September 26, 2017

Representative Andy Schor
P.O. Box 30014
Lansing, MI 48909-7514

Dear Representative Schor:

I am writing to urge you to support SBs 103-106, which would provide common definitions for truancy and chronic absenteeism with appropriate graduated interventions for when a child is missing school.

Michigan has no standard definitions for chronic absenteeism or truancy. As a result, rules vary from district to district throughout our entire state, there is insufficient accounting of missed seat time, and students are often suspended or expelled without ever addressing what causes them to miss school in the first place.

A child is often absent from school because of internal and external barriers. These proposed changes to the law are meant to address what actually causes the children to miss school in the first place so that we can enable them for long-term success.

Students who miss school are more likely to struggle academically and eventually to drop out of school altogether. The decision to drop out is a dangerous one for the student. Dropouts are much more likely than their peers who graduate to be unemployed, living in poverty, receiving public assistance, in prison, unhealthy, divorced, and single parents with children who drop out from high school.

Our communities and nation also suffer from the dropout epidemic due to the loss of productive workers and higher costs associated with increased incarceration, crime, health care and social services.

Punishing students who fail to come to school by sending them home is counterproductive and contributes to lower graduation and higher delinquency rates. **Bottom** **line: This is a statewide issue that must be addressed as Michigan currently ranks 39th in the nation for graduation rates.**

Please Support SBs 103-106 and keep our children in school. Every Day, Every Child!

Sincerely,