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# EDUCATION & ARTS

## **Mandate Personal Finance Class for Seniors in High School** *by Zach Sherman, Suzanne Walter & Jeffrey Jacobs*

**WHEREAS** all high schools require certain classes to graduate, the Michigan State Board of Education has not recognized the importance of a personal finance class for seniors.

**WHEREAS** currently many high school seniors are uneducated about personal finance matters. Implementing a personal finance class will assist students who are planning on going to college and those that are planning on working directly out of high school. For students who are going to college this class can help them choose loans that are appropriate for their circumstances and learn how to budget their money. For students who plan on working after high school this personal finance class will give them insight on how to invest their money, manage a credit card, pay their taxes, choose what benefit packages and retirement funds are best for them and make sure their personal finances are in line.

**WHEREAS** According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and national studies over 50% of high school seniors work after school or on the weekends. These studies have shown that this is where these students begin picking up habits that ultimately affect how they decide to manage their money.

**WHEREAS** Up to 1997, Oregon required a personal finance for high school graduation. The class was ultimately removed in order to mandate other math and science credits, but this sets a precedent for similar requirements in the future. In Oregon, the class was only for a half-credit, which could work well in other states too because a lot could be learned about personal finances in a semester long class.

**WHEREAS** Currently, David Douglas High School in Portland mandates its students to take a class about personal finances and career explanation.

**WHEREAS** According to the U.S. Census Bureau, in 2003, 27% of people who are over 25 have a college degree, thereby implying that they had to finance their college education in some way.

**WHEREAS** This issue has been addressed outside of the classroom. The Jump\$tart Coalition for Personal Financial Literacy, founded in December, 1995, was formed in order to address this exact issue. The coalition is aware of the fact that the average high school graduate does not have the basic skills necessary to manage their personal finances. The coalition's objective is to encourage curriculum enrichment and to make sure that students get the proper personal financial management skills in their secondary education.

**WHEREAS** According to our expert Sam Sharff, in "Rich Dad, Poor Dad", there's talk that the middle-to-upper class families teach their children about handling their money, how to invest, and why it's wise to save. For the students who came from poorer families and made it to Michigan or any other top school, it's only fair to offer the course in their education.

**WHEREAS** Financial Advisor, Mark Hein emphasized the importance of knowing about homeowners insurance, life insurance, disability insurance and car insurance.

**WHEREAS** At least eight states have legislated that personal financial education be either a requirement for high school graduation, or a course that must be offered. These states include Idaho, Illinois, Georgia, Kansas, Kentucky, New York, Texas and Utah.

**WHEREAS** The National Endowment for Financial Education stated that a nationwide survey, conducted in 2004, measured 12th-graders' knowledge of personal finance basics such as credit, saving, insurance and retirement. More than half (65.5 percent) of students received a failing grade on their answers. This is well below high school students' average 57.3% score in JumpStart's 1997 poll, but up from a 50.2% low in 2002. (based on information from the Jump Start Coalition)

**WHEREAS** If pre-adults are taught the basics of money and savings, then it would be much easier to continue financial education in college. Moreover, this gained knowledge will be extremely applicable to any student that will enter into adulthood.

**WHEREAS** Financial literacy for children will cost less money when children are younger than waiting until they are freshman in college and being introduced, possibly, for the first time, with financial responsibilities. Not only are the financial responsibilities much greater in college/in adulthood, but the actual cost of post-high school education can be expensive.

**WHEREAS** Financial experts such as Erica Li agree that understanding such basics as cash, credit, and ethical money management are important in building a sense of financial responsibility in children.

**THEREFORE,**

**BE IT RESOLVED** That all high schools implement policies that mandate a personal finance class for high school seniors in order to graduate.

**BE IT RESOLVED** Incorporating student loans information into the class will allow students to be informed about the different options they have when deciding how to best finance their college education. Students will have to choose a loan, say why they decided to go with that option, and how they will ultimately save to pay it off.

**BE IT RESOLVED** Another essential part of the course deals with managing one's income. For example, each student will have their own checkbook and credit card, and they will be responsible for balancing their checkbook and keeping their personal finances in line. This part of the course will be beneficial to students because it will simulate real world circumstances. Therefore, when faced with similar responsibilities down the line, students will be prepared. This section of the course will be helpful regardless of what students do after high school.

**BE IT RESOLVED** The course offers valuable insight and information about the variety of investment options that occur today. One cannot predict what the economy will be like in fifty years, so it is essential to have a diverse array of investments. This course will provide information about stocks, mutual funds, options and other investment opportunities that exist.

**BE IT RESOLVED** In addition to an income, many employers today provide a variety of benefit packages to their employees. Often, there are a wide array of packages to choose from, and it may not be easy to determine what is the best for one's circumstances. Therefore, being introduced to the different types of offers, students will become familiar with the language and have a better idea of what is best for them.

**BE IT RESOLVED** It is never too early to start saving for one's retirement. Keeping this in mind, the course will address how to save for retirement. Similar to benefits, employers offer their employees several different options, and it can be overwhelming if one is not educated about the differences between them. This will give the students an advantage and security in planning for their future.

**BE IT RESOLVED** A section of this course be devoted to managing one's taxes. When you start earning a steady flow of income, you can no longer rely on your parents to take care of your taxes. It is important to learn about W-4s, W-2s, 1099s, and other important tax forms.

**BE IT RESOLVED** A small section of the course should focus on insurance. No one knows what will happen in the future, therefore making sure to prepare oneself for the worst possible scenario is important. The most common kinds of insurance (life, homeowners, disability and car) should be explained thoroughly to students and an assignment involving them should be implemented.

**BE IT RESOLVED** A portion of the course should speak to the importance of ethical behavior in regards to money. The recent corporate scandals would be good models to use to explain to children how unethical behavior can cause harmful effects on society as well as yourself. Ethics is involved in almost every monetary transaction and should be discussed on a basic level.

**BE IT RESOLVED** The course should discuss the idea of money; where it comes from (printing presses), what "backs" the American dollar, why we use money, as well as a discussion of why we cannot simply print more money if we need extra cash.

## **CONSULTATIONS**

**CONSULTATION:** <http://www.jumpstartcoalition.org/>

**CONSULTATION:** <http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/education/001863.html>

**CONSULTATION:**  
[http://www.oregonlive.com/news/index.ssf/2008/10/personal\\_finance\\_urged\\_for\\_ore.html](http://www.oregonlive.com/news/index.ssf/2008/10/personal_finance_urged_for_ore.html)

**CONSULTATION:** Mark W. Hein, Personal Financial Advisor - Smith Barney

**CONSULTATION:** Sam Sharff, Analyst - Diamond Consultants

**CONSULTATION:** Erica (Xuenan) Li, Assistant Professor of Finance, Ross School of Business

**CONSULTATION:** Keith Schenker, Principal, Glen Cove High School

**CONSULTATION:**

<http://www.nefe.org/NEFENews/PressRoom/PressRelease/PERSONALFINANCECOURSESINHIGHSCHOOLSONTHE/tabid/220/Default.aspx>

***DISCUSSION***

- *Should the class be mandatory or offered as an elective?*
- *At what point during a student's four years in high school should this class be offered?*
- *Should more advanced finance classes be available for those that are interested?*
- *Who would teach this class? How rigorous would the requirements be for the teacher?*
- *Where does the budget necessary to support an additional class come from? What gets cut?*
- *Is there a way to integrate personal finance into the math classes already offered?*

## **Mandatory Community Service** *by Samuel Kyle Shenfeld & Jaclyn Einstein*

**WHEREAS** Community service can serve as a type of social learning not offered in a classroom environment.

**WHEREAS** If community service is required for graduation both on the high school and college level, the entire community will prosper.

**WHEREAS** Doing community service enriches the lives of both the volunteers, and the service recipients

**WHEREAS** Some states like Washington have a 60 hr community service requirement in order to receive a high school diploma while Michigan public school districts do not usually exhibit this type of requirement.

**WHEREAS** The Clonlara School and its Home Based Education Program in Ann Arbor, MI require 180 hours of community service. Studies have shown that students who complete service to others are more successful academically. In fact, those who are required to do the service are slightly more successful than those who do it altruistically.

**WHEREAS** the community for youth study program has shown, there is a clear and direct correlation between doing community service and the psychological engagement that stems from such service activities.

**WHEREAS** as Carolyn R. Haack puts it, since 1987 the University of Michigan has displayed an arrogant dismissal of the "common man/woman" by having extremely minimal community service programs.

**THEREFORE,**

**BE IT RESOLVED** that a community service requirement is issued in Michigan for the high school level

**BE IT RESOLVED** that there be a minimum requirement of 40 community service hours for high school students

**BE IT RESOLVED** that students who spend a LOT of time in their community making a difference should also be encouraged to apply for national scholarships that not only help to finance college, but also grant their service work national media attention.

