

Senators Patterson, Thomas, Pappageorge, Jansen, Hardiman, Basham, Birkholz, Olshove, Jelinek and Gleason offered the following concurrent resolution:

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 8.

A concurrent resolution to urge the President of the United States, the United States Congress, and the United States Department of Energy to restore funding for the Weatherization Assistance Program in Fiscal Year 2008 and to consider increasing future funding for this important federal program.

Whereas, The Federal Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP), created in 1976 during the nation's oil crisis and administered by the United States Department of Energy (DOE), provides funding to states to operate programs that pay for weatherization improvements for low-income homes. Weatherization refers to a wide variety of measures and technologies, such as weather stripping, caulking, insulation, and energy efficient appliances that reduce a building's energy consumption. The WAP is the country's longest running, and perhaps most successful energy efficiency program. During the last 30 years, the WAP has provided weatherization services to more than 5.5 million low-income families; and

Whereas, The WAP is a proven and effective program that helps not only low-income households but the nation as a whole. The WAP empowers low-income families by enabling them to reduce energy costs and take responsibility for their energy bills. Weatherization reduces heating bills by an average of 31 percent. Low-income families receiving WAP retrofits commonly save about \$200 to \$300 each year in energy costs. In addition to the direct benefits that low-income families receive, a recent study by Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL) documents a multitude of indirect benefits to local economies, the nation's energy security, and the environment. These benefits include job creation, increased property values, reduced national energy consumption, and a reduction in carbon dioxide emissions by an average of one ton per weatherized house. The ORNL study concludes that for each dollar of investment in the WAP program, the nation receives \$3.71 worth of benefits. Surely, no other program receives such bang for its buck; and

Whereas, The effectiveness of the WAP program is threatened by recent DOE funding decisions. The DOE recently cut the Fiscal Year 2007 budget for the WAP by about 16 percent or about \$38 million less than it was a year ago. Local communities and state weatherization directors throughout the nation were dismayed by this decision; and

Whereas, Under the Fiscal Year 2007 budget, Michigan is receiving almost \$2 million less than it did a year ago and it could not have come at a worse time. The state is suffering through disturbingly high unemployment rates and a weakened economy and is in the midst of its most devastating and prolonged economic downturn since the Great Depression. Losing about \$1.9 million in WAP funds and the associated job stimulus that WAP generally provides is a hard pill for the state to swallow; and

Whereas, As the Fiscal Year 2008 federal budget is hammered out, the WAP program should be recognized and celebrated for its immense effectiveness rather than having its budget slashed. Clearly, it is fiscally wise to invest in the energy saving WAP program; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That we urge the President of the United States, the United States Congress, and the United States Department of Energy to restore funding for the Weatherization Assistance Program in Fiscal Year 2008 and to consider increasing future funding for this important federal program; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the Office of the President of the United States, the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, the members of the Michigan congressional delegation, and the Secretary of the United States Department of Energy.