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Sens. Cherry and Gleason, Democrats Oppose Extreme Budget Cuts, Call on Republicans to Stay and Work

Republicans head to Mackinac Island junket, pass budgets that drastically cut education funding and other important programs

LANSING, Mich.—Sen. Deb Cherry (D-Burton), Sen. John J. Gleason (D-Flushing) and Senate Democrats today opposed the passage of a 30-day all-cuts budget that jeopardizes vital programs that Michigan families rely on and called on Senate Republicans to stay and work on a permanent solution. With a government shutdown looming five days away and the House scheduled to work all weekend, Senate Republicans passed a brutal cuts-only budget before running off to Mackinac Island for a retreat with donors and shirking their responsibility to reach a final budget resolution.

“A balanced budget means nothing if it includes stripping Michigan’s children of a good education,” said Sen. Cherry. “We’ve had all summer to work on solutions to the state’s problems, including how we’re going to maintain funding for education, health care, and services such as police and fire, and I’m disappointed that the final product includes such deep cuts that leave an uncertain future for our children and their families.”

The budgets passed by Senate Republicans today implement their cuts to health care, education, college scholarships and local revenue sharing among others. Senate Democrats opposed these cuts because they go too far and hurt the state’s chances for economic recovery. Senate Republicans took most of the summer off instead of working on a comprehensive budget solution, and today’s action only continued their procrastination that leaves Michigan families in limbo.

“Calling these cuts today a continuation budget is like calling Liz Taylor a model of matrimony,” said Sen. Gleason. “This budget hurts state programs more than it helps, and these cuts to education funding are a betrayal to our students and a detriment to the future of Genesee County and the state of Michigan.”

Throughout the budget process, Senate Democrats have consistently fought to protect key priorities, including early childhood and public education programs, Promise scholarships that help our students afford a higher education, local revenue sharing that provides police officers and firefighters to watch over our loved ones, and essential health care programs. Another statewide poll was released this week that shows a majority of Michigan citizens support a budget compromise that includes some cuts

while also instituting some revenue to protect imperative programs.

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