

MEMO

TO: House Education Committee Members
From: Michigan Association of Superintendents & Administrators, Michigan Association of School Boards, Michigan Association of Secondary School Principals, Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators, Middle Cities Education Association, School Equity Caucus, Barry ISD, Branch ISD, Calhoun ISD, Jackson ISD, Lenawee ISD, Monroe ISD, Macomb ISD, Genesee ISD, Oakland Schools, Wayne RESA, and the West Michigan Talent Triangle
RE: House Bill 4739
Date: January 28, 2020

House Bill 4739 (H1) raises many questions and issues for the signatories of this memo. Under the substitute the cost of the inspections will completely fall on the school districts and intermediate school districts. Not only is this an unconstitutional unfunded mandate, it will be very difficult for districts to afford to do this annually. Many inspections are already performed, that are not reflected in this legislation. These inspections are performed at no cost to schools.

Board members are not equipped to perform these open ended and unspecified health and safety inspections. In some cases, the bill asks five individuals to be responsible for the direct inspection of hundreds, if not thousands of school buildings who have little to no expertise or knowledge about school building safety inspections.

The timeline for remediation is unrealistic given the reality of school district operations and state-imposed bidding requirements. The bill would require that services be contracted within 14 days. Depending on the work that needs to be done, a district may need a bond, a bid, or at least a budget adjustment to be passed by the board in order to enter into a contract. This may not be possible in the mandated timeline. This would certainly be the case where a bond would require voter approval.

In short, the bill represents a massive undertaking, without funding or clear expectations and we urge a no vote on this version of HB 4739.

CC: Rep. Ryan Berman
House Republican Policy Office
House Democratic Policy Office