5TH DISTRICT
STATE CAPITOL
P.O. BOX 30014
LANSING, MI 48909-7514

MICHIGAN HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

REGINA WEISS

STATE REPRESENTATIVE

PHONE: (517) 373-0844
FAX: (517) 373-5711
ReginaWeiss@house.mi.gov

November 18, 2026

The Honorable Gretchen Whitmer
Governor of Michigan
P.O. Box 30013
Lansing, MI 48909

Re: Protecting Michigan's Progress in Public Education

Dear Governor Whitmer,

As members of the Michigan Legislature, we have had the privilege of working alongside your administration over the past eight years to make public education a top priority in Michigan. Together, we have worked toward an education system that provides every student, regardless of their ZIP code, family income, or individual needs, with the resources and opportunities to succeed. The decision before you regarding Michigan's participation in the federal scholarship tax credit program is an opportunity to protect that legacy and preserve the progress we have made for generations to come.

Since 2019, your administration and the Legislature have fundamentally changed the trajectory of public education in Michigan. After years of inadequate funding and policies that left too many students behind, we made historic investments in our schools, worked to address longstanding funding disparities between districts, and expanded support for economically disadvantaged students, students with disabilities, and English language learners. We made breakfast and lunch free for every public school student, expanded access to early childhood education through significant investments in the Great Start Readiness Program, and strengthened literacy instruction through investments and policies grounded in the science of reading. We also invested in educator recruitment and retention, expanded school-based mental health services, and provided additional resources for transportation and other essential student needs. Alongside these investments, we pursued meaningful policy reforms, including eliminating third-grade reading retention and replacing an outdated school accountability system with a more constructive approach to supporting schools. These accomplishments reflect a sustained commitment to strengthening public education and ensuring our schools have the resources to meet the needs of their students.

That progress is now at risk as you consider whether to opt Michigan into the federal scholarship tax credit program. Despite being presented as an expansion of educational opportunities, the program raises serious questions about transparency, accountability, oversight, and its potential impact on public education. Michigan should remain focused on protecting and building upon our investments in public schools rather than introducing a new federal program that could undermine them.

Recycled Paper

We must also consider the political landscape and the likely future of this program. Michigan voters made their priorities clear in the 2026 elections. They elected Jocelyn Benson governor by a decisive margin, rejecting a candidate who had promised to opt Michigan into the scholarship program on day one. They also elected a Democratic majority to the Michigan Legislature, reaffirming support for an agenda centered on strong public schools, working families, and responsible investments in our communities.

The 2028 elections present a very real opportunity for Democrats to regain control of the presidency and retain control of both chambers of Congress, creating a national Democratic trifecta. A new Democratic administration and Congress would have both the opportunity and the incentive to repeal the OBBBA, including its federal scholarship tax credit provision. We have already been in conversations with our federal representatives and are encouraged by their commitment to repealing this program and addressing the federal government's longstanding failure to meet its obligation under IDEA to fund 40 percent of special education costs. After 50 years, it is time for the federal government to finally fulfill that promise.

Michigan should take this very real possibility into account before making a decision with lasting consequences. Participation would require state agencies to establish new administrative procedures, dedicate staff and resources, and develop oversight mechanisms to implement the program. Schools, families, and scholarship organizations would also make decisions based on the expectation that it will continue. It makes little sense to undertake such a significant investment in new infrastructure and administrative systems for a federal program that could be repealed within two years. Michigan should not create unnecessary costs, uncertainty, or disruption for our public schools to accommodate a policy with such an uncertain future.

For these reasons, we strongly urge you to decline Michigan's participation in the federal scholarship tax credit program before the January 1 deadline. Doing so will allow our state to remain focused on its existing public education commitments without assuming unnecessary financial, administrative, and legal risks. We also urge you to join us in calling on Congress to repeal the scholarship tax credit provision of the OBBBA and fully fund IDEA. Rather than accommodating a program that threatens to undermine our public schools, Michigan should continue leading the fight for the resources and policies our students deserve.

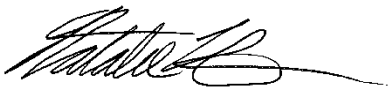
Governor Whitmer, the progress we have made in public education over the past eight years is among the most significant legacies of your administration and our work together in the Legislature. We have a responsibility to protect those accomplishments and ensure that future generations of Michigan students continue to benefit from them. Opting into this federal program would introduce unnecessary uncertainty and threaten to distract from the work still ahead. We urge you to make the decision that protects Michigan's public schools and preserves the legacy we have worked so hard to build.

