

***Michigan Student Caucus: Platform In Progress
Fall Hearings, 2007-2008
House Commission on Civic Engagement***

This platform is to be considered “in progress,” as part of a rolling platform that will be submitted to commission members in Spring of 2008. Further editing is likely to occur.

About the Michigan Student Caucus:

The Michigan Student Caucus represents students throughout Michigan to the Michigan State Legislature. Since 2001, thousands of students across Michigan have participated in online deliberation, negotiation and voting leading to the construction of a political platform that is presented in formal testimony to the House Commission on Civic Engagement.

The Michigan Student Caucus is not affiliated with any political party or organization.



This year's theme is "Michigan 2017." Our goal is to figure out where we want to be ten years from now--and how we need to get there.

The MSC is open to any Michigan resident (permanent or temporary) who is a student. For information about the program, please contact our faculty advisors at The University of Michigan, Professors Gary Weisserman (gweiss@umflint.edu) and Jeff Kupperman (jkupp@umich.edu).

The Michigan Student Caucus' online environment can be accessed at <http://www.michiganstudentcaucus.org>.

RESOLUTION TO AMEND MICHIGAN BEVERAGE CONTAINER ACT (1976).
Submitted by Adam Krasner and Russell Shevins.

WHEREAS: The Michigan Beverage Container Act requires a 10-cent bottle deposit on all standard beverage containers and the rest of participating United States charge a 5-cent bottle deposit on all standard-size beverage containers;

WHEREAS: The State of Michigan defines a beverage valid to receive a bottle deposit and refund as a: "soft drink, soda water, carbonated natural or mineral water, or other nonalcoholic carbonated drink; beer, ale, or other malt drink of whatever alcoholic content; or a mixed wine drink or a mixed spirit drink;"

WHEREAS: Currently only two of the 11 United States, California and Maine, requires the bottle deposit incentive for bottled water, thus including it in its definition as a beverage;

WHEREAS: Bottled water sales are estimated at \$50 to \$100 billion each year in the United States;

WHEREAS: Bottled water sales are greater than every other category of beverages in the United States aside from soft-drinks;

WHEREAS: 80% of bottled water bottles end up in United States landfills instead of being properly recycled;

WHEREAS: The 80% of bottled water bottles in landfills accounts for 38 billion bottles each year, accounting for over \$1 billion in plastic;

WHEREAS: The national recycling rate for the standard bottles that water is sold in is 23.1%, this percent for bottled water bottles is even lower; **THEREFORE,**

BE IT RESOLVED THAT: the State of Michigan will include bottled water in its standard definition of a beverage worthy of a bottle deposit refund of 10-cents.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT: this will result in a greater number of recycled bottles in the State of Michigan, providing relief to overflowing landfills and helping the environment.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT: this will place Michigan in a unique place along with 4 of the 11 States (Oregon will require a water bottle deposit as of January 1, 2008) causing it to be a national leader in environmental awareness.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT: the cost incurred from the increased use of Recycling Plants will be likely offset by the decrease of water bottles in landfills.

RESOURCES:

<http://www.bottledwater.org>

<http://www.bottlebill.org/>

http://www.michigan.gov/deq/0,1607,7-135-3585_4130-56198--,00.html

<http://www.organicconsumers.org/foodsafety/water121003.cfm>

<http://www.fastcompany.com/magazine/117/features-message-in-a-bottle.html>

RESOLUTION TO FIGHT CHILDHOOD OBESITY. Submitted by Amanda Fleischman and Ryan Singer.

WHEREAS: the number of overweight and obese children has more than doubled in the last 25 years; and

WHEREAS: 14% of children in Michigan are overweight; and

WHEREAS: 29 states have state laws addressing childhood obesity and Michigan has none; and

WHEREAS: most public schools in Detroit have lunch programs that consist of pre-packaged, processed food that is unhealthy and high in fat; and

WHEREAS: 70% of students living in impoverished areas of Detroit are on the reduced price lunch plan and have no choice but to eat the unhealthy meals; and

WHEREAS: children covered by Medicaid are nearly six times more likely to be treated for a diagnosis of obesity than children covered by private insurance; and

WHEREAS: children in Michigan are heavier than children from the rest of the nation; and

WHEREAS: all schools must offer physical education, there is no time or frequency requirement; and

WHEREAS: high schools students are required to take only one credit of physical education/health; and

WHEREAS: teacher preparation programs do not offer nutritional education specializations; **THEREFORE,**

BE IT RESOLVED: that the State of Michigan require health education beginning in elementary school, teaching students the importance of a healthy lifestyle and balanced diet;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: that the State of Michigan further regulates the nutritional content of meals served in public schools by decreasing the calorie and fat allowances;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: that Michigan creates a fruit grant that provides fruits and vegetables to schools across Michigan;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: that this grant provides students with a healthy choice that is free and has high nutritional value;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: that these fruits and vegetables be available as a snack for students participating in after school activities;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: that all elementary schools provide one hour of PE three days a week;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: that all high school students are required to take 2 credits of physical education and health.

