

Coalition for the Future
of Detroit Schoolchildren

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BLM Urges support for the Senate's Detroit Public Schools Reform Package

DETROIT – Michigan's top business leaders support a Detroit Public Schools (DPS) reform package that largely aligns with the plan that passed the Michigan Senate with support from Governor Rick Snyder. Business Leaders for Michigan (BLM) believes Detroit Public Schools reform is critical to achieving the organization's goal of Michigan becoming a Top Ten state, and that a bi-partisan bill like that which passed the Senate most closely aligns with its aspirations of achieving long-term fiscal stability for Michigan, redeveloping Detroit and improving the image of the state.

A reform package is necessary because the alternatives are another one-year supplemental appropriation that adds to the state's debt or a declaration of bankruptcy for DPS. The state's potential fiscal liabilities in a DPS bankruptcy are estimated to range from \$715 million to \$4.8 billion.

"The Senate package reflects the work of a broad coalition of business, civic and community leaders, has the local support needed to succeed and prevents major statewide ramifications," said Doug Rothwell, BLM President and CEO. "Michigan's fiscal stability will be adversely impacted by delaying action because of potential liabilities of up to \$4.8 billion under a bankruptcy proceeding, substantially higher than the cost of a reform package, which the Governor and Senate believe to be \$715 million."

"The business leaders of this state believe the state cannot afford to lose a generation of Detroit children who, through no fault of their own, will not have access to the education they need to succeed."

The Coalition for the Future of Detroit Schoolchildren formed on December 11, 2014 as an independent, diverse cross-section of Detroit leaders who came together to make recommendations to improve the city's education system. Its first report, The Choice Is Ours, focused on how the state could help. Most of our recommendations were enacted. Now, the Coalition is focused on actions Detroiters can take locally to strengthen the city's schools.

The Coalition's leadership teams are made up of approximately 150 community members. The Coalition is led by six co-chairs: Tonya Allen, Skillman Foundation president & CEO; Rev. Wendell Anthony, Fellowship Chapel and president of the Detroit branch of the NAACP; David Hecker, president of AFT Michigan/AFL-CIO; John Rakolta Jr., CEO of Walbridge; Mark Reuss, executive

vice president, global product development, purchasing and supply chain of General Motors; and Angela Reyes, executive director of Detroit Hispanic Development Corporation.

The Coalition's 2017 report, Our School, Our Moment, is available at www.DetroitEducationCoalition.org.

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