

Coalition to Stop the K-16 Spending Mandate Growing, Preparing for November Ballot

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While the State Board of Canvassers today certified that there are enough valid petition signatures to ask for a vote on a statutory education spending mandate, the coalition opposed to the proposal announced it has tripled in size. The Coalition to Stop the K-16 Spending Mandate, first formed in February with 15 organizations, has now grown to include 45 statewide organizations including taxpayer, local government, law enforcement, healthcare, and human service organizations. At the same time, the K-16 Coalition for Michigan's Future is shrinking due to lack of support.

"It is clear to Michigan State Police Troopers that this proposal is bad public policy and is wrong for Michigan," said Matt Wesaw, Government Affairs Director of the Michigan State Troopers Association of Michigan. "The Troopers joined the Coalition to Stop the K-16 Spending Mandate because if this proposal passes citizens could see drastic cuts in state funding of law enforcement and other critical services," added Wesaw.

The Michigan Education Association is leading an effort to provide a guaranteed spending mandate for K-12 public schools, community colleges, and state public universities. The non-partisan House Fiscal Agency has estimated that this proposal would cost state government approximately \$1.1 billion above current spending on education -- in the first year alone.

If the Legislature approves the proposal, it becomes law. If the Legislature rejects the proposal over the next 40 days, the proposal will go before voters on the November 2006 ballot. The Coalition to Stop the K-16 Spending Mandate is urging the Legislature and voters to reject the spending mandate, and for educators to drop their support for the spending mandate.

"Our polling shows that once people understand the extraordinary cost of this spending mandate, the threats to critical services and their wallets, support plummets," said Bill Martin, CEO for the Michigan Association of Realtors. "It would be irresponsible to put this spending on auto-pilot with no accountability to taxpayers. This plan would have a negative impact on Michigan's economy and should be rejected."

"The number and range of groups who are opposed to this plan says a lot about how devastating this proposal would be," added Wesaw. "This coalition is committed to defeating this ill-conceived plan," concluded Wesaw.

The Coalition to Stop the K-16 Spending Mandate today announced it has hired Marketing Resource Group, a Lansing-based firm with a 100 percent track record of defeating this type of proposal, to provide campaign and coalition services.

For more information on the K-16 spending proposal, visit the Web site of the Coalition to Stop the K-16 Spending Mandate at <http://www.stopthespendingmandate.com/>.

Members Of the Coalition to Stop the K-16 Spending Mandate
(AS OF 6/05/06)

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Paid for by the Coalition to Stop the K-16 Spending Mandate with regulated funds, 600 S. Walnut St., Lansing, MI 48933. Contributions not eligible for charitable deductions on federal tax returns.

SOURCE: Coalition to Stop the K-16 Spending Mandate

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Web site: <http://www.stopthespendingmandate.com/>

<http://michamber.mediaroom.com/index.php?s=19845&item=39646>