**BE IT RESOLVED** with these national scholarships, this mandatory community service program gets national attention and possible spreads to a nation-wide requirement.

### **CONSULTATIONS**

**CONSULTATION:** [http://www.mlive.com/opinion/ann-arbor/index.ssf/2009/01/letter\\_community\\_service\\_hardl.html](http://www.mlive.com/opinion/ann-arbor/index.ssf/2009/01/letter_community_service_hardl.html)

**CONSULTATION:** [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Community\\_service](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Community_service)

**CONSULTATION:** [http://www.sciencedirect.com/science?\\_ob=ArticleURL&\\_udi=B6WH0-4GYNY7C-2&\\_user=10&\\_rdoc=1&\\_fmt=&\\_orig=search&\\_sort=d&view=c&\\_acct=C000050221&\\_version=1&\\_urlVersion=0&\\_userid=10&md5=0386270140ae62643eb27cbe1f45d94c](http://www.sciencedirect.com/science?_ob=ArticleURL&_udi=B6WH0-4GYNY7C-2&_user=10&_rdoc=1&_fmt=&_orig=search&_sort=d&view=c&_acct=C000050221&_version=1&_urlVersion=0&_userid=10&md5=0386270140ae62643eb27cbe1f45d94c)

**CONSULTATION:** Art Mandel, director of Roslyn High School guidance office

**CONSULTATION:** Martin J. Davidson, director of community service at the Roslyn JCC

### **DISCUSSION**

- *Should students be rewarded for going “above and beyond” the required hours? How?*
- *What is the incentive for students? Should they receive school credits for their service?*
- *Should this be a barrier to graduation? Especially in Michigan where graduation rates are already an issue?*
- *What number of hours should be required and over what period of time? Could this be adjusted from school to school?*
- *How will students log their hours? Who is responsible for keeping track?*
- *Should community service hours be mandatory? Would it take away from the value?*
- *What activities do and do not count as community service?*
- *Are there students who will not be able to fulfill the requirement, such as students that spend a large amount of time on sports or clubs or students with more rigorous class schedules?*
- *How do you deal with students transferring from one school to another? Do the hours “roll-over?”*

## **Increase Health Requirements in Michigan High Schools** *by Lauren Shick*

**WHEREAS** Research shows effective health education helps students stay in school and better achieve in their classes. One of the ultimate goals of teaching health education is for students to acquire health knowledge and skills that can be transferred to personal health behavior.

**WHEREAS** According to the Michigan Merit Curriculum (MMC) High School Graduation Requirements, a student must complete one credit of physical education and health, as opposed to the four credits of mathematics, four credits of English language, three credits of science and three credits of social studies.

**WHEREAS** According to the Michigan Merit Curriculum Credit Guidelines for Health Education, while schools have flexibility in how they meet the requirement, many districts will find that “the simplest solution is to offer a semester of health and a semester of physical education.”

**WHEREAS** The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has identified the risk behavior areas that have the greatest effect on the short-term and long-term health of young people. The Credit Guidelines for Health Education lists the seven main content areas schools are recommended to address: Nutrition and Physical Activity; Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs; Safety; Social and Emotional Health; Personal Health and Wellness; HIV Prevention; Sexuality Education.

**WHEREAS** Additionally, our nation is currently dealing with an obesity crisis. If teachers were allowed to teach more in-depth in health classes, this could be seen as a preventative measure against an even greater increase in obesity rates.

**WHEREAS** Currently, the Health requirement can be met through a number of alternative means: through an online course, in middle school classes and by testing out. However, there are many skill-based requirements that could not effectively be taught through an online experience and leaving students without such education during high school could place them at greater risk for alcohol, tobacco, and drug use; sexual activity leading to STD's and both personal injury and long term health problems related to lack of nutrition and physical activity.

**WHEREAS** The minimal health requirements in Michigan high schools and leniency in completing these requirements are not effective in providing students with the proper health education. One semester is simply not enough time to adequately cover the seven main content areas identified and outlined in the Credit Guidelines for Health Education as listed above. One semester is not enough time to impart the necessary skills and knowledge for long-term personal health behavior.

### **THEREFORE,**

**BE IT RESOLVED** The Michigan Merit Curriculum (MMC) High School Graduation Requirements be amended so that the health requirement is increased. Although it would be unrealistic to require the same number of credit hours as core curriculum classes, at least one full credit hour of health, separate from any physical education requirement, would now be required in order to graduate.

**BE IT RESOLVED** With more than just one semester devoted to health class, the recommended topics can be covered more thoroughly by teachers. Teachers will also be able to use their discretion as to which issues to emphasize. For example, more attention can be given to nutrition and exercise, given the current problem of obesity in America. Teachers may also choose to spend more time on topics that they feel are most important in adolescent development, such as sexuality education or drug and alcohol safety.

**BE IT RESOLVED** The MMC also be amended so that the only way for students to complete the health requirement is by taking the required credits in a classroom setting. Other means of fulfilling the requirement do not effectively convey the importance of content areas covered in class.

**BE IT RESOLVED** Requiring students to take at least one credit of health class during high school will not only emphasize the importance of health education that is so often overlooked, but will be more effective in fostering long-term personal health behavior.

## **CONSULTATIONS**

**CONSULTATION:** Michigan Department of Education. Copyright 2001 - 2008.  
<http://www.michigan.gov/mde/>.

**CONSULTATION:** Michigan Merit Curriculum Merit Guidelines: Health Education. 02/2007.  
[http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/Health\\_MMC\\_178846\\_7.pdf](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/Health_MMC_178846_7.pdf)

**CONSULTATION:** Ms. Anne Bezeau, Physical Education and Health Teacher, Ann Arbor Public Schools.

**CONSULTATION:** Mr. Steve Price, Health and Physical Education Department Head, West Bloomfield School District.

**CONSULTATION:** Mr. Edward Hoover, Health and Physical Education Teacher, Commack Public School District.

## **DISCUSSION**

- *How often should students be required to take health classes? Is every year of high school too much? If so, what is enough?*
- *Will teachers' hours need to be increased? How would it affect their contracts?*
- *What topics are the most important for students to learn about? Where does physical education fit in?*
- *What constitutes a "health credit?"*
- *If you increase health requirements, what gets cut?*

# HEALTH

## **Michigan Smoking Ban** *by Gaal Surugeon & Aviva Berlin*

**WHEREAS** 1,800 Michigan residents die annually from second-hand smoke exposure

**WHEREAS** Second-hand smoke inhalation causes heart disease, lung cancer, nasal sinus cancer, sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), asthma, and other respiratory illnesses. It has also been linked to strokes, low birth weight, spontaneous abortion, cystic fibrosis, and cervical cancer.

**WHEREAS** Three dozen states have some form of smoking ban

**WHEREAS** California was the first state to pass a smoke-free restaurant law in 1998

**WHEREAS** Since then, Michigan is one of the 7 states that has not banned smoking from public venues

**WHEREAS** The 2006 Surgeon General Report states "there is no safe level of exposure to second-hand smoke, and that establishing smoke-free environments is the only proven way to prevent exposure"

**WHEREAS** Smoke-free environment encourage smokers to stop or reduce smoking, which also reduces heart attack risk.

**WHEREAS** Researchers in California have found that the number of heart attack victims admitted to a regional hospital dropped by nearly 60 percent during the first six months that a smoke-free ordinance was in effect in the area.

**WHEREAS** Casinos should be able to opt out of this requirement to ensure their viability. The Detroit casinos together generated about \$1 billion in revenue in 2001, up from \$744 million in 2000. The state's share of Detroit casino revenue derives from the annual services fee (\$25 million in 1999 and adjusted for inflation thereafter) paid by the three casinos and the state wagering tax (8.1 percent of net win). The latter is paid daily by each casino, through electronic transfer, and deposited into the School Aid Fund; this amounted to \$60 million in 2000 and nearly \$82 million in 2001.

**WHEREAS** Florida restaurant sales were up 7% one year after the state made all restaurants 100% smoke-free.

**WHEREAS** In New York the number of bars in the state increased by 3.5% one year after the law took effect.

**WHEREAS** California sales tax data show a 30.8% increase in annual sales for establishments serving alcohol after the smoking ban was passed.

**THEREFORE,**

**BE IT RESOLVED** Michigan pass a smoking ban in all indoor public venues, including restaurants, bars, workplace, and other arenas.

**BE IT RESOLVED** Establishments that fail to enforce the smoking ban shall be fined by the state of Michigan for a predetermined fee

**BE IT RESOLVED** Casinos have the ability to opt out of the smoking ban to ensure the viability of these state landmarks

**BE IT RESOLVED** Those who smoke will be required to do so outdoors at least 10 feet from the establishment.

**BE IT RESOLVED** Cigar bars, private functions organized for the promotion and sampling of tobacco products, and retail tobacco shops will also have the opportunity to opt of this law.

