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LAME DUCK: Issues to Contact Your Legislators About

Stop ANOTHER Cut to Education Funding

December 10, 2014 (Updated) - House Bill 5477 was sent to the Senate where it was passed in mid-November with Substitute S-13. When sent to the house, an alternate funding option was added by Representative Jase Bolger. The Bolger proposal eliminates the 6% sales tax on gasoline over a period of six years. It replaces that with an increase in the gasoline tax of an equivalent amount. Under Proposal A, the School Aid Fund receives 4.3% of the 6% sales tax. Leading experts estimate this equates to a loss of $600-700 million per year. Other units of local government would lose approximately $100 million per year. There is NO proposed replacement for this lost revenue.

Last night the Bolger proposal passed the House and will now be forwarded to conference committee.

Michigan PTA supports a plan to provide funding to build and maintain our State’s infrastructure including our roads. However, we do not support a plan that will take funds away from education. The estimated loss to the School Aid Fund would equate to approximately $415.00 per student cut. This is not acceptable! Our children deserve a quality education and funding cuts do not provide for that.

Michigan PTA believes that the education of our students and the quality of our local communities should be our highest priority. To that end, if the legislature alters the allocation of the gasoline tax to provide a dedicated funding stream for road repairs then those funds must be replaced with an alternate guaranteed revenue stream.

CALL your legislators today and let them know that the conference committee version MUST contain a guaranteed funding stream to replace the funding stream for education and that you will be asking the Governor to veto the bill if it does not. Our local schools and communities must not be sacrificed for roads. A great state provides all three – great schools, great communities and great roads.

Contact Governor Snyder and thank him for recognizing the shortfalls of the bill passed by the House. Also, ask him to veto any bill forwarded to him that does not contain a guaranteed funding stream to replace any funding cuts to education.

Penalizing 3rd Grade Students is not the Solution

December 8, 2014 - Introduced in October 2013, HB 5111 would simply hold back 3rd graders that do not “achieve a score of at least proficient in reading on the grade 3 state assessment.” There is nothing in the bill that actually provides the resources necessary to facilitate interventions that address the issue of reading proficiency.

Read HB 5111 and House Fiscal Agency Analysis:

Michigan PTA agrees that we must address early childhood literacy, however, this bill is not the solution. Similar bills have been rejected in other states (Oklahoma, New Mexico) and there is broad lack of support for this bill amongst Michigan’s educators.
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HB 5111 is short-sighted and is not in the best interest of our children. There is no research that conclusively shows a connection between holding a third grade student back for one or more years to achieve proficiency in one subject area and overall K-12 academic success. There is research indicating there are harmful effects to retention.

It should not be up to our Legislators to mandate whether or not a child will be held back if they are unable to pass any standardized reading test; this is a decision that should be made between parents and educators. Rather than penalizing third graders after the fact, there are measures the Legislature can and should take – such as allocating resources for early literacy and reading intervention programs.

Our children deserve better than HB 5111. PTA members expect legislators to work proactively, not punitively, on behalf of students.

**This is a time for PTA to do what it does best, ADVOCATE.**

Please share this message with your members, school community, family and friends. We cannot continue to allow the future of Michigan’s children to be sacrificed.

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You can contact your legislators by following the link below:

http://www.legislature.mi.gov/%28S%28rb12gg2bdwxrsj45kupwyl45%29%29/mileg.aspx?page=legislators