

STATE SENATOR • JOHN J. GLEASON • 27<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT

# Gleason Press Release

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## **Michigan Legislature Passes Gleason Bills to Protect Kids, Aid Workers as Session Comes to Close**

LANSING –The Michigan Legislature recently voted to pass several major pieces of legislation sponsored by Senator John J. Gleason (D-Flushing) before the 2007-2008 session officially came to a close. Gleason’s bills to allow school districts to share criminal background checks on substitute bus drivers, enable individuals with a heating and cooling license to install, repair or remove a boiler, and add social studies to the academic requirements for the Michigan Promise scholarship were all passed by the legislature on December 19, 2008.

“I have been working on these issues for more than a year to better the lives of my constituents and Michigan residents statewide, and am glad that the House and Senate were able to work together to move them before the end of the year,” said Gleason. “The passage of these bills will ensure that our children are as safe as possible getting to and from school, and that they are getting a well-rounded education that thoroughly covers all subjects when they get there.”

Senate Bill 482 adds social studies to the academic requirements for the Michigan Promise scholarship, which provides up to \$4,000 to high school graduates for successfully completing two years of postsecondary education. Students must pass the Michigan Merit Exam to be eligible for this scholarship. SB 482 adds that a qualifying score be met on the social studies portion of that exam to ensure students are receiving a proper education on all sections.

Senate Bill 1252 allows school districts to share criminal background checks on substitute bus drivers. The law requires that school employees have background checks prior to employment, but substitute bus drivers often work in more than one school district. This legislation says that an employee can allow their background record to be shared among districts rather than having to do a background check for each district. This will continue to ensure the safety of our children while also simplifying the process for those who make their living as substitute bus drivers.

“The hardworking men and women in this state don’t need unnecessary barriers between them and doing their job. By allowing schools to share background checks for substitute bus drivers, it will maintain safety while also making sure there are bus

drivers available to work in multiple districts, which benefits the schools, the drivers and our local economy,” Gleason said. “And SB 651 will allow individuals with a proper heating and cooling license to work on boilers, protecting consumers while also creating more work for those in the industry.”

Senate Bill 651 allows for individuals with a heating and cooling license to install, repair or remove a residential boiler. Current law says a person needs both a mechanical contractor’s license and a boiler contractor’s license to perform installations in a residential building. By implementing this new license, contractors will only need a mechanical contractor’s license as long as they’re trained in hydronic heating and piping. The Michigan Department of Energy, Labor and Economic Growth supports this measure.

These bills are currently in Governor Granholm’s office awaiting her signature to enact them into law.

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