**BE IT RESOLVED** Local governments may enact separate local anti-smoking measures, though they may not allow smoking where the state law prohibits it.

## **CONSULTATIONS**

**CONSULTATION:** [www.michigan.gov](http://www.michigan.gov)

**CONSULTATION:** <http://www.ocat.org/healtheffects/index.html>

**CONSULTATION:** <http://www.no-smoke.org/getthefacts.php?id=13>

**CONSULTATION:** <http://www.michiganinbrief.org/edition07/Chapter5/CasinosGamb.htm>

**CONSULTATION:** Dr. Sharon Minott, Huron Valley-Sinai Hospital, Detroit Medical Center

**CONSULTATION:** Research Faculty, Department of Epidemiology, University of Michigan School of Public Health

**CONSULTATION:** Bruce Kaplan, MD, Internal Medicine

## **DISCUSSION**

- *Does personal choice not matter? Should we allow people to have this personal choice, leaving it up to the market to decide?*
- *Should any exemptions be included? Does giving exemptions to places like casinos mean that the threat of losing money “trumps” the threat to patrons’ health?*
- *On the other hand, should more exemptions be given to places like bars and restaurants? How will this effect Michigan’s economy?*
- *Is the proposal based on accurate research? Have the authors looked at all the research necessary to propose this type of ban?*
- *What happens to a business or individual that fails to comply with the smoking ban?*

## **Healthier Food Options in Campus Cafeterias** *by Jared Blechman & Jeff Brunswick*

**WHEREAS** According to the National Youth Risk and Behavior Survey, eating properly proves to be a challenge for college students.

**WHEREAS** According to the survey, 20 percent of college students are overweight and 75 percent of students do not eat the requested amount of five fruit and vegetable servings each day.

**WHEREAS** According to the Tufts Longitudinal Health Study (TLHS) which surveyed 1,800 students, college men gained an average of 5.5 pounds their freshman year, and college women gained an average 4.5 pounds.

**WHEREAS** According to the TLHS, 66% of freshmen don't consume the recommended five servings of fruits and vegetables a day.

**WHEREAS** According to the TLHS 50% of all students don't get enough fiber (25 grams a day).

**WHEREAS** According to the TLHS 60% eat too much artery-clogging saturated fat.

**WHEREAS** According to the TLHS 30% of women don't get enough calcium.

**WHEREAS** According to the TLHS, 59% of students say they know their diet has gone downhill since they went to college.

**WHEREAS** According to American Sports Data (ASD), Between 1962 and the year 2000, the number of obese Americans grew from 13% to an alarming 31% of the population.

**WHEREAS** According to ASD, 63% of Americans are overweight with a Body Mass Index (BMI) in excess of 25.0.

**WHEREAS** According to ASD, 31% of Americans are obese with a BMI in excess of 30.0.

**WHEREAS** According to ASD, childhood obesity in the United States has more than tripled in the past two decades.

**WHEREAS** According to the U.S. Surgeon General report obesity is responsible for 300,000 deaths every year.

**WHEREAS** According to ASD, obesity is proliferating in the United States: 3.8 million people are over 300 pounds, over 400,000 people (mostly males) carry over 400 pounds and the average adult female weighs an unprecedented 163 pounds!.

**WHEREAS** In one study, researchers used follow-up data from three National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) cohorts (1971–1975, 1976–1980, and 1988–1994) and the body-mass index distribution in the NHANES 1999–2002 cohort to estimate the number of deaths in 2000 associated with being underweight (BMI, <18.5), overweight (BMI, 25–29.9), or obese (BMI, Your browser may not support display of this image.30). Compared with normal weight (BMI, 18.5–24.9),

obesity accounted for an estimated 112,000 excess deaths (most among people younger than 70), being underweight accounted for 34,000 excess deaths, and (curiously) being overweight accounted for 86,000 fewer deaths.

**WHEREAS** According to CalorieLab, the state of Michigan ranks number 10 as the most obese state.

**THEREFORE,**

**BE IT RESOLVED** Michigan dormitory cafeterias will have a limit on the amount of fattening foods they can serve, such as pizza, burgers, french fries, onion rings, etc. This limit will be a 2 to 1 ratio of healthy items to fattening items. The fattening food that is offered, will be cooked in the healthiest manner possible. For example, french fries can be cooked in an oven rather than fryer.

**BE IT RESOLVED** Vending machines will not only carry candy or soda. Water, milk, fruit juices will be added in the drink vending machines and kashi bars, nutrigrain bars, unsalted nuts, granola mix and other snacks of this variety will be added to the candy vending machines that carry items such as snickers, milky ways, and other fattening snacks. These vending machines will also impose the same 2 to 1 ratio of healthy items to fattening items that the dining halls with have.

**BE IT RESOLVED** Food products used in campus dining facilities will be organic and locally produced whenever possible. Ann Arbor and Detroit Farmers Market as well as Whole Foods will be the universities main suppliers. Foods will be grilled and sauteed in unsaturated cooking ingredients with no transfat.

**BE IT RESOLVED** In other campus dining facilities such as Student Unions, there will be a limit to having just one fast food restaurant. Healthier restaurants such as Chop't and Energy Kitchen will be instituted within these dining facilities. To encourage these restaurants to open on campus, they will given tax breaks.

**CONSULTATIONS**

**CONSULTATION:** <http://www.americansportsdata.com/obesitystats.asp>

**CONSULTATION:** <http://cardiology.jwatch.org/cgi/content/full/2005/520/1>

**CONSULTATION:** <http://calorielab.com/news/2008/07/02/fattest-states-2008/>

**CONSULTATION:**

<http://media.www.thejusticeonline.com/media/storage/paper573/news/2002/09/24/Features/Unhealthy.Eating.Prevalis.In.College-280290.shtml>

**CONSULTATION:** <http://www.usatoday.com/news/health/diet/2002-01-10-college-eating.htm>

**DISCUSSION**

- *If campus dining offers healthier options, won't students just eat elsewhere?*

- *Is this attempting to mandate personal choice or behavior?*
- *Should healthier food be the only food available, or should it just be present as an option? Should unhealthy food be removed from cafeterias and vending machines, or just balanced with healthier offerings?*
- *Is the idea of giving tax breaks to healthier restaurants that come to campus realistic? Is this money available?*
- *Can schools afford to make these necessary changes, such as buying organic foods? Again, is this money available?*

# POVERTY

## **Bringing New Business to Michigan** *by Brendan Lloyd Weitz & Jared A. Seigel*

**WHEREAS** One of the main factors of Michigan's economic breakdown was due to the state's dependency on the auto industry which has recently plummeted.

**WHEREAS** Almost half of Michigan's residents (47 percent) said that their household's economic well-being depended on the overall health of the Michigan's auto industry, even if they did not have someone in their household working directly in the auto industry or for a company that depends on the auto industry.

**WHEREAS** Michigan must reposition its strategies to attract new, innovative businesses and jobs to Michigan from around the world.

**WHEREAS** The highly competitive tech industry is the place where Michigan should look to capitalize and attract both small/big businesses as well as entrepreneurs to bring their businesses to Michigan.

**WHEREAS** The climate of Michigan makes it great place to build data centers and compete for a piece of the increasing Internet-based managed hosting business.

**WHEREAS** While computers are continually getting smaller and faster, they are doubling in heat generation approximately every 18 months. As this problem compounds over time, smaller but hotter devices mean more data center capacity must remain unused.

**WHEREAS** Recent reports forecast a shortage in data center capacity in the coming years, which bodes a perfect opportunity for Michigan to capitalize.

**WHEREAS** More than one-third of Michigan households (31%) include one or more people who are directly or indirectly involved in the auto industry.

**WHEREAS** Approximately 11% of Michigan citizens are employed by the auto industry.

**THEREFORE,**

**BE IT RESOLVED** Michigan's state legislature acts as a catalyst promoting a campaign marketing its competitive advantage in this industry as opposed to other parts of the country and the world

**BE IT RESOLVED** Michigan's competitive advantages over other parts of the country begin with the existing building capacity, a willing workforce with technical experience and access to first-class education, and economics - like low-cost land and power.

**BE IT RESOLVED** This campaign should promote the benefits of moving your business and investing in Michigan highlighting the positive aspects of the state such as an experienced workforce that is ready, willing, able, and passionate about working for a new business.

**BE IT RESOLVED** These benefits should include Michigan's stellar in-state universities, strong infrastructure, diverse population, vacation spots, population base, high standard of living, entertainment (casinos, sporting teams)

**BE IT RESOLVED** Becoming a competitor in this cutting-edge industry would provide long-term economic growth as well as incentives for recent graduates from the many top universities to stay living and working in Michigan.