RESOURCES:

<http://www.michigan.gov/mde>

http://www.medstat.com/pdfs/childhood_obesity.pdf

<http://www.statehealthfacts.org/profileind.jsp?ind=51&cat=2&rgn=24>

<http://www.med.umich.edu/opm/newspage/2003/childobesity.htm>

http://www.cityyear.org/sites/service.cfm?Site_ID=7&Service_ID=146

RESOLUTION TO IMPLEMENT A STATEWIDE SINGLE-PAYER HEALTH CARE SYSTEM. Submitted by Marisa Seiss and Brock Strasbourger

WHEREAS: In fiscal 2004, United States' spending on health care was nearly \$2 trillion; and

WHEREAS: The United States spends nearly twice as much as other developed countries; and

WHEREAS: Despite our large spending, at approximately \$7,129 per capita, in comparison to other developed nations we perform poorly; we have a worse professional to patient ratio, increased incidence of many diseases, a higher infant mortality rate, and a lower life expectancy; and

WHEREAS: The United States is the only place in the developed world that does not include health as a fundamental right; and

WHEREAS: The United States has 46 million citizens completely uninsured and millions more inadequately covered, while these other countries provide comprehensive coverage; and

WHEREAS: The number of Michigan residents without health insurance increased by 132,000 from 1999 to 2006; and

WHEREAS: During 2006, an average of 10.4% of Michigan's population was completely uninsured; and

WHEREAS: 4.9% of Michigan's population under the age of 18 was uninsured; and

WHEREAS: The United States utilizes private insurers who waste health dollars on overhead, underwriting, billing, sales and marketing and reap enormous profits and inflated executive compensation; and

WHEREAS: The bureaucracy of the medical system combined with needless administration wastes 31% of Americans' health dollars; and

WHEREAS: A single-payer system would allow Michigan to recapture the wasted health care dollars; and

WHEREAS: A single-payer system could potentially save the United States an estimated \$350 billion per year, which would allow the nation to provide comprehensive coverage without further investment; and

WHEREAS: Costs would be controlled through uniformly, negotiated fees, statewide budgeting, and bulk purchasing, capitalizing on the economies of scale concept;
THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED THAT: Michigan implements a statewide single-payer health care system; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT: Under this system, the newly acquired funds would provide health insurance for all of Michigan's citizens; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT: These funds will comprehensively cover essential medical services including doctor, hospital, dental, prescription drug costs, and long term care; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT: This coverage plan will be accepted throughout the country at all public and private medical firms; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT: This policy will provide fundamental health benefits to all and if an individual wants additional coverage they can purchase privatized health care; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT: Similar to a tax, all Michigan inhabitants would have to pay into this system; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT: The state of Michigan would act as the single-payer and dictate spending, providing a budget proposal for the allocation of funds; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT: A formal department and/or office must be implemented to determine the day-to-day distribution of these benefits.

RESOURCES:

Krugman, Paul, and Robin Wells (2006) "The health care crisis and what to do about it." New York Review of Books, 53 (March 23).

www.pnhp.org/facts/single_payer_resources.php

jec.senate.gov/State%20by%20State/September%202007/MI.pdf

U.S. Census Bureau (2006) Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2005.

RESOLUTION TO PREVENT AND/OR DECREASE DRUNK DRIVING IN THE STATE OF MICHIGAN: Submitted by Samantha Rosen and Allyson Segal

WHEREAS: Statistics released earlier in the week by the NHTSA confirm that alcohol-related traffic deaths are on the rise in Michigan while these types of traffic deaths continue to decline across the country. According to NHTSA, there were 112 fewer fatalities involving drunk drivers in 2006 than the country experienced in 2005. At the same time, however, Michigan had 332 fatalities in 2006, a 1.5% increase over the number of similar fatalities in 2005. (http://www.madd.org/home/3303)

WHEREAS: about one third of all drivers arrested or convicted of driving under the influence are repeat offenders. These drivers are 40% more likely to be involved in a fatal crash than those without prior DUIs.

WHEREAS: Over 55,000 arrests are made in Michigan annually for drunk driving with roughly 28,000 at 0.15 BAC and above while over 21,000 are repeat offenders. Because Michigan law does not mandate the use of ignition interlocks for all drunk drivers, there are only 3,500 ignition interlock devices in operation here. (http://www.madd.org/home/3303)

WHEREAS: over half of alcohol related traffic fatalities involve drivers with a BAC of .5% and above. These drivers are at least 382 times more likely to be involved in a fatal crash than a non-drinking driver.

WHEREAS: 50-75% of drunk drivers who licenses are suspended continue to drive.

WHEREAS: Generally, unlicensed drivers are 4.9 times more likely to be involved in fatal crash than properly licensed drivers.

BE IT RESOLVED: The State of Michigan restricts drunk vehicle operation by suspending licenses, impounding or immobilizing vehicles, and requiring alcohol ignition interlock devices on offenders' vehicles.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT: Michigan needs to work to promote recovery programs through mandatory alcohol assessment and treatment, intensive probation and attendance at victim impact panels

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT: The state of Michigan needs to increase the number of sobriety checkpoints, as sobriety checkpoints reduce alcohol related crashes, injuries, and fatalities. Centers for disease control researchers showed crash and fatality reductions from 18 to 24%.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT: Generally, about 85-90%of Americans support sobriety checkpoints. Also, 6% of Americans want sobriety checkpoints to be used more often.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT: The state of Michigan Ignition utilize interlocks for all convicted DUI offenders as several studies in the United States and Canada have shown that ignition interlocks decrease repeat offenses by 50-90%.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT: The state of Michigan help preserve the 21 minimum drinking age as almost 50 high-quality studies have found conclusively that the 21 minimum drinking age decreases alcohol-related fatalities by 16 percent