Sincerely,

Regina Weiss
State Representative
5th House District

Dylan Wegela
State Representative
26th House District

Emily Dievendorf
State Representative
77th House District



Natalie Price
State Representative
6th House District



Mike McFall
State Representative
14th House District



Sharon MacDonell
State Representative
56th House District



Jason Morgan
State Representative
23rd House District



Julie Brixie
State Representative
73rd House District



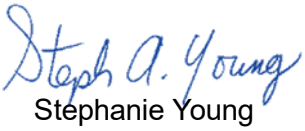
Helena Scott
State Representative
8th House District



Jimmie Wilson Jr.
State Representative
32nd House District



Samantha Steckloff
State Representative
19th House District



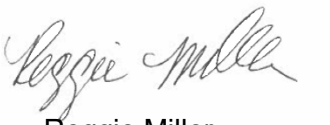
Stephanie Young
State Representative
16th House District



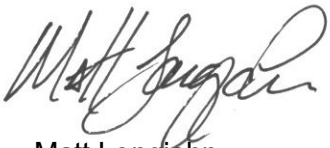
Matt Koleszar
State Representative
22nd House District



Laurie Pohutsky
State Representative
17th House District



Reggie Miller
State Representative
31st House District



Matt Longjohn
State Representative
40th House District



Tonya Myers Phillips
State Representative
7th House District



Veronica Paiz
State Representative
10th House District



Penelope Tsernoglou
State Representative
75th House District



Tulio Liberati
State Representative
2nd House District



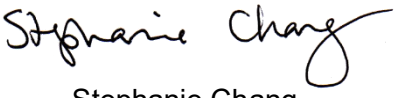
Kelly Breen
State Representative
21st House District



Jeff Irwin
State Senator
15th Senate District



Rosemary Bayer
State Senator
13th Senate District



Stephanie Chang
State Senator
3rd Senate District



Jennifer A. Conlin
State Representative
48th House District



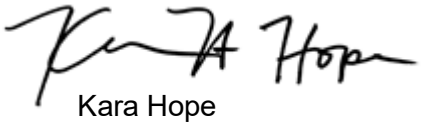
Cynthia Neeley
State Representative
70th House District



Mary Cavanagh
State Senator
6th Senate District



Donovan McKinney
State Representative
11th House District



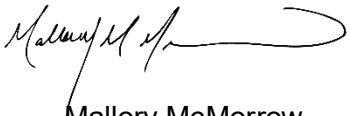
Kara Hope
State Representative
74th House District



Stepehen Wooden
State Representative
81st House District



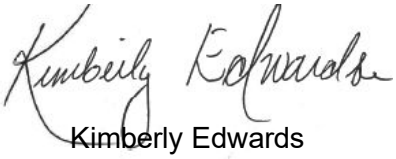
Erin Byrnes
State Representative
15th House District



Mallory McMorrow
State Senator
8th Senate District



Sue Shink
State Senator
14th Senate District



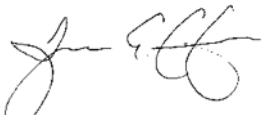
Kimberly Edwards
State Representative
12th House District



Denise Mentzer
State Representative
61st House District



John Fitzgerald
State Representative
83rd House District



Tyrone Carter
State Representative
1st House District



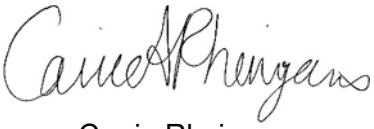
Brenda Carter
State Representative
53rd House District



Betsy Coffia
State Representative
103rd House District



Alabas Farhat
State Representative
3rd House District



Carrie Rheingans
State Representative
47th House District



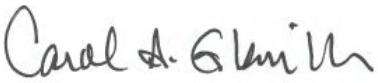
Sylvia Santana
State Senator
2nd Senate District



John Cherry
State Senator
27th Senate District



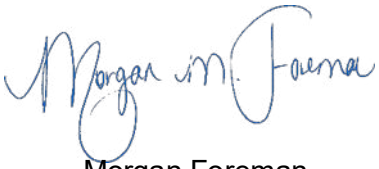
Veronica Klinefelt
State Senator
11th Senate District



Carol Glanville
State Representative
84th House District



Phil Skaggs
State Representative
80th House District



Morgan Foreman
State Representative
33rd House District



Jason Hoskins
State Representative
18th House District



Darrin Camilleri
Senate Majority Leader Elect
4th Senate District