**BE IT RESOLVED** To create even more incentives for these businesses to move to Michigan or start-up in Michigan could come in the form of financial incentives or tax exemptions depending on the size and outlook of each particular business.

## **CONSULTATIONS**

**CONSULTATION:** Michigan Economy Statistics <http://www.bls.gov/eag/eag.mi.htm>

**CONSULTATION:** "Data Centers in Michigan"  
[www.mlive.com/businessreview/oakland/index.ssf/2009/02/michigan\\_benefits\\_from\\_data\\_ce.html](http://www.mlive.com/businessreview/oakland/index.ssf/2009/02/michigan_benefits_from_data_ce.html)

**CONSULTATION:** Online Tech CEO Yan Ness [http://www.mlive.com/business/ann-arbor/index.ssf/2009/02/in\\_our\\_opinion\\_michigan\\_must\\_r.html](http://www.mlive.com/business/ann-arbor/index.ssf/2009/02/in_our_opinion_michigan_must_r.html)

**CONSULTATION:** "Michigan Benefits from Data Centers"  
[http://www.mlive.com/businessreview/annarbor/index.ssf/2009/02/michigan\\_benefits\\_from\\_data\\_ce.html](http://www.mlive.com/businessreview/annarbor/index.ssf/2009/02/michigan_benefits_from_data_ce.html)

**CONSULTATION:** "Data Centers are Bright Spot in Troubled Economy"  
<http://www.channelinsider.com/c/a/Networking/Data-Centers-are-Bright-Spot-in-Troubled-Economy-351383/>

**CONSULTATION:** Yan Ness, CEO of Online Tech

## **DISCUSSION**

- *Michigan already offers tax incentives (to the film industry, for example), how is this proposal different and necessary?*
- *What other industries is this proposal attempting to bring to Michigan?*
- *Has this proposal be researched to the extent necessary to be brought in front of law makers? How can it better balance opinion based and research based information?*
- *Do more tax incentives mean less revenue for the state?*
- *What types of tax benefits or subsidies are being suggested?*

## **Preventing Homeless Youth** *by Kristyn Arlington*

**WHEREAS** According to the National Coalition for the Homeless in 2000, 1.35 million U.S. children are homeless on any given night.

**WHEREAS** In 2003, children under the age of 18 accounted for 39% of the homeless population.

**WHEREAS** 42% of homeless children are under the age of five.

**WHEREAS** 63% of runaway and homeless youth are never reported or sought after by guardians.

**WHEREAS** In 2001, the number of homeless youth is at least 7,000 in Michigan; 3,000 of them in Detroit. That number is an estimated 1,000 more than last year, according to the Detroit-Wayne County Homeless Action Network, a coalition of homeless service providers across Detroit.

**WHEREAS** In 2004, Congressman Dave Camp announced there had been no homeless shelters or transitional living programs in the central Michigan area for homeless youth ages 16 through age 21.

### **THEREFORE,**

**BE IT RESOLVED** The citizens of Michigan need to be aware of the growing number of homeless youth throughout our state either through television, radio, newspaper or organizations.

**BE IT RESOLVED** There is a new Transitional Living Program (TLP) that will offer youth ages 16-21 a chance to have shelter, food, support, education and learn independent living. This is only in two counties near central Michigan so far. If at least one of these were in each county, every young homeless person could find shelter and start having a livable life.

**BE IT RESOLVED** The state of Michigan can have the National Coalition for the Homeless set up designated fundraisers that could help pay for these homeless shelters and the programs that accompany them. These would take place about every month or couple months so their could be constant, whether it be small or big, revenue coming in.

**BE IT RESOLVED** By making the people of Michigan aware and gathering volunteers for shelters, the homeless youth of Michigan can be saved.

### **CONSULTATIONS**

**CONSULTATION:** <http://www.misd.net/Homeless/statistics.htm>

**CONSULTATION:** <http://www.michigancitizen.com/default.asp?sdetail=6776>

**CONSULTATION:** <http://www.covenanthousemi.org/news/article.php?aid=49>

**CONSULTATION:** <http://camp.house.gov/press/pressrelease.aspx?NewsID=1585>

## **DISCUSSION**

- *Where is the funding necessary to enact this proposal coming from? Could community organizations like churches be encouraged to provide funding and run operations rather than the government?*
- *Are all communities in need of this program, for example, Ann Arbor? Would this proposal require a shelter in every community, or just those in need?*
- *How will the individuals that need this kind of help be made aware of the facilities and support services?*
- *What standards will be set for which homeless youth can and cannot stay in the shelters, if any?*
- *How can Michigan citizens be made more aware of the high incidence of homeless youth?*

# ENVIRONMENT & SCIENCE

## **10 Cent Bottle Deposit Return on All Plastic Bottles or Containers** *by Rachel Melching*

**WHEREAS** Only about 12 percent of "custom" plastic bottles were recycled in 2003, according to industry consultant R.W. Beck, Inc;

**WHEREAS** Millions of dollars are spent annually to clean up plastic bottles that litter our highways, parks and open spaces;

**WHEREAS** 30 million single-serve non-returnable containers end up in landfills or as litter every day;

**WHEREAS** 18 million barrels of crude oil was consumed in 2005 to replace the 2 million tons of plastic bottles that were wasted instead of recycled, which in turn manufacturing that much plastic releases more than 800,000 metric tons of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere, contributing to global climate change.

**WHEREAS** Since New York adopted the bottle bill in 1982, 90.6 billion beverage containers have been recycled. Roadside container litter has been reduced over 70%;

**WHEREAS** It takes an estimated 1000 years for one plastic water bottle to decompose;

**THEREFORE,**

**BE IT RESOLVED** A 10-cent deposit will be applied to all water bottles or juice containers under one gallon;

**BE IT RESOLVED** The reclamation system will set up using reverse vending machines in retail locations or depots;

### **CONSULTATIONS**

**CONSULTATION:** <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/5279230/>

**CONSULTATION:** [http://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/materials\\_minerals\\_pdf/waterbottles.pdf](http://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/materials_minerals_pdf/waterbottles.pdf)

**CONSULTATION:** <http://www.aboutmyplanet.com/theories/water-bottled-tap-better/>

### **DISCUSSION**

- *Retailers are already arguing that they don't have the resources to handle the large amount of bottle returns, would this proposal also require the formation of recycling centers?*
- *Should only water bottles be included in this proposal? Why not all plastic bottles or containers?*
- *What sizes of bottle or containers would this apply to?*
- *What should the return be? Is 10 cents too much or too little?*
- *What would be done with the money earned from bottle deposits?*
- *Does this proposal require state funding? If so, is the money available?*
- *Where would the recycling machines be located? Will people really be willing to make the trip?*

## **Plastic Bag Recycling/Tax Incentives** by Allison Tiedrich & Samantha Bernstein

**WHEREAS** The Environmental Protection Agency estimates that 5.2 percent of plastic bags are recycled in the United States, and most environmental groups put the figure much lower.

**WHEREAS** Plastic bags litter the landscape, get into water and soil, and stop up storm drains.

**WHEREAS** Plastic bags are made from polyethylene, which is a by-product of petroleum. When discarded in the environment, plastic bags could take centuries to decompose.

**WHEREAS** With a 20% recycling rate, Michigan is behind the average of 26% for Great Lake States

**WHEREAS** Recyclable materials processing has a significant impact on Michigan's economy. Recycling is nearly \$2 billion industry in Michigan, with a 20 percent recycling rate.

**WHEREAS** In 2002, Ireland imposed a 33-cent tax on plastic shopping bags. The New York Times reported that plastic bag use there dropped 94 percent within weeks.

**WHEREAS** In 1989, Italy imposed a plastic bag tax (approx. 6 cents/bag), making the use of alternative bags less costly. From 1989 to 1992, the government took in over 250 billion lira (around \$150 million) through this tax.

**WHEREAS** According to Lisa Roderiguez, service coordinator at a Meijer in East Lansing, approximately 300,000 plastic bags are used each week, totaling 15.6 million bags at one Meijer store each year if those figures are typical. Nearly 47 million plastic bags are given away annually at the three Meijer stores located in Lansing on Saginaw Highway, Pennsylvania Avenue and Lake Lansing Road. Kroger Co. shipped close to 550 million plastic bags to Michigan and Ohio regional stores last year, Gordon said.

**WHEREAS** WalMart's attempt to reduce plastic bag waste has produced changes. WalMart estimates since October 2007, it has sold enough reusable bags in the U.S. to eliminate the need for one billion plastic bags. Wal-Mart Canada has reduced plastic bag waste by 15 percent in the last year by offering affordable reusable bags and improved recycling.

