

SR-62, As Adopted by Senate, June 16, 2009

Senator Bishop offered the following resolution:

Senate Resolution No. 62.

A resolution to memorialize Congress to provide for waivers from requirements attached to stimulus funding that would hamper the state's efforts to meet its constitutional obligation to balance future budgets.

Whereas, The massive federal spending program to stimulate the national economy is, in many instances, accompanied by requirements for the states to implement certain provisions in their state statutes as a condition to receiving the money from Washington. The modifications of state laws will remain in place long after the federal money is spent; and

Whereas, Even as Michigan, a state long battered by transformational economic challenges, faces budgetary problems that make every federal dollar enticing, there are many observers who have expressed grave concerns over the conditions attached to the stimulus money. This concern has been articulated in conjunction with expanded government programs and requirements for permanent changes to Michigan law that will imperil our state's economic strength in the future; and

Whereas, Many people have also expressed strong reservations over the impact similar conditions will have on other key programs. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act's prohibitions on making cuts to Medicaid, higher education operations, community college operations, and debt service mean that 47 percent of Michigan's General Fund/General Purpose budget is effectively off the table, even as we have a \$1.7 billion deficit to reconcile. As a consequence, the cuts that must be made can only come from other priority areas, such as health care, public emergency services, local government services, road infrastructure, and other core government functions; and

Whereas, The impact of the "strings" attached to the stimulus money is that the state is implicitly abdicating its authority and discretion related to meeting our essential responsibilities and establishing budget priorities to meet our constitutional obligations to provide core services such as health, public safety, welfare, and educating our children; and

Whereas, The strings attached to stimulus money cannot be glossed over in the state's efforts to deal with our present budget crisis. The federal mandates connected with accepting this money may hamstring future legislatures and generations and prevent the very reforms and new approaches this state so desperately needs to craft solutions; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate, That we memorialize Congress to provide for waivers from requirements attached to stimulus funding that would hamper the state's efforts to meet its constitutional obligation to balance future budgets; and be it further

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