RESOURCES:

*<http://www.madd.org/home/3303> Elder, R.W., Shults, R.A., Sleet, D.A, Nichols, J.L., Zaza, S., Thompson, R.S. (2002) Effectiveness of Sobriety Checkpoints for Reducing Alcohol-Involved Crashes, *Traffic Injury Prevention*, pp 266-274. Gallup Poll done for MADD, 2005.*

http://www.madd.org/docs/MADDNationwideGallupSurvey_DrunkDriving_2005.pdf NHTSA. Volume III: Findings Report National Survey of Drinking and Driving Attitudes and Behavior: 2001. DOT HS 809 551

<http://www.madd.org/stats/11002>

RESOLUTION TO HELP CURB THE ALGAE OUTBREAK IN THE GREAT LAKES TO HELP THEM REMAIN HEALTHY. Submitted by Andrew Marcus and Max Stern

WHEREAS: The shorelines of the Great Lakes are currently littered with horrible-smelling muck due to a recent algae outbreak.

WHEREAS: The outbreak reduces oxygen in the water, strangling and killing a percentage of the inhabiting fish, additionally killing loons and water birds whose habitat is the shoreline.

WHEREAS: There is a great presence of zebra mussels in the lakes and they promote algae growth, which is a main reason for the pollution.

WHEREAS: Phosphorus is a key algae nutrient. A phosphorus cutback from laundry detergents and sewage treatment plants has been used in the past to attack this problem and it worked for a while. Phosphorus sources also include livestock farms and urban lawn fertilizers.

WHEREAS: Leisurely boating and touring are major industries on the Great Lakes . Additionally, a number of cruise ships operate on the Great Lakes as well as sailing boats, and many different fishing boats. Fishing in the Great Lakes is a multi-billion dollar industry, being that there are so many major catches. This industry is now in an especially bad position to lose significant amounts of money and productivity because fish in many areas of the lakes have been declared inedible.

WHEREAS: There are two major ferries across Lake Michigan that bring in significant revenue.

WHEREAS: Sewage disposal, toxic contamination through pesticides and heavy metals, overdevelopment of the water's edge, and air pollution also pollute the Great Lakes on a daily basis.

WHEREAS: Persistent Organic Pollutants are chemical substances that pass through the food web. If people eat a lot of fish, they are likely to obtain chemicals in their bodies that have been linked to cancer and neurological problems.

WHEREAS: Many sources show that children are most affected by neurological damage from pollutants in the lakes. Infertility is the most common effect among adults.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT: Bills and agreements with have been negotiated in the past when this issue worsened in the 1970's. We need to be involved in our resolution of this problem; if we do our part and does not reduce pollution-increasing actions for progress will be a waste.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT: This issue cannot be completely solved without a consistent means for controlling and regulating phosphorous pollution in the Great Lakes, as it is one of the dominating pollutants of the water and is also a key component of algae which is depleting the water and its inhabitants of oxygen.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT: By controlling phosphorous pollution, we can control algae growth, and thus preventing the demise of fish, loons, and water birds.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT: We cannot completely tackle this issue without limiting the quantities of sewage and toxins that are dumped by the lakes' shorelines. This dumping has had a deep impact upon the Great Lakes fishing economy, as the quantity of edible fish has increasingly decreased.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT: The state of Michigan can integrate a pollutant permits system which is commonly used to serve the dual purpose of regulating the quantities of pollution and stimulating the economy.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT: Implementing such a system would attack the pollution dilemma from numerous sources, such as: A) regulating quantities of phosphorous dumping from sewage treatment plants and other phosphorous polluters. B.) regulating the frequency of ferry trips on the water, thereby controlling toxin pollution from that source. C.) regulating the quantities of pollutants and toxic waste dumped along the shorelines.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT: If such a trading system were to be carried out, the water of the Great Lakes would become cleaner and cleaner in time, and that the population of fish inhabiting the lakes would, as a result, be healthier. Being that people eat these fish, the people would be less at risk to suffer from the negative health consequences which have previously resulted such as infertility in adults, and neurological damage in children.

RESOURCES:

<http://tigger.uic.edu/~maqkhan/LAS100/GreatLakesPollution.html>

<http://www.great-lakes.net/teach/pollution/water/water1.html>

<http://media.www.michigandaily.com/media/storage/paper851/news/2007/10/05/State/Fo- r-Great.Lakes.Muck.No.Simple.Solution-3014844.shtml>

www.epa.gov/glnpo/p2.html

http://archives.cbc.ca/IDD-1-75-1390/science_technology/great_lakes_pollution/

<http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2004/09/14/tech/main643305.shtml>

Resolution to attract investors and entrepreneurs to Michigan by BRENDAN LLOYD WEITZ and DUSTIN T. WACHLER. Submitted by Brendan Lloyd Weitz.

WHEREAS: The Michigan economy is locked into the Old World era of union labor and high taxes.

WHEREAS: The unions protested the new technique of flexible manufacturing pioneered by Toyota and embraced around the world.

WHEREAS: Michigan's high taxes created a vicious cycle of investors and entrepreneurs leaving the state, thus eroding the tax base, thus fooling politicians into raising taxes on those left behind.