### **THEREFORE,**

**BE IT RESOLVED** We propose that Michigan implement a tax on each plastic bag used.

**BE IT RESOLVED** Stores would be taxed ~3 cents/ bag, which would be carried over to the consumer during checkout. The

**BE IT RESOLVED** In addition, supermarkets will offer a credit equal to ~1/3 the cost of the tax on plastic bags. Bins will be set up at each supermarket.

**BE IT RESOLVED** No shopper would be exempt from the mandated plastic bag tax. If a customer chooses to bring in their own plastic bags to use during their visit, they would not be charged. We hope that this will encourage shoppers to re-use plastic bags, and/or purchase more durable, reusable bags.

**BE IT RESOLVED** The money collected from the tax could be distributed to Environmental groups through Michigan's Environmental Advisory Council in the Department of Environmental Quality. Each year, a budget will be prepared that would allocate certain percentages of the money to certain programs or organizations.

## **CONSULTATIONS**

**CONSULTATION:** <http://www.michiganrecycles.org/pdf/MRMPeconomics.pdf>

**CONSULTATION:** <http://www.michiganinbrief.org/edition07/Chapter5/SolidWaste.htm>

**CONSULTATION:** <http://blogpublic.lib.msu.edu/index.php/2008/04/17/help-eliminate-plastic-bags?blog=33>

**CONSULTATION:** <http://midmichigandining.com/2008/09/25/press-release-wal-mart-attempts-to-reduce-plastic-bag-waste/>

**CONSULTATION:** Martha, Member of Customer Service team at Hiller's Supermarket (3/26/09)

## **DISCUSSION**

- *How much should the tax be?*
- *Is there research on this proposal being enacted anywhere else? If so, was it successful?*
- *How would the tax revenue that this proposal generates be used?*
- *Do retailers have flexibility or are they required to comply?*

## **Tax Breaks for Purchasing a Hybrid** *by Danielle Berns*

**WHEREAS** The electric car revolution is in full swing. Nearly every carmaker in the world—big and small—is preparing a vehicle that runs from the plug instead of the pump.

**WHEREAS** Hybrid cars help to reduce tailpipe emissions and to improve mileage.

**WHEREAS** Auto makers in the United States have another strong incentive to improve mileage. They are required by law to meet Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) standards. The current standards require that the average mileage of all the new cars sold by an auto maker should be 27.5 mpg (8.55 liters per 100 km). This means that if an auto maker sells one hybrid car that gets 60 mpg (3.92 liters per 100 km), it can then sell four big, expensive luxury cars that only get 20 mpg (11.76 liters per 100 km).

**WHEREAS** There are many rules and regulations people must follow and meet in order to receive tax breaks on a hybrid vehicle.

**WHEREAS** In order to receive a tax break, the vehicle must be placed in service after 12/31/05 and purchased on or before 12/31/10. The original use of the vehicle must begin with the taxpayer claiming the credit. The credit may only be claimed by the original owner of a new, qualifying, hybrid vehicle and does not apply to a used hybrid vehicle. The vehicle must be acquired for use or lease by the taxpayer claiming the credit. The credit is only available to the original purchaser of a qualifying hybrid vehicle. If a qualifying vehicle is leased to a consumer, the leasing company may claim the credit. For qualifying vehicles used by a tax-exempt entity, the person who sold the qualifying vehicle to the person or entity using the vehicle is eligible to claim the credit, but only if the seller clearly discloses in a document to the tax-exempt entity the amount of credit. The vehicle must be used predominantly within the United States.

**WHEREAS** More rules have recently been added. The new tax credit sets a limit of 60,000 hybrids per carmaker. Toyota hit the 60,000 mark in June 2006, and Honda reached the mark in late 2007. Buyers who purchased one of the five Toyota or Lexus gasoline-electric hybrid models before Oct. 1, 2006 will qualify for 100 percent of the credit. Buyers purchasing Toyota hybrids on or after Oct. 1 will receive a reduced credit, based on the exact date of purchase. Those who purchased after Oct. 1, 2007, will receive no tax credit. The phase-out of incentives for Honda hybrids began on January 1, 2008—and will be completely phased out on January 1, 2009. The credit amount is based on the purchase date of the vehicle. The new law for the hybrid tax credit might require taxpayers to recapture their hybrid tax credit if they re-sell their hybrid car or truck. The credit will not reduce your alternative minimum tax, if that applies to you. As stated in Toyota's statement about the new tax credits: "The benefit of the hybrid vehicle tax credit will also be substantially reduced or eliminated if the individual purchaser is subject to the federal alternative minimum tax." The credit will reduce your regular income tax liability, but not below zero.

**WHEREAS** If you are eligible for multiple tax credits, the hybrid tax credit is taken last after all the other credits (e.g., child care tax credit, mortgage credit, retirement savings credit) have been taken. Any tax liability left over by these reductions will be the maximum dollar limit of your hybrid tax credit. If your

hybrid tax credit exceeds your maximum dollar limit, the excess is not refundable, and is lost forever. The excess cannot be carried over to another year, or given away to another person.

**WHEREAS** Hybrids are useful for many reasons. Hybrids combine clean energy of the electrical motor with the power of the gas-powered engine which results into lower emissions and better mileage. Thanks to the ever improving technology, hybrids perform at par with the normal gas-powered vehicles, if not better. Hybrids are reliable and comfortable as any traditional car. There are purchase incentives for Hybrid vehicle owners (varies by state). Hybrids are much cleaner cars than normal vehicles with lesser CO and other greenhouse gas emissions. Hybrids provide a better mileage. The future for hybrids looks bright with rapid developments in hybrid technology to improve engine efficiency. Due to the Regenerative Braking technology, the batteries need not be charged by an external source. Special warranties are provided for the battery pack, the electric motor other costly items. Hybrids help reduce the dependency on fossil fuels which directly affects fuel prices.

**WHEREAS** Hybrid Vehicle emissions today are getting close to or even lower than the recommended level set by the EPA (Environmental Protection Agency). The recommended levels they suggest for a typical passenger vehicle should be equated to 5.5 metric tons of carbon dioxide. The three most popular hybrid vehicles, Honda Civic, Honda Insight and Toyota Prius, set the standards even higher by producing 4.1, 3.5, and 3.5 tons showing a major improvement in carbon dioxide emissions.

**WHEREAS** There is still an issue regarding the environmental damage of the Hybrid car battery. Today most Hybrid car batteries are one of two types: (1) nickel metal hydride, or (2) lithium ion; both are regarded as more environmentally friendly than lead-based batteries (which constitute the bulk of car batteries today). There are many types of batteries. Some are far more toxic than others. While batteries like lead acid or nickel cadmium are incredibly bad for the environment, the toxicity levels and environmental impact of nickel metal hydride batteries—the type currently used in hybrids—are much lower. Although nickel-based batteries are known carcinogens, and have been shown to cause a variety of teratogenic effects, there are substantially less toxic than conventional car batteries.

**WHEREAS** There are some cons to buying a hybrid car such as its higher cost as opposed to a non-hybrid vehicle, their complicated system which needs to be taken care of by experienced mechanics only, and spare parts maybe hard to find and may be costly. The batteries in hybrid vehicles have been designed to last the lifetime of the vehicle. Detractors have claimed that the batteries of hybrid cars will be both expensive to replace and will also be difficult to safely recycle. Manufacturers of hybrid vehicles have responded with reassurances about the expected lifespan of batteries. To ensure that batteries are effectively recycled, Toyota has even gone as far as putting a \$200 bounty on their batteries, which is paid when they are returned for recycling.

**WHEREAS** Vehicle manufacturers recognize the importance of recycling car parts. Hybrid vehicles have been designed to make recycling easier to achieve. Even the conventional car manufacturing process can benefit from recycling. The cost of manufacturing some car parts from virgin material can be significantly more than using recycled parts.

**WHEREAS** It is estimated that in the long run, its manufacturers will start losing money. So the rate is expected to increase over the years and may cause a pinch on the pocket of the buyer.

**WHEREAS** Production subsidies in certain cases are used to encourage the development of a particular industry, for example governments may provide direct production subsidies—cash payments for production of a given good or service. Frequently, production subsidies are easily identifiable, such as minimum price policies. Indirect production subsidies may be less easy to identify, such as infrastructure subsidies. However, by offering subsidies, we can help manufacturers produce hybrids with less costs and more efficiently, which could lead to a better price of the car for buyers. In fact, the State of Michigan has decided to subsidize hybrid auto production and research and development at the manufacturer's level based on recent actions by the Michigan Economic Development Corporation. The State of Michigan has shown its commitment to working towards the next generation of hybrid vehicles by giving \$55mm to Ford in February for use in advanced battery development for the production of four new types of vehicles such as Plug-In Hybrids, Battery Electric, and Hybrid Electric. These should be available by at least 2012.

