



For Immediate Release
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Early Literacy Bills Earn Strong State Support

4 out of 5 Michigan voters support bi-partisan bills to improve early literacy through early screening, interventions and retention

Lansing, MI – According to survey data released today by the Great Lakes Education Project (GLEP), an overwhelming number of Michigan voters support adopting the early literacy improvement plan contained in a bi-partisan bill package pending in the legislature. The bills are HB 5111, sponsored by Rep. Amanda Price (R-Holland) and HB 5144, sponsored by Rep. Thomas Stallworth III (D-Detroit).

Voters were informed that roughly one-third of the state's 3rd graders cannot read proficiently and the legislature is debating bills to require early screening; parental notification; intervention and tutoring for all struggling readers in Kindergarten through 3rd grade – and that students who are still not proficient would be required to repeat 3rd grade with intensive reading intervention. Given these facts, 80% of voters supported, 13% percent opposed and 7% had no opinion on the bills.

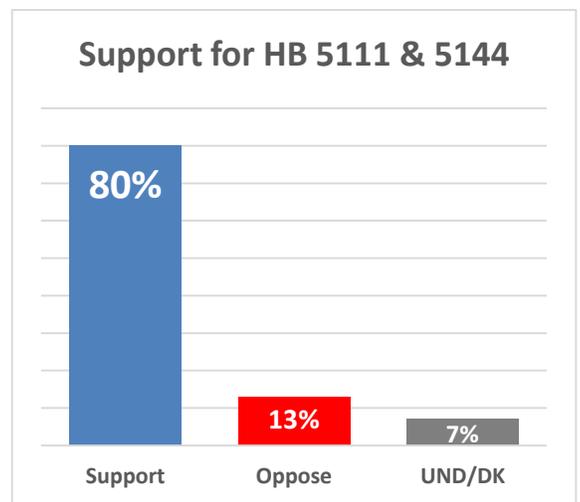
“Improving reading skills is extremely critical for student success, and we’re pleased the general public is showing such tremendous support for this comprehensive approach to improving early literacy and ending social promotion,” said Gary Naeyaert, GLEP Executive Director. “Thirty-five states have adopted a statewide approach to early literacy, and we think it’s important to note the 6:1 support for these bills transcend age, gender, geography, political party and other demographic variables,” he continued.

Naeyaert said these bills include the option for students to re-take the state assessment and include a number of "good cause" exemptions from retention, including passing an alternative assessment, demonstrating proficiency through a student portfolio of work; students with an IEP; and English Language Learners.

GLEP is among a number of organizations, including the Capital Area Literacy Coalition, MAPSA, Detroit Regional Chamber, The Council of Michigan Authorizers, Americans for Prosperity, and Democrats for Education Reform-Michigan which are advocating for passage of these reading improvement bills. HB 5111 and 5144 passed with bi-partisan support from the House Education Committee and are currently on the floor of the Michigan House of Representatives.

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Methodology: This survey was part of a Denno Research Periodic Survey of the Michigan electorate. 600 respondents in the state of Michigan were surveyed between March 9-10, 2014, with a margin of error of plus/minus 4%, and the participation was stratified based on census data and past voter behavior. 120 respondents (20%) were from cell phone users, in an attempt to gather younger voters who do not have a land line. A screen was employed to include only those participants who said they would vote, either at the polls or by absentee ballot, in the November 2014 General Election. All numbers are rounded and may exceed 100%. Visit www.dennoresearch.com or www.glep.org for additional details.



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