WHEREAS: More than a third of Michigan households (31 percent) include one or more people who directly or indirectly involved in the auto industry.

WHEREAS: About 11 percent of Michigan citizens are employed in the auto industry

WHEREAS: 16 percent of Michigan citizens "have someone with a job in an industry or company that depends of the auto industry"

WHEREAS: 47 percent of Michigan residents who claim to not have a member of their household who works or has worked for a company that depends on the auto industry say that their household's economic well-being "depends on the general health of the Michigan auto industry"

WHEREAS: Michigan's neighbor state, Minnesota, has an economy that hums because it is remarkably diverse. Its anchor companies span from agriculture and food products (Cargill, General Mills) to medium tech (3M) to aviation (Cirrus Design) to healthcare (Medtronic) to retail (Best Buy, Target) to a cluster of tech startups in the southwestern suburbs of Minneapolis.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT: Michigan uses Minnesota's approach as a blueprint for success. Michigan should focuses on diversifying its core businesses that uphold its economic stature, therefore, protecting the state from plummeting economically during industry slumps as well as luring investors and entrepreneurs to increase the net capital inflow of dollars coming from outside the state.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT: The state of Michigan should not try to bet its economy on one or two industries as this leaves out many investors and entrepreneurs looking to pour dollars into states with diversity across industries.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT: Michigan dedicates its limited resources to the long-term health of the state's economy. The government allocates funds to attracting new businesses to the state, possibly using financial incentives and tax exemptions.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT: Michigan's economy needs an everlasting amount of capital at this point in time and the best place for this to come from is from outside the state.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT: Investors and entrepreneurs pouring millions of dollars into this state would make its economic situation much more stable long-term as well as create incentives for Michigan residents to stay living and working in Michigan instead of the steady trend of moving out of state looking for opportunities.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT: This focus would create more jobs and more opportunity for the state of Michigan long-term creating an incentive for the young generation of workers to come to Michigan with opportunities arising.

RESOURCES:

http://www.civilsocietyinstitute.org/media/pdfs/022807_CSI_40MPG_Michigan_new_%20release.pdf

<http://forbes.com/digitalrules/2007/09/tackling-the-mi.html>

http://www.statenews.com/index.php/article/2007/04/healing_michigan039s

<http://www.city-data.com/states/Michigan-Economy.html>

FUEL EFFICIENT CARS AND REGULATED GAS PRICES IN MICHIGAN.
Submitted by Kailey Wudyka and Amber Eckardt.

WHEREAS: One year ago the average gas prices in Michigan for gasoline were \$2.157 for Regular unleaded, \$2.285 for Mid, \$2.376 for Premium, and \$2.594 for Diesel.

WHEREAS: The current average price for Michigan gasoline is \$2.885 for Regular unleaded, \$3.055 for Mid, \$3.178 for Premium, and \$3.139 for Diesel. Which is up around \$.80 more than the previous year.

WHEREAS: The record high for gas prices was in May, 2007, at \$3.533 for Regular unleaded and \$3.479 for Diesel in October, 2005.

WHEREAS: The Michigan average for gasoline has surpassed the National average all this year except in February.

WHEREAS: Michigan 's average gas price is the 9th highest in the Nation as of right now, but is expected to raise by the end of the year.

WHEREAS: In 2005, oil refineries increased their prices 255%.

WHEREAS: The current oil refineries crack spread is \$36 per barrel, which is considered an excessive profit.

WHEREAS: A crack spread of \$8-9 per barrel is considered a good profit.

WHEREAS: We haven't built a new refinery in this country in the last 30 years., so things will only get worse.

WHEREAS: 20% of people spend over \$300 a month to fill up their cars. Which is \$3,600 blown on gas each year.

WHEREAS: Additionally, 74% of people spend over \$101 a month on gasoline.

WHEREAS: Cars can get as low as 8 mpg city and 13 mpg highway with an annual fuel cost of \$4,500.

WHEREAS: A Honda Civic Hybrid can get 40 mpg city and 45 mpg highway with an annual fuel cost of \$1,000. This saves you an average of \$2,500 on gasoline each year.

WHEREAS: The average sticker price for the top 5 hybrids is \$23,200.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT: Gas prices in Michigan should have a set range that is reasonable and consistent. This can be a NEGOTIATED range set up with the government. If we have an oil refinery in Michigan then we can set our own prices for the gas we provide at stations.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT: There should be plans to build a new oil refinery in Michigan within the next 10 years that can be available by the year 2017. The government can raise funds to help build the refinery and pay for the rest. Then the refinery will create a profit for the state and the will open up new jobs for residents in Michigan.

BE IT STILL FURTHER RESOLVED THAT: Car companies produce more affordable fuel-efficient cars so as to create a larger percent of people able to purchase them. With more people buying these cars we can save gas and money, creating a better economic situation. Even though this is new technology... over the next 10 years some type of drop can be achieved.

