

## SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 128

Senator LaSata offered the following resolution:

1 A resolution to oppose mandates related to COVID-19 at all  
2 public and private colleges and universities in Michigan.

3 Whereas, The COVID-19 Pandemic has taken an especially hard  
4 toll on our students at both universities and community colleges,  
5 which has been reflected in declining enrollment numbers.  
6 Enrollment at public four-year institutions in Michigan fell by 9.5  
7 percent from 2020 to last year, while private four-year colleges  
8 experienced a 6 percent decrease during that same time period.  
9 Enrollment at public two-year colleges, which disproportionately  
10 enroll the state's low-income students and adult students, declined  
11 by over 20 percent from fall 2019 to fall 2020. Statistics dating  
12 back to before the pandemic also reflect declining enrollment at  
13 institutions across the state; and

1           Whereas, This decline in enrollment presents a problem for  
2 employers looking to fill positions with skilled graduates.  
3 Michigan added thousands of jobs in March 2022 and the workforce  
4 need is expected to continue to increase in the next several years.  
5 The combination of declining enrollment and increased job  
6 opportunities creates a clear need for an educated workforce to  
7 compete with our neighboring states and beyond; and

8           Whereas, Mandates related to COVID-19, including vaccine  
9 requirements and building closures, create barriers for students  
10 seeking postsecondary education. In addition, implementing burdens  
11 such as mandatory online class, masks, fines, or frequent testing  
12 creates opportunities for postsecondary institutions to  
13 discriminate between vaccinated and unvaccinated students. This  
14 type of environment is likely to be frustrating and discouraging  
15 for many students; and

16           Whereas, We should be doing everything we can to encourage,  
17 not discourage, students to seek job training and postsecondary  
18 degrees, especially when the potential barriers are not essential -  
19 60 percent of the population in this state is already fully  
20 vaccinated. Further unnecessary mandates will result in increased  
21 resentment and resistance, not compliance; and

22           Whereas, Some institutions are easing the burden on students  
23 by making recommendations as opposed to implementing mandates, but  
24 this should be standard at all colleges and universities.  
25 Postsecondary institutions should ensure any COVID-related policies  
26 are not mandatory and allow waivers for medical, religious or any  
27 other objection, as is currently allowed in K-12 education; and

28           Whereas, In order improve the health of Michigan's economy, we  
29 need to do everything we can to ensure students stay on track and

1 complete their degrees. We must ensure students are not forced to  
2 put their education and futures on hold because of COVID-19  
3 mandates; now, therefore, be it

4 Resolved by the Senate, That we oppose mandates related to  
5 COVID-19 at all public and private colleges and universities in  
6 Michigan; and be it further

7 Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the  
8 chief executive officer of the Michigan Association of State  
9 Universities, the president of Michigan Independent Colleges and  
10 Universities, and the president of the Michigan Community College  
11 Association.