**WHEREAS** In the 2009 fiscal year, Michigan is supposed to spend 7.2 Billion dollars in "other" expenses (about 1 billion at the state level and about 6.3 billion at the local level). "Other" expenses include, but are not limited to, pollution abatement, waste management, environmental protection, fuel and energy, basic research, and other industry spending. All these areas are affected by the environment, specifically the issues of the environment which Hybrid cars address.

**WHEREAS** Many states have recently created programs to give monetary incentives to buyers of hybrid vehicles, including sales tax reductions, income tax rebates, and immediate cash rebates. Many states have also created programs to give non-monetary incentives to users of hybrid vehicles, including the use of carpool-only lanes, free parking privileges, exemption from emission testing requirements, and specialized toll lanes. For example, the city of Ferndale, MI currently offers free metered parking to drivers of hybrid cars

**WHEREAS** The major ways to improve fuel economy is by: recovering energy and storing it in the battery, sometimes shutting off the engine, using advanced aerodynamics to reduce drag, using low-rolling resistance tires, using light weight materials, and having a smaller engine. All of the hybrid cars on the market utilize some or all of these efficiency tricks.

**WHEREAS** Exceptionally high fuel economy of HEVs (up to 150 percent better than comparable cars). HEVs present an easy way to help wean the United States off of politically fraught foreign oil — a concern underscored by the war in Iraq and the recent anniversary of the 1973 OPEC oil embargo. Because cars and trucks account for 40 percent of U.S. oil consumption, increasing vehicle fuel efficiency is one of the most effective ways to promote U.S. energy independence. According to David Friedman, Research Director for the Clean Vehicles Program at the Union of Concerned Scientists, and author of *A New Road: The Technology and Potential of Hybrid Vehicles*, "If every new car and truck in America used [second generation] Prius-like technology, we could more than double the fuel economy of our vehicles and save nearly three times more oil than we currently import from the Persian Gulf by 2020."

**WHEREAS** On average, hybrids emit 30 to 50 percent fewer greenhouse gas emissions than conventional cars. Therefore hybrids not only help to slow climate change, but also spew far fewer criteria air pollutants, reducing air pollution linked with asthma, cancer, and other serious health problems.

**WHEREAS** Hybrids offer a clear financial advantage due to the decrease in gas needed. Additionally, reduced maintenance and higher trade-in value may also bring down the overall cost.

**WHEREAS** The aforementioned tax breaks are for federal taxes. The state of Michigan offers no incentives for hybrid cars except in Ferndale, MI.

**THEREFORE,**

**BE IT RESOLVED** Hybrid cars are better for the environment and save money and should be the car of choice was purchasing a vehicle.

**BE IT RESOLVED** Hybrid cars should be promoted and have less rules and regulations regarding tax breaks. To be specific, breaks should be given regardless of how many cars are sold or when the car was purchased.

**BE IT RESOLVED** The government and the world is being aided when someone drives a hybrid instead of a regular car. Therefore a tax break should be given to all drivers of hybrid cars when they buy their car. There should not be as many rules regarding the tax break.

**BE IT RESOLVED** Hybrid cars should be advertised with a great zeal and enthusiasm in the market in order to make people realize the potential of environment friendly vehicles. Though there are many hybrid vehicles doing really well, more awareness is needed to increase the usage of hybrid vehicles and repair the damage done to the environment.

**BE IT RESOLVED** By offering tax incentives, more people would be enthused to buy a hybrid. Also, any of the cons of owning a hybrid would seem less important and more easy to deal with, especially if those cons include economic costs because people would have more money in their pockets.

**BE IT RESOLVED** If the government were to subsidize the manufacturing of hybrids, the production of the cars would more efficient and thus the cost of a hybrid could decrease, allowing more people to afford a hybrid. Therefore, the government should continue to support the production and purchase of such cars.

**BE IT RESOLVED** If more hybrids were driven, the environment would be better and the government could spend less money on such issues.

**BE IT RESOLVED** If the government cannot afford to give tax breaks, there should at least be other incentives offered to people who purchase hybrid. For example, exemption of paying meters, or being allowed to drive in a car-pool only lane could be options. These incentives should be statewide so such perks are offered to all and thus all are encouraged to buy hybrids.

## **CONSULTATIONS**

**CONSULTATION:** <http://www.allhybridcars.com/advantages-of-hybrid-cars.html>

**CONSULTATION:** <http://auto.howstuffworks.com/hybrid-car8.htm>

**CONSULTATION:** [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hybrid\\_vehicle#Environmental\\_issues](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hybrid_vehicle#Environmental_issues)

**CONSULTATION:** "Green Book: The Environmental Guide to Cars and Trucks" by: Jim Kliesch

**CONSULTATION:** <http://hybridreview.blogspot.com/2009/03/types-of-hybrid-cars.html>

**CONSULTATION:** [http://www.futurecars.com/futurecars/hybrid\\_cars2.html](http://www.futurecars.com/futurecars/hybrid_cars2.html)

**CONSULTATION:**

[http://www.associatedcontent.com/article/159953/the\\_2\\_types\\_of\\_hybrid\\_cars.html?cat=27](http://www.associatedcontent.com/article/159953/the_2_types_of_hybrid_cars.html?cat=27)

**CONSULTATION:** [http://greenliving.lovetoknow.com/Hybrid\\_Vehicles\\_Negative\\_Environmental\\_Impact](http://greenliving.lovetoknow.com/Hybrid_Vehicles_Negative_Environmental_Impact)

**CONSULTATION:** [http://www.usgovernmentspending.com/Michigan\\_state\\_spending.html](http://www.usgovernmentspending.com/Michigan_state_spending.html)

**CONSULTATION:** MSC proposal by Bryan Blum and Ben Glaze

**CONSULTATION:** <http://www.newdream.org/newsletter/hev.php>

**CONSULTATION:** "A New Road: The Technology and Potential of Hybrid Vehicles" by David Friedman, Research Director for the Clean Vehicles Program at the Union of Concerned Scientists.

**CONSULTATION:** <http://www.hybridcars.com>

**CONSULTATION:** <http://www.irs.gov/newsroom/article/0,,id=104549,00.html>

## **DISCUSSION**

- *How are these tax breaks being subsidized? Is the money available?*
- *Should where the car is made (America or foreign) be a factor in distributing tax breaks?*
- *Could domestics be incentivized to manufacture more hybrids?*
- *Tax breaks already exist for hybrid owners; how is this proposal different?*
- *Could the tax credit funding issue be tied to the gas tax?*
- *Is now the right time to implement this proposal? Should it be put on hold until the economy and auto industry are more stable?*

# JUSTICE & SECURITY

## **Ban the Use of Cell Phones While Driving** *by Jamie Bernstein*

**WHEREAS** A half-dozen states - including New York, Connecticut and starting this summer, California - have banned talking on hand-held phones while driving.

**WHEREAS** Another six states, including Michigan, allow local governments to adopt their own policies, but have no statewide ban. And some states restrict cell phone use for new or young drivers.

**WHEREAS** Michigan traffic accident reports for 2006 that show cell phone use was a factor in 951 crashes. Driver distraction in some form was a factor in more than 3,600 accidents.

**WHEREAS** According to another poll, that number skyrockets to 66 percent when drivers 18 to 24 are isolated. The practice, especially popular among young people, is exacting a deadly toll.

**WHEREAS** Harris Interactive Poll from August shows 9 out of 10 American adults believe that sending text messages or E-mails while driving is "distracting, dangerous, and should be outlawed."

**WHEREAS** Only two states expressly prohibit texting while driving. Washington banned the practice last May, and New Jersey followed suit in November. Similar bills are now in the works in Delaware, Florida, Hawaii, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Hampshire, New York, Ohio, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia.

**WHEREAS** Of drivers who were using cell phones at the time of their accidents, the majority were talking on their cells at the time of impact. Therefore, phone conversations, rather than dialing, is the most frequently reported crash factor.

**WHEREAS** A few drivers were startled when their mobile phone rang and, as they reached for their phones, they ran off the road.

**WHEREAS** An overwhelming majority of cell phone users involved in car crashes struck cars or other large objects that were in clear view.

**WHEREAS** The federal government estimates that 30 percent of all crashes in the United States involve driver distraction,

**WHEREAS** Since holding a phone to your ear was made a traffic violation last July, the California Highway Patrol has written about 48,000 tickets, fining drivers from \$20 to \$50.

**WHEREAS** "Six months ago, everywhere I looked someone who was driving was on the phone," he said. "From the saddle, I'm seeing less people on the phone now."

**THEREFORE,**

**BE IT RESOLVED** By making a law that states hand-held cell phone use, talking and texting, is illegal we can hope to minimize car accidents.

**BE IT RESOLVED** The roads will be safer

**BE IT RESOLVED** Policemen could watch out for cell phone behaviors and enforce the new law, also enabling them to give out tickets, thus generating more money in the Michigan economy.