RESOURCES:

<http://www.fuelgaugereport.com/MIavg.asp>

http://michigangasprices.com/Prices_nationally.aspx

<http://www.dailyfueleconomytip.com/?p=403>

<http://www.cars.com/go/advice/Story.jsp?section=fuel&story=fuelCost&subject=fuelList&referrer=&aff=national>

RESOLUTION TO REDUCE TRAFFIC AND CONGESTION, IN LIEU OF EFFICIENCY, IN AND AROUND THE DETROIT METROPOLITAN AREA VIA HOV and HOT LANES. Submitted by Brock Strasbourger and Marisa Seiss

WHEREAS: Detroit's traffic ranks amongst the worst in the country and is worse than the likes of Chicago, Boston, and New York; and

WHEREAS: Detroit is the 8th most congested city in the United States; and

WHEREAS: Detroit is the 5th most polluted city in the United States that is in part due to the excessive idling of automobiles in Detroit traffic; and

WHEREAS: On average, drivers are wasting approximately 2.9 billion gallons of gas over the course of a year; and

WHEREAS: The 2007 Urban Mobility Report found that on average the nation's drivers are wasting 54 hours a year, significantly more time than an average full work week, sitting in traffic; and

WHEREAS: The two aforementioned complications of congestion are creating a total of a \$78 billion drain on the U.S. economy; and

WHEREAS: Driving times during peak hours are 38% longer than non-peak times; and

WHEREAS: Detroit could significantly reduce congestion by adding about 2,300 new lane miles by 2030 at an estimated cost of \$24.1 billion; and

WHEREAS: This figure includes the cost of adding 10% of the new capacity as elevated roadways and tunnels; and

WHEREAS: HOV and HOT lanes could act as cost effective substitutes for new roadway; and

WHEREAS: HOV lanes (high occupancy vehicle lanes), reserved for vehicles containing three or more people, would encourage carpooling and significantly reduce congestion and its negative economic and environmental ramifications; and

WHEREAS: HOT lanes (high occupancy toll), which provide an opportunity for reliable travel times to users prepared to pay a significant premium, are enacted on single or double occupant vehicles; and

WHEREAS: The revenue raised from such a road pricing and/or transportation tax can be used to better Michigan's economy; **THEREFORE,**

BE IT RESOLVED THAT: The state of Michigan implement HOV and HOT lanes in and around the Detroit Metropolitan area; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT: HOV lanes are reserved for vehicles of three or more people; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT: Cameras be installed and positioned along the side of the lane to snap a digital photo of every vehicle and its respective license plate to ensure proper usage of the lane; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT: If a vehicle is found to have less than three passengers the owner of the vehicle will be subject to a fine of \$150; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT: HOT toll booths are stationed in between major on ramps and exits; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT: The revenue raised from the HOT lanes shall go directly into a fund under Michigan's Department of Transportation; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT: The price of the toll will increase as the number of passengers decreases so as to further encourage carpooling; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT: There will be barriers separating the HOV and HOT lanes from regular lanes so as to prevent a potential increase in accidents for automobiles merging into the drastically faster moving traffic; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT: A monthly E-ZPass may be purchased from the Department of Transportation, that utilizes an electronic toll collection system (common in the northeast), at a discount due to bulk purchasing; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT: Due to the discounted price because of the scaled purchase, the cost will be fixed in relation to the number of passengers i.e. one versus two.

RESOURCES:

<http://detnews.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20070927/OPINION01/709270304/1008/opinion01>

<http://www.reason.org/ps346/mi.shtml>

http://www.citymayors.com/environment/polluted_uscities.html

tti.tamu.edu/documents/mobility_report_2007_wappx.pdf

http://www.its.dot.gov/JPODOCS/REPTS_TE/13668_files/chapter_1.htm

Public Transportation (e.g. Buses) and Taxis: Required Utilization of Advanced Hybrid Technologies in. Submitted by Ryan Klarberg and Evan Seidenberg.

WHEREAS: Hybrid technology in buses and other automobiles reduces harmful emissions, improves fuel economy, and contributes to reducing the ' dependency on foreign oil.

WHEREAS: Reduced air pollution emissions from hybrid vehicles lead to improved human health with regard to respiratory and other illness.

WHEREAS: American and international automobile manufacturers are developing affordable forms of transportation in which electrical and diesel/gasoline systems work together to reduce fuel consumption and emissions while improving performance.

WHEREAS: Research is being performed at the Hybrid Development Center for Automotive Research in Oakland Country, Michigan, in hope to develop affordable alternative energy technology.

WHEREAS: 500 researchers from three different automobile companies (GM, Daimler-Chrysler, & BMW) are collaborating in Michigan "to develop a two-mode hybrid system, which combines two electric motors with an internal combustion engine to increase fuel economy by up to 25 percent."

WHEREAS: The most advanced hybrid powertrain technology – the two-mode hybrid- eventually achieve significant cost advantages.

WHEREAS: Prices for gasoline are increasing nationwide within the . The nation's average price for a gallon of regular grade gas is \$3.013 (as of November 5th, 2007). This price is \$0.81 more per gallon compared to a year ago.

WHEREAS: Gas prices in the State of Michigan have fluctuated dramatically, as both wholesale and retail gas prices have risen significantly.

WHEREAS: In Michigan, it costs \$3.179 per gallon for regular grade gasoline and \$3.471 per gallon for diesel (as of November 6th, 2007). One year ago in Michigan, the average cost for regular unleaded gasoline per gallon was \$2.269 and \$2.638 for diesel. Therefore, prices for regular gasoline and diesel have increased \$0.916 and \$0.833 respectively over the past year in Michigan.

WHEREAS: as of November 6th, 2007, the State of Michigan has the fourth highest cost of Regular grade gasoline per gallon average in the .

WHEREAS: Current trends in gas prices show that gas prices in the State of Michigan and the will continue to increase.

