

STATE SENATOR • GRETCHEN WHITMER • 23RD DISTRICT

Whitmer Press Release

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Whitmer Donates Legislative Expense Account Money to East Lansing Schools

Introduces government reform bills to help fix broken system

LANSING— State Senator **Gretchen Whitmer** announced today that she will donate her full legislative expense stipend for this month to the East Lansing Education Foundation. Additionally, Whitmer formally introduced bills yesterday that call for the Legislature to share in the sacrifices of Michigan's citizens and reform the way government works.

“Slashing schools while protecting their own perks shows just how out-of-touch these lawmakers are,” said Sen. Whitmer. “My donation alone can't repair all the damage done by this Legislature, but I cannot in good conscience accept this expense allotment while they balance our state's budget on the backs of our children.”

The Senate Republican Majority's refusal to compromise on a budget agreement has lead to a \$165 per pupil cut to Michigan's public schools, an additional reduction for East Lansing and 39 other districts, and the potential of a \$127 pro-rata cut. Senator Whitmer has strongly opposed these measures and demanded that lawmakers make sacrifices of their own pay and benefits before making school children go without resources they need.

This week, Sen. Whitmer introduced legislation, Senate Bill 946, which would require public officials to provide documentation on how their expense allowances are spent. Senate Joint Resolution N would reduce the salaries of legislators who have an unexcused absence from session. Whitmer also plans to introduce legislation that would: Cut legislators' pay; pro-rate legislators' pay each time local schools are sent a letter pro-rating their funding; end taxpayer-funded lifetime health care benefits for legislators; and require candidates seeking public office to disclose their income and assets.

“I will continue to donate my expense account each month until we finally get some action on common-sense reforms in Lansing,” said Whitmer. “Hopefully my colleagues will do the same so we can start restoring some public confidence and begin fixing what's seriously broken in this town.”

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