**BE IT RESOLVED** A law will be implemented that if drivers need to talk on the phone they use bluetooth.

### **CONSULTATIONS**

**CONSULTATION:** <http://blogpublic.lib.msu.edu/index.php/2008/05/19/title-38?blog=5>

**CONSULTATION:** <http://www.usnews.com/articles/news/national/2008/02/11/outlawing-text-messaging-while-driving.html>

**CONSULTATION:** <http://www.edgarsnyder.com/auto-accident/auto/cell/>

### **CONSULTATION:**

<http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2006/11/22/earlyshow/contributors/susankoeppen/main2205559.shtml>

**CONSULTATION:** <http://articles.latimes.com/2009/jan/03/local/me-handsfree3>

**CONSULTATION:** Santa Monica Police Sgt. Larry Horn

### **DISCUSSION**

- *How does this proposal pertain to hands free devices? Should they be legal, or illegal due to the fact that they can still cause distractions?*
- *Is cell phone use the only relevant problem on our roads today? What about eating or putting on make-up? How is it different?*
- *Is this law hard to police and enforce?*
- *What is the penalty for disobeying the law?*
- *What is the history of this issue in Michigan? Has it been brought up before, and with what results?*
- *Does there need to be a separate proposal regarding texting and driving?*
- *Should the proposal target young drivers rather than all drivers?*

## **DUI Policy in Michigan** *by Daniel Elrod & Lewis Benjamin Miller*

**WHEREAS** In the State of Michigan, driving while intoxicated is currently handled as a misdemeanor for the first two violations. Only for the third violation is the crime considered more serious, and given the title of “felony.”

**WHEREAS** In the year 2007, over 300 people were killed in the State of Michigan alone by drunk drivers. This loss of life due to the irresponsibility of others is unnecessary and damaging to our state. It decreases citizen morale as well as stresses our police and medical facilities.

**WHEREAS** In the same year, there were over 49,000 arrests for drinking and drug related driving offenses in Michigan.

**WHEREAS** Michigan currently has very strict laws regarding first time offenders, which include significant fines, possible jail time, possible community service, and a suspension of ones license along with 150 days of other driving restrictions. We strongly support these punishments regarding first time offenders, as they can help people learn from their mistakes and promote positive development for the future

**WHEREAS** If a driver is convicted for a second time of drunk driving, the act is still a misdemeanor. This means that while the maximum terms on their sentences are increased, they are relatively similar and not terribly damaging.

**WHEREAS** Only when the driver is convicted of a third offense is serious action taken. The crime is considered a felony and is punishable by up to 5 years in prison and a considerable fine. Additionally, the amount of community service and the time the convicted individual’s license is revoked is greatly increased.

**WHEREAS** In December of 2006, the state of New York altered their DUI policies, making a second DUI conviction a felony offense. According the New York State Department of Motor Vehicles, in 2005, prior to the passage of this law, there were 7,724 people injured in alcohol related accidents. In 2007, after the passage of this law, the amount of people injured decreased nearly by 1,000. Furthermore, in 2007, the number of fatalities significantly decreased as well compared to 2005.

**WHEREAS** The punishment that Michigan ascribes to an individual the third time they are convicted of driving under the influence of alcohol should apply the second time the individual is caught. Nobody should have a three chances to get behind the wheel while they are intoxicated. Nobody should get a three chances to kill an innocent person.

### **THEREFORE,**

**BE IT RESOLVED** We are proposing to alter the State’s current DUI policy, by making stricter punishments for second time offenders. We propose that second time drunk driving offenders be charged with a felony offense, if the offense is within seven years of the first conviction.

**BE IT RESOLVED** The state ensures that drivers are aware of this change of law. This can be achieved through television advertising as well as with signs on highways and other major thoroughfares. A grace period of one year where the old laws are applicable to ignorant individuals may be allowed.

**BE IT RESOLVED** Along with making second time convictions a felony offense, we propose that the offender must pay between \$1,000-\$5,000 in fines and face up to four years in jail. We recognized that these punishments are a significant increase from the current law; however, we feel that it is in the best interest of the state to impose these strict penalties for such reckless behavior.

**BE IT RESOLVED** People are very accustomed to a three-strike policy; however, the thought of losing a family member or friend has made us realize that one chance is enough. We therefore, believe with these stricter penalties in place, Michigan will be able to save lives and curb the amount of drunk drivers, and drunk driving accidents.

### **CONSULTATIONS**

**CONSULTATION:** [http://www.1800duilaws.com/states/mi\\_ DUI\\_third\\_offense.asp?state=MI](http://www.1800duilaws.com/states/mi_ DUI_third_offense.asp?state=MI)

**CONSULTATION:** [http://www.michigan.gov/documents/msp/2007\\_Drunk\\_Driving\\_Audit-Section\\_I\\_242178\\_7.pdf](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/msp/2007_Drunk_Driving_Audit-Section_I_242178_7.pdf)

**CONSULTATION:** <http://www.alcoholalert.com/drun-driving-statistics-michigan.html>

**CONSULTATION:** <http://www.duilaws.com/michigan/michigan- DUI-penalties>

### **DISCUSSION**

- *Should jail overcrowding be a concern?*
- *Should the first, second, or third offense be considered a felony? When should the offender receive jail time and how much?*
- *How will the public be made aware of new DUI laws?*
- *How could license suspension be incorporated? What about alcohol education?*
- *Could penalties be stricter for “extreme” drunk drivers? What is considered an “extreme” case?*

# SERVICE

## **Give the Gift of Life – Donate Blood** *by Jeff Brunswick*

### **BACKGROUND/NEED**

According to the American Association of Blood Banks (AABB), most blood centers strive to maintain an optimum inventory level of a three-day supply. Due to unpredictable demands from trauma incidents the inventory fluctuates hourly. When the blood supply drops below a three-day level, blood centers begin alerting local donors to increase the inventory to a safe operating level.

According to AABB, The body contains 10 to 12 pints of blood. Your whole blood donation is approximately one pint.

According to AABB, You may donate whole blood once every 56 days, which allows plenty of time for your red cells to be replenished. Platelet (apheresis) donors may donate more frequently -- as often as once every seven days and up to 24 times per year.

According to AABB, While donated blood is free, there are significant costs associated with collecting, testing, preparing components, labeling, storing and shipping blood; recruiting and educating donors; and quality assurance. As a result, processing fees are charged to recover costs. Processing fees for individual blood components vary considerably. Processing fees for one specific component also may vary in different geographic regions. Hospitals charge for any additional testing that may be required, such as the crossmatch, as well as for the administration of the blood.

According to the Red Cross, Every two seconds someone in America needs blood.

According to Blood Centers (BC), More than 4.5 million patients need blood transfusions each year in the U.S. and Canada

According to BC, 43,000 pints is the amount of donated blood used each day in the U.S. and Canada.

According to BC, Only 37 percent of the U.S. population is eligible to donate blood – less than 10 percent do annually

According to BC, About 1 in 7 people entering a hospital need blood.

According to BC, One pint of blood can save up to three lives.

The American Red Cross is urging people to donate blood after harsh winter weather led to shortages in many parts of the country, including southeast Michigan, Arkansas and Buffalo, N.Y.

### **ACTION PLAN**

Students from the Michigan Student Caucus will sign up @ <https://www.givelife.org/index.cfm?group=op> if appointments are available, or find blood drive dates and locations at that site.

Committed students will help disseminate information about the need for more blood donors, where to donate blood, etc., through Facebook campaigns and/or handing out pamphlets. They may choose one or the other, or both.

## **Blanket Drive** *by Eric Lassin*

### **BACKGROUND/NEED**

The U.S. Census Bureau estimates that there are roughly 37 million people that are classified as "poor" in this country alone. There are several thousand homeless people in the state of Michigan alone, including some three to four thousand children.

These homeless individuals and families lack the necessary income to adequately feed and shelter themselves and their families, which can be burdensome as well as embarrassing for those stretching to make ends meet.

The poverty rate in America has increased slightly since 2007, from 12.3% to 12.5% and is rising. In the same time frame, the poverty rate for children also unfortunately has increased from 17.4% to 18.0%. As a result of the current economic recession, these numbers are likely to increase.

Homeless people who lack shelter must combat the elements and face the weather outside, even in extreme conditions such as winters in Michigan. Many of these people are not prepared for the harsh weather they face and the sickness that could be derived from such prolonged exposure to cold weather.

The poverty rate since the 1950's has been fluctuating between 11.1% and 22.4%

According to the National Poverty Center, a disproportionate amount of poverty stricken individuals have been children, with 18% of children under 18 living in poverty.