WHEREAS: 830 GM-Allison hybrid-equipped buses are operating in 74 cities in North America and Europe, and an additional 379 hybrid bus systems in North America will be fulfilled throughout 2007.

WHEREAS: Cities within Michigan such as Ann Arbor are utilizing hybrid technology in buses to minimize negative impacts on the environment and reduce operating costs.

WHEREAS: This incorporation of hybrid buses in Ann Arbor will reduce carbon monoxide and hydrocarbons of up to an estimated 90 percent and up to 50 percent in carbon dioxide and nitrogen oxide.

WHEREAS: Hybrid buses, such as the buses being utilized in Ann Arbor, will reduce noise pollution in addition to running engines that are safer for the environment.

WHEREAS: Each individual bus will save approximately \$125,00 in fuels costs and 40,560 gallons of fuel, over a twelve-year period.

WHEREAS: A study performed in 2006 by the National Renewable Energy Laboratory, transit buses with GM-Allison's hybrid technology "deliver up to 75 percent better fuel economy than traditional transit buses."

WHEREAS: GM-Allison hybrid-powered buses have "reduced maintenance costs resulting from extended brake, engine oil and transmission oil life, superior torque, and better acceleration," compared to traditional municipal diesel buses.

WHEREAS: The GM-Allison hybrid-powered buses can deliver 50 percent better acceleration than a bus equipped with a normal diesel power train.

WHEREAS: The Detroit Department of Transportation (DDOT) "serves the City of Detroit and over 20 suburban communities along 52 fixed-route bus lines. DDOT carries approximately 80 percent of the region's bus passengers."

WHEREAS: In 2002, the DDOT had an active fleet of 472 full-size and small buses. DDOT's annual passenger count totaled 39,769,169 and the annual passenger miles covered were 176,859,829.

WHEREAS: New York City Mayor Bloomberg passed an act in which all 13,000 New York City cabs must utilize hybrid technology. Every taxi that is removed from duty must be replaced by a hybrid vehicle, resulting in an entire hybrid taxi fleet by 2012 (estimated).

WHEREAS: "The current, all-gasoline taxis average about 14 miles per gallon. By contrast, the hybrid vehicles are expected to get approximately 30 miles to the gallon."

WHEREAS: “Implementing tougher standards for the more than 13,000 taxis in this city will provide the same clean air benefits as removing 32,000 privately owned cars from our streets.”

BE IT RESOLVED: The State of Michigan execute a plan to require if a DDOT or any other public transportation bus statewide is removed from duty, any new buses entering their fleet must implement hybrid-technology.

BE IT RESOLVED: The State of Michigan require that all purchased commercial vehicles that will be used for taxi must utilize hybrid-technology, unless approved by the state government (e.g. limousines).

BE IT RESOLVED: That all public transportation vehicles in Michigan have transferred over to the use of hybrid technology by 2017.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: The State of Michigan initiate a “Michigan Green Technology Initiative” that encourages the population of Michigan to purchase hybrid-engine vehicles, using public transportation especially those that employ hybrid technology, and the use of energy-efficient and eco-friendly appliances.

LET IT BE FUTHER RESOLVED: By the general population seeing the government intervening in providing a solution to the CO2 emissions problem, others may part-take in the constructive progress towards utilizing hybrid vehicles.

RESOURCES:

<http://www.fuelgaugereport.com/MIavg.asp>

http://www.michigan.gov/gov/0,1607,7-168-39899_39903-152748--,00.html

<http://www.newstarget.com/022093.html>

http://www.hybridcar.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=525&Itemid=122

<http://www.detroitmi.gov/ddot/aboutDDOT/operations.html>

***Resolution to Petition to Raise High School Graduation Rates in the state of Michigan.
Submitted by Marissa Antonio and Zabrina Reich.***

WHEREAS: The high school graduation rate in the state of Michigan is 71.6%, much lower than New Jersey with 86% or North Dakota with 80%.

WHEREAS: The high school diploma represents the bare minimum requirement for successful participation in the workforce, the economy, and society as a whole.

WHEREAS: The unemployment rate for high school dropouts is more than 30 percent higher than that of graduates. When employed, dropouts earn close to 30 percent less.

WHEREAS: Dropouts are also more likely to end up incarcerated and to rely on public assistance.

WHEREAS: Michigan has developed an achievement gap between affluent communities and poor communities.

WHEREAS: Young people have stated that principals dismiss their concerns and teachers have such low expectations that they bore the students out of the classroom.

WHEREAS: In high poverty urban areas in Michigan , there are more coloring assignments rather than writing or mathematics assignments.

WHEREAS: This is crucial to Michigan 2017, because education is the tool for success in the next generation.

WHEREAS: In current high schools across the country, students who take more rigorous coursework learn more and perform better on tests.

