

Reps. Lipton, Driskell, Hovey-Wright, Singh and Slavens offered the following resolution:

House Resolution No. 293.

A resolution to declare January 27-31, 2014, as Promise Zones Awareness Week in the state of Michigan.

Whereas, It is estimated that two- thirds of the jobs in Michigan's economy will require education beyond high school by 2025; and

Whereas, There is a bi-partisan consensus in our state that Michigan's economic future depends upon more of our citizens obtaining college degrees, technical certifications, and other meaningful post-secondary credentials; and

Whereas, Michigan's level of educational attainment has lagged behind the national average; and

Whereas, This problem is most severe in Michigan communities experiencing high rates of poverty; and

Whereas, The fortunes of these communities threaten Michigan's overall ability to grow and prosper; and

Whereas, In 2005, Kalamazoo became the first community in the United States to embrace a new concept for dramatically raising the level of educational attainment—a universal place-based scholarship initiative known as the Kalamazoo Promise; and

Whereas, In 2008, Michigan became the first state to give support and encouragement to communities that wanted to start their own universal scholarship programs by enacting what became known as the Promise Zones legislation; and

Whereas, In 2009, ten communities with above average poverty rates were given Promise Zones designations—Baldwin, Battle Creek, Benton Harbor, Detroit, Hazel Park, Jackson, Lansing, the Muskegon ISD, Pontiac and Saginaw; and

Whereas, It has taken tremendous effort on the part of community leaders in the Promise Zones to launch these scholarship programs and great generosity on the part of donors to raise the private funds needed to make them work; and

Whereas, Promise Zones make effective use of federal and state resources by requiring students to apply for needs-based aid before using their Promise Zone scholarships; and

Whereas, Promise Zones are making college and other post-secondary education more affordable for the young people of their communities and creating a “college-going culture” that increases students' aspirations for education beyond high school; and

Whereas, Promise Zones are reinforcing the message that every young person who graduates from high school in Michigan should be prepared for success in college, technical training, and the work place; and

Whereas, Promise Zones will help make the existence of a skilled, educated workforce a key component of the economic development strategies of their communities; and

Whereas, Promise Zones are, step by step, moving Michigan closer to its goal of having a workforce that is second to none; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That the members of this legislative body declare January 27-31, 2014, as Promise Zones Awareness Week in the state of Michigan; and be it further

Resolved, That the members of this legislative body support the goals and ideals of Promise Zones Awareness Week; and be it further

Resolved, That this legislative body encourages media organizations to participate in Promise Zones Awareness Week and help educate the public about benefits of Promise Zones.