The Interagency Council on Homelessness (ICH) has set out a 10 year plan to help stem homelessness, but there are people who need help NOW, and may not even make it through this winter without access to blankets and warm clothing

In Michigan, 37% of the rural homeless population is between the ages of 18-24

According to the Michigan League for Human Services, Michigan has one of the fastest rising poverty rates in America. There were 13.3% (or roughly 1.3 million Michigan residents) who were living in poverty in 2006. The average nationally is lower, at 12.5%

### **ACTION PLAN**

To attempt to combat the cold weather faced by the homeless, students can donate blankets as well as other items to a blanket drive.

This drive could also include other items needed by those who are homeless, such as clean sheets, comforters, and whatever else people are willing to donate.

Lots of bedding is thrown out every year by students not wanting to pay to have those items shipped home, so extra collection bins could be set up at the semesters end.

On top of having trash and many types of recycling, dormitories should add large canisters for extra bedding that could be donated to homeless individuals, or to homeless shelters, which are historically underfunded

Students participating in this proposal should collect a minimum of three blankets each, from either friends houses, high traffic areas on campus, or dormitories, to ensure that we maximize our positive influence on Michigan's homeless community

Students should donate the blankets that they collect to a homeless shelter, preferably the Ann Arbor Community Center, due to its close proximity to campus

Any student that lacks transportation to get to a donation center, should email the service proposal creators ([jessgros@umich.edu](mailto:jessgros@umich.edu), [rlassin@umich.edu](mailto:rlassin@umich.edu)) to arrange for us to pick them up and donate the blankets on their behalf

## **Pledge to Lose the Weight** *by Lewis Benjamin Miller*

### **BACKGROUND/NEED**

Before even having the opportunity to gain weight in college, several students are heading to college overweight.

The National College Health Risk Behavior Survey suggests that as many as 35% of college students may be overweight or obese.

A study done at Cornell University shows that 90% of 310 normal weight women, yearn to be thinner.

Nutritionists feel that the massive weight gain such as the “freshman 15” are laying the groundwork for an unhealthy and overweight future. These nutritionists believe so because students are giving into the temptation of unlimited and unsupervised food choices. Often people do not have these many choices when eating at home.

### **ACTION PLAN**

MSC students will pledge to lose weight. Weight pledges will be confidential and will be realistic goals. According to webmd.com, losing 1-2 pounds a week is considered a realistic goal. Weight pledges will be recorded and re-evaluated at the plan's end.

Individuals will have their own personal goals, but will have a realistic goal for how much weight they believe they could lose in a 3-4 week span.

We will provide MSC students with easy ways to keep off the weight.

Suggestions include when it comes to late-night snacking, sit down with a portion. Put it in a bowl or on a plate and don't eat from the bag. Instead of driving to class, start walking. Set realistic goals and mini-milestones.

Eat right. By eating foods with less sugar and fat and replacing them with nutritional food, your body will be healthier and better able to burn calories.

Another suggestion is to drink less calories. There are as many as 440 calories in a fountain soda or "big gulp" soft drink. Replace pop with water or milk.

If everyone pledges to lose 1-2 pounds a week for three weeks, we can promote a healthier lifestyle. I am hoping that by starting small with these little milestones, we can alter the way people think. Causing people to adjust their normal routines to a healthier lifestyle can possibly cause a snowball effect that will make a healthier and more comfortable/confident University of Michigan student.

Students will anonymously report back after the 3-4 week period and discuss what they did and what they could have done.

#### Consultations

<http://media.www.msureporter.com/media/storage/paper937/news/2007/10/11/NationalAndWorldNews/Obesity.A.Growing.Problem.On.College.Campuses-3027113.shtml>

<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2007/11/071120111544.htm>

<http://care.diabetesjournals.org/cgi/content/full/27/12/3000>

[http://www.usatoday.com/news/health/2006-10-22-freshman-weight\\_x.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/news/health/2006-10-22-freshman-weight_x.htm)

<http://www.webmd.com/diet/guide/setting-realistic-weight-loss-goals>

MSC students can pledge to be active for at least 3 hours a week. Whether it is participating in sports, exercising, or running, 3 hours a week is a feasible goal that good go long way to maintaing a health lifestyle.

## **Books for Prisoners** *by Jaclyn Einstein & Michael Eichberg*

### **BACKGROUND/NEED**

During times of financial cutbacks, prison libraries are often one of the first services targeted by budget committees.

In spite of public support, across the country general reading libraries for the prison population sometimes get caught in the cross hairs of budget cuts. In the past decade, libraries have lost paid staff in states such as Arizona and Florida...

"Reading books increases vocabulary, challenges self concept, encourages reflection, engages the inmate for several days in a social world created by an author and thereby introduces him to consider the social context of choices and reactions" -- Judith Jordet, MLS, Librarian, Oregon's Deer Ridge Correctional Institution

Examples of actively managed prison library collections still occurs in states such as Maryland, Colorado and Washington, but because it is difficult to measure the positive input that reading books have on inmates it is often difficult to prove to budget committees why books are important.

Reading that stimulates intellectual discussion and debate (either informal or formal) can improve the critical reasoning and analytic skills necessary for success in many social and professional situations.

Reading can stimulate positive thought, reflection, and dialogue within a prison.

According to the brutalization effect, if a former prisoner cannot find work, is identified and ostracized as a "felon" or "prisoner," and is therefore prohibited from integrating into society, recidivism is very likely. If instead, we give inmates educational opportunities, improved skills, improved chances to find work, we hope to encourage a more productive lifestyle and deter crime.

Through this project we aim to achieve the following four goals : Increased concern and compassion for prisoners; a more successful reentry to society for released inmates ; lower rates of recidivism; and a safer society.

### **ACTION PLAN**

MSC Students will participate in book drives in the diag and major school buildings to collect used books to send to prison libraries.

MSC Students will set up donation points in major student organizations and school buildings for donors to leave books at their own leisure. After a month, these boxes will be collected and sent to Michigan State Prisons.

Since the goal of our project is two-fold, we intend to both collect books as well as educate those in Ann Arbor about the reasons that such a book drive can benefit society. Therefore we intend to post informational flyers about the dire need for such educational materials in our prisons.

This service project will also work with other book donation services to provide MSC with education regarding prison book donations around the country.

## **Winter Clothing Drive** *by Jake Billmeyer*

### **BACKGROUND/NEED**

Detroit is the nation's poorest big city, with about one in three residents living below the federal poverty level -- \$19,157 in household income for a family of four. ([www-personal.umich.edu](http://www-personal.umich.edu))

Detroit's unemployment rate is around 15%

There are 9500 homeless people in Detroit. ([cotsdetroit.org](http://cotsdetroit.org))

There are only 1,995 beds in homeless shelters to support the homeless population. This leaves many individuals on the cold streets of Detroit.

The average temperature in Detroit is 28 degrees in December, 23 degrees in January, and 25 degrees in February. (City Rating website)

Families make up 26% of the homeless population in Detroit. There is definitely a need for winter clothes for young people who can use old clothes that do not fit the donator.

### **ACTION PLAN**

The University could use the Intramural Sports building to host a winter clothes drive for the homeless and unemployed in the City of Detroit.

Students would bring in new or used clothes to the IM building and at the end of the week these would be taken to a homeless shelter in Detroit for distribution. The students can bring in any type of clothing that is helpful for the homeless.

We could use a truck from local business that want to help give back to their community by transporting the donated goods.

This takes very little effort by the donators since they can give old winter clothes that still keep people warm, but might not fit them anymore.

## **Collect Canned Food for the Homeless** *by Sara Pervil*

### **BACKGROUND/NEED**

Homelessness is a big problem in the United States. You can't go anywhere in a large city without seeing a box where a homeless person lives, or just seeing one holding a sign saying that they "will work for food."

One of the things we can do to help homeless people is that we can start a canned food drive. Other things will be accepted, like hygiene items, etc. Money isn't a smart thing to give someone who is homeless, because they may not always use it for the things they need.

Homelessness is one problem that will more than likely never be totally resolved. Any of us could become just like the less fortunate if something happened that was beyond our control, like losing a job or having a major medical problem.

The most proximate cause of homelessness in America is poverty. Statistics show between twenty and thirty percent of homeless families surveyed in 1996 said they had gone without food for part of the previous month (Burt, Aron, and Lee\*). The homeless also face persistent deprivation and constant threat of harm.

Homelessness in America persists in part because many urban areas remain economically depressed, housing costs have risen rapidly in the past decade, and wages for lower skilled workers have remained stable

### **ACTION PLAN**

In order to get a good amount of cans we will set up different stations around campus where people can come bring canned food

In the weeks prior to our can drive we will go to greek life houses and dorms to put up signs as well in campus buildings.

While all homeless people are in need of money, it is better to provide them with food and other things rather than money. If we were to give the homeless money they could go and spend it on other things such as drugs. Thus, we will provide information around campus telling people where they can bring canned food along with other products to be given to those that are in shelters. We will accept products like hygiene items. Anything that we can do to help those in need is great.