WHEREAS: In mathematics, students who complete the full college preparatory sequence perform much higher on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) than those who complete only one or two courses. While students who take more vocational-type courses, perform consistently lower on the NAEP; THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED THAT: The Michigan State Government increases the graduation rate by 5% in the next three years, and that the State of Michigan does this by creating a more challenging curriculum and higher standards for students.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT: The State of Michigan follows the Kentucky Education Reform Act that has been enacted to create a more rigorous curriculum in state schools that challenges students to reach their highest potential.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That Michigan follow in this way: In June, 2001, the Kentucky Board of Education accepted new performance standards that resulted from a comprehensive process involving more than 1,600 Kentucky teachers, various advisory

groups, and which provided for public input. These new standards set the stage for the work that lies ahead of Kentucky's educators: To improve the academic achievement of all our students.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That Michigan will use multiple evaluation and assessment strategies to continuously monitor and modify instruction to meet student needs and support proficient student work.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: The schools' instructional program will actively engage all students by using effective, varied, and research-based practices to improve student academic performance. The school leader recognizes and encourages implementation of instructional practices that best motivate and increase student achievement.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: The school is organized to maximize use of all available resources to support high student and staff performance. The school leader acquires and uses resources wisely for the purpose of student achievement. The school leader uses and organizes time in innovative ways to meet the goals and objectives of school standards.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That for efficiency, school/district develops, implements, and evaluates a comprehensive school improvement plan that communicates a clear purpose, direction, and action plan focused on teaching and learning. The school leader uses data to initiate and continue improvement in school and classroom practices and student achievement.

LET IT STILL FURTHER BE RESOLVED: That through this implementation of higher standards and a more challenging curriculum in state high schools, the graduation rates will improve.

***RESOLUTION TO STOP UNEMPLOYMENT AND CREATE JOBS IN MICHIGAN.
Submitted by Laura.***

WHEREAS: Government and corporate economists continue to insist that our economy is turning around and the good times are about to return, millions of Americans remain unemployed and unable to find jobs.

WHEREAS: Michigan 's seasonally adjusted jobless rate in September was 7.5 percent, highest in the nation.

WHEREAS: The number of jobs in the state fell by 28,000, while unemployment rose by 12,000 on a seasonally adjusted basis, according to the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth.

WHEREAS: The state's unemployment rate continues to lead the national rate, which was 4.7 percent last month. It also was the highest in the country two months ago.

WHEREAS: According to percentages by economatic.com in the past year, percentages have only gone up since the beginning of the year. In January the unemployment was at 6.9% and is now, in September is at 7.5%, that's a raise of 0.4%.

WHEREAS: August's jobless rate was the highest monthly rate since September 1993, the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth, said. The rate stood at 7 percent in August 2006.

WHEREAS: Michigan has lost 11,000 manufacturing jobs since June. Total employment in Michigan has dropped by 57,000 jobs from a year ago.

WHEREAS: Michigan's third quarter 2007 jobless rate increased by three-tenths of a percentage point to 7.4 percent from the 7.1 percent rate posted in the second quarter. This rise primarily reflected an 11,000 decline in manufacturing jobs since June.

WHEREAS: Although the state's labor force grew over the month, it remains below levels recorded earlier in the year. From January to September, Michigan 's labor force declined by 38,000 or 0.7 percent.

WHEREAS: The Unemployment Insurance Agency of the state of Michigan permanently shuttered its nine branch offices Monday, leaving more than 8,500 unemployment employees unemployed. It had served almost one-fifth of the state's employable population.

WHEREAS: Corporate profits are rising, companies are not hiring.

WHEREAS: Seasonally unadjusted unemployment rates rose slightly in 14 of Michigan 's 17 regional labor markets in September, said state officials.

WHEREAS: Total employment dropped in 12 regions from August to September. The biggest drop came in Northwest Lower Michigan as the summer tourism season began to wind down.

WHEREAS: Jobs dropped in the areas of construction, leisure and hospitality, and trade, transportation and utilities.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT: More even wealth distribution and support for the less well off provided the money is used wisely. Less taxes, fees and charges should apply for them. This would include small businesses, volunteers, and pensioners or unemployed people.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT: Today Michigan leaders are looking for ways to attract new industries to the state. Tourism has increased and some computer-related businesses are moving into the state.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT: Those unemployed can receive unemployment benefits. They can go to an unemployment agency (UA).

BE IT RESOLVED THAT: If we were to make Michigan more attractive to employers then we would have more jobs.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT: In the past automotive sales increasing in 1984 had reduced the state unemployment rate.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT: If businesses were given tax incentives then they might move to Michigan and create more jobs for the unemployed.

Resolution to Increase Aid to School Districts. Submitted by Evan Seidenberg and Ryan Klarberg.

WHEREAS: The state of Michigan spent \$6,700 per pupil in 2002-2003 [and now averages about \$7,200].

WHEREAS: The 50 states and the District of Columbia spent an average of \$8,044 per pupil in 2002-2003 [and now averages about \$8,200].

WHEREAS: The state of Michigan had an estimated 72.5% of public high school students graduate on time, meaning receive a diploma four years after beginning their freshmen year.

WHEREAS: The 50 states and the District of Columbia had an estimated 74.3% of public high school students graduate on time, meaning receive a diploma four years after beginning their freshmen year.

WHEREAS: The lagging auto industry has no longer made it acceptable to drop out of high school, children need a high school diploma in order to succeed.

WHEREAS: The “foundation allowance” introduced in Proposal A differed from district to district and failed to consider whether the level of funding provided a sound education.

WHEREAS: Almost 2/3rd of every new dollar provided is taken by health care and pension costs.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT: The amount of money Michigan spends per pupil will be on par with the national average

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT: This increased funding will result in a greater graduation rate, eventually becoming greater than the national average.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT: The amount of money spent per pupil will be more equally distributed between school districts

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT: One half of all dollars provided be given to health care and pension costs.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT: Michigan becomes more efficient with its resources combining school districts, optimizing administrative offices, and investing more money in teaching and learning.

