

STATE SENATOR • GRETCHEN WHITMER • 23RD DISTRICT

# Whitmer Press Release

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## **Senator Whitmer, College Students Rally at State Capitol to Protect Michigan Promise Scholarships**

*Whitmer argues that cutting scholarship program jeopardizes state's future*

LANSING, Mich. — Today Senator Gretchen Whitmer (D-East Lansing) was a featured speaker at the “Storm the Capitol, Save the Promise” rally and joined college students from around the state to call for the protection of the Michigan Promise scholarship program. The Michigan Promise scholarship provides up to \$4,000 to qualified students to pursue a college education.

“It’s disgraceful that my Senate Republican colleagues are overlooking the importance of these scholarships to both our students and our state’s economic future,” said Sen. Whitmer. “This is not the time to break promises and increase the financial burden on Michigan families. We need to prioritize higher education and keep our promise to help hardworking students access an affordable college education and help pave the way for a successful career.”

Currently, more than 96,000 Michigan students are relying on the Michigan Promise scholarship to attend college. The scholarship offers \$4,000 to high school and college students who meet academic and testing requirements to pursue a higher education. In their budget proposal for 2009-2010, Senate Republicans cut \$140 million in funding for the Michigan Promise Grants, completely eliminating the program that offers the scholarships.

Sen. Whitmer has been, and continues to be, a major advocate for the protection of the Michigan Promise scholarship. She and her Senate Democratic colleagues sought to pass an amendment to the Higher Education budget passed in June that would have restored funding for the program. Video of Sen. Whitmer speaking at today's "Save the Promise" rally can be seen here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vm8yGwsYtgA>. Sen. Whitmer also recently spoke on the Senate floor about the negative impact drastic budgets can have on Michigan’s kids, from protecting health services to important education resources, which can be seen here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-7keGEW9SYo&feature=channel>.

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