



For Release
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Statement from Great Lakes Education Project *In response to passage of DPS reform bills in the State Senate*

“Rather than face chaos and uncertainty in the fall, over 115,000 students in Detroit will have access to more opportunities for a brighter future thanks to the Michigan Senate, which voted tonight to preserve school choice and quality options in K-12 education,” said Gary Naeyaert, Executive Director of the Great Lakes Education Project (GLEP).

“The people of Michigan should be congratulating Senate Majority Leader Arlan Meekhof (R-West Olive) and the 19 Republican Senators who made it their priority to put students first in this process. Detroit kids and parents deserve the same control over their own decisions that all other Michigan families have. Thanks to passage of this legislation, their opportunities are protected,” Naeyaert continued.

Key features of the six-bill package include eliminating \$515 million in operational debt at Detroit Public Schools; providing \$150 million in transition funding for the new school district; improving accountability through implementation of an A-F accountability system; serious intervention or closure for failing traditional and charter public schools, mandatory national accreditation for any charter authorizer who opens schools in the city; elimination of the Education Achievement Authority (EAA) and creation of a charter-DPS Advisory Committee to make recommendations on school needs in the city

“We look forward to Governor Snyder signing these bills into law, and then beginning work with all education stakeholders to implement these bold reforms in the very near future. We are also eager to work with Mayor Mike Duggan on issues of school locations and access to facilities and with Natasha Baker of the State School Reform Office to address chronically failing schools. The real work is before us, and we shouldn’t waste any time on getting it done,” Naeyaert concluded.

Bills approved tonight include HB 5383, 5384 and 5387; SB 711, 820 and 822. Senators voting “YES” on HB 5384, the primary policy bill in the package, are as follows: Booher, Brandenburg, Green, Hildenbrand, Horn, Hune, Jones, Knollenberg, Kowall, MacGregor, Marleau, Meekhof, Nofs, O’Brien, Proos, Robertson, Shirkey, Stamas and Zorn.

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Supporting quality choices in public education.