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Title: School Safety Inspections

Introduced by: Gunjan Malhotra and Tamara Roumayah for the Medical Student Section

Original Author: Shubhangi Arora, Anne Drolet, Jeanne Kochkodan, Gunjan Malhotra, and Tamara Roumayah

Referred to: Reference Committee D

House Action: **APPROVE**

Whereas, children spend nearly one-third of their days in school buildings, and the environment of the school buildings may affect their health and well-being, and

Whereas, the American Association of School Administrators put out a statement that students are more likely to prosper when their environment is conducive to learning including the environmental conditions of the building¹, and

Whereas, schools older than 40 years likely require renovations (i.e., new electrical, roofing) and urban areas may have several older school buildings in various states of disrepair², and

Whereas, school districts are currently responsible for maintaining the school buildings in their districts, with varied results, and

Whereas, lack of proper inspection on behalf of some school districts has led to states of disrepair so severe that the health and safety of the children in that school is in jeopardy, such as in Detroit where there have been alarming reports of safety hazards including ceiling tiles falling on children, floors buckling, toxic mold growing in classrooms, inadequate heating systems, rodent and insect infestations³, and

Whereas, the conditions of the schools in Detroit have prompted teachers to organize “sick-out” days to protest these dangerous conditions in over 60 schools, leading to thousands of children not attending school for days at a time⁴, and

Whereas, the city of Detroit has responded to the recent public outcry against the deplorable conditions of the school buildings in the Detroit Public School system by committing to inspect all Detroit Public School buildings by April 2016, but has not made mention of any plans to continue with inspections at regular intervals after the current issues are addressed⁵, and

Whereas, other school districts in Michigan may have buildings in similar states of disrepair, in part due to lack of proper inspections, and

47 Whereas, the state of Michigan currently has policies in place to regulate the inspection
48 of schools in regards to food and sanitation, playground equipment safety, and fire safety, but
49 does not have policy regarding regulation of school building inspections on a regular basis for
50 health and safety concerns^{6,7,8}; therefore be it

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52 RESOLVED: That MSMS advocate for regular inspection of all school buildings for health
53 and safety violations, to be conducted by the local health departments and overseen by the
54 Michigan Department of Health and Human Services or an appropriate governing body, which
55 would include but not be limited to inspection of: malfunctioning heating systems, unsafe
56 water contamination, toxic mold, structural hazards (i.e., falling ceiling tiles, unsafe flooring),
57 rodent and insect infestations; and for the appropriate regulatory body to enforce the timely
58 correction of these health and safety violations by either the school district in question or the
59 state of Michigan, in order to protect the health and wellness of children in schools.

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62 WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE FISCAL NOTE: NONE

¹ Lyons, John B. "Do school facilities really impact a child's education." Council of Educational Facility Planners International, Scottsdale, Arizona. (ERIC Reproduction Service No. ED 458791) (2001). Accessed 02.29.2016. <http://sdpl.coe.uga.edu/articlesandpapers/lyons.html>

² Overview: How Old are America's Public Schools. National Center for Education Statistics. Accessed 02.29.2016. <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/FRSS/publications/1999048/>

³ Call for Public Hearings on Dangerous Learning Conditions [1.11.16]. Detroit Federation of Teachers. AFT Local 231, AFL-CIO. Accessed 02.29.2016. <http://dft231.mi.aft.org/call-public-hearings-dangerous-learning-conditions-11116#sthash.GyK5qCbw.dpuf>

⁴ Higgins, L. DPS Teachers at Rally: Sick-outs a demand to be heard. Detroit Free Press. Pub. 01.05.2016. Accessed 02.29.2016. <http://www.freep.com/story/news/local/michigan/detroit/2016/01/11/dps-schools-closed-sickouts/78618800/>

⁵ School Inspection Reports. City of Detroit. Accessed 02.29.2016. <http://www.detroitmi.gov/How-Do-I/Find/School-Inspection-Reports>

⁶ Food Safety and Sanitation. Michigan Department of Education. Accessed 02.29.2016. http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,4615,7-140-66254_50144-194536--,00.html

⁷ Playground Inspections. Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs. Accessed 02.29.2016. http://www.michigan.gov/lara/0,4601,7-154-63294_5529_49572_53751-217255--,00.html

⁸ Fire Safety Inspections. Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs. Accessed 02.29.2016. http://www.michigan.gov/lara/0,4601,7-154-63294_5529_49572_53751-82388--,00.html