Child Safety Law: Age Restriction on Front Seat for Children, by Molly Coleman and Ariel Halperin.

WHEREAS: Approximately 500 children, 4-8 years old die in a car accident every year in the United States

WHEREAS: 48 children are treated in hospital emergency rooms and at least two children are fatality injured every week due to sitting in the front seat of a vehicle

WHEREAS: According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, more than 100 children have been killed or injured by a deploying airbag

WHEREAS: The airbags deploy out of the dashboard at 200 miles per hour, causing severe head and neck injuries to the child

WHEREAS: The number of cars without airbags is greatly decreasing and therefore the risk to kids riding in the front seat is increasing

WHEREAS: Children who weigh less than 80 pounds are more susceptible to being thrown into the dashboard, resulting in serious injury

WHEREAS: According to The Department of Motor Vehicles, the back seat of a vehicle is safest for children

WHEREAS: Kids in the back seat are 38 percent less likely to be injured in a crash.

WHEREAS: According to General Motors, it is recommended that children under the age of 13 should be seated in the back of a vehicle

WHEREAS: All states and the District of Columbia have child safety laws with standard enforcement, allowing law enforcement officers to issue a citation when they see a violation of that law. However, many states have gaps in their child passenger restraint laws that leave the children of some ages or in certain seating positions uncovered by either a child safety seat law or a safety seat belt law.

WHEREAS: If all states closed all remaining gaps in their child occupant protection laws, and all children were properly restrained 100% of the time, as many as 630 additional children's lives would be saved and another 182,000 serious injuries prevented every year

WHEREAS: Currently, the state of Michigan has no age restriction for the passengers in the front seat. Michigan's safety law requires that infants from birth to age 3 be properly restrained in a car seat. The law in Michigan further states that children ages 4 to 16 must wear a seat belt no matter where in the vehicle they ride.

WHEREAS: The fine for violating the child safety law is only 25 dollars

BE IT RESOLVED: Michigan's Child Safety Resitriction Laws should be updated

BE IT RESOLVED: Children under 13 years of age, or under 80 pounds are not allowed to sit in the front seat of a vehicle

BE IT RESOLVED: When a child is over 80 pounds, the airbag will better protect the child from injury

BE IT RESOLVED: The penalty for violating this revised law should be increased to 100 dollars.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: An increase in the penalty will deter people from breaking the law as well as provide an additional revenue to the Michigan economy

RESOURCES:

<http://www.smartmotorist.com/chi/chi.htm>

<http://www.carseatsite.com/statistics.htm>

<http://www.securityworld.com/ia-53-kids-in-the-front-seat.aspx>

<http://www.chop.edu/consumer/jsp/division/generic.jsp?id=77979>

http://www.oksafekids.org/airbag_safety.htm

http://www.njsafety.org/html/air_bags.htm

http://www.babycenter.com/400_when-can-my-child-safely-ride-in-the-front-seat-of-a-car_506123_1000.bc

Resolution to outlaw Hydrochlorofluorocarbons in production in the State of Michigan. Submitted by Lee Nussbaum and Jesse Gross.

WHEREAS: The Ozone Layer protects people from harmful cancer causing ultraviolet rays emitted by the sun; and

WHEREAS: The Ozone Layer has depleted 5-6 percent since 1978; and

WHEREAS: This depletion has contributed to melting of the polar ice caps and glaciers around the globe; and

WHEREAS: One of the main pollutants contributing to this depletion is HCFC, once thought to be a suitable alternative to CFC, both of which are used as refrigerants; and

WHEREAS: HCFCs are a very poisonous greenhouse gas in terms of Ozone Depletion; and

WHEREAS: A single chlorine atom (one of the atoms comprising HCFC) can destroy up to 100,000 molecules of ozone; and

WHEREAS: The average lifetime of a single HCFC-22, a common HCFC coolant molecule, is between 250-300 years in the lower stratosphere, an atmospheric layer with a high Ozone molecule count; and

WHEREAS: The Montreal Protocol, an international treaty, has already called for cessation of production of HCFCs by 2020 in industrialized nations; and

WHEREAS: Any HCFCs released into the present atmosphere can have negative effects on future generations of Michigan residents; and

WHEREAS: The Montreal Protocol is overly lenient on this pressing environmental issue; and

WHEREAS: Hydrofluorocarbons (“HFCs”) are organic molecules with similar cooling capabilities as HCFCs; and

WHEREAS: HFCs do not contain any chlorine atoms and thus do not have any Ozone Depletion effects;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT: Starting immediately, all production companies currently using HCFC’s in their product begin phasing them out in favor of HFCs; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT: All production companies have until December 31, 2008 to completely switch to HFC’s; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT: Any company not complying by these new regulations will be fined 100% of profit on these sales, making it useless to continue to produce anything using HCFCs; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT: The proceeds of this fine will be given directly to the EPA; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT: Any out-of-state distributors wishing to conduct business in Michigan must comply by these regulations

RESOURCES:

"The Essentials of Meteorology" 4th edition; C. Ahrens. Copyright 2007.

*Ozone Depletion FAQ: "19 What about HCFC's and HFC's? Do they destroy ozone?"
Robert Parson, Colorado University*