

Rep. Alma Smith offered the following resolution:

House Resolution No. 310.

A resolution to memorialize the United States Congress to enact the Youth Prison Reduction through Opportunities, Mentoring, Intervention, Support, and Education Act, the Youth PROMISE Act.

Whereas, Among the most effective approaches to reducing juvenile delinquency and criminal street gang activity are those preventing children from turning to crime in the first place -- encouraging early childhood home visitation, parental love and education, quality schooling, and proven youth and family development initiatives; and

Whereas, There are many alternatives to incarcerating youth that have been proven to be more effective in reducing crime and violence at the national, state, local, and tribal levels. Failure to provide for such effective alternatives is a pervasive problem that leads to increased youth, and later adult, crime and violence; and

Whereas, Research funded by the U.S. Department of Justice indicates that gang membership is short-lived among adolescents--with very few youth remaining gang-involved through their adolescent years. This indicates that there are opportunities for intervention; and

Whereas, Over-reliance on incarceration and confinement of youth, particularly in the early stages of delinquent behavior and for nonviolent delinquent behavior, has been shown to increase long-term crime risks; and

Whereas, Congress has before it the Youth Prison Reduction through Opportunities, Mentoring, Intervention, Support, and Education Act, the Youth PROMISE Act, (H.R. 3846), which seeks to provide for evidence-based and promising practices related to juvenile delinquency and criminal street gang activity prevention and intervention and to help build individual, family, and community strength to ensure that our youth lead productive, law-abiding, addiction- and gang-free lives; and

Whereas, The Youth PROMISE Act will provide resources to enable communities with the greatest concentration of juvenile delinquency and criminal street gang activity to come together to assess unmet needs and implement research-based prevention and intervention approaches to promote youth success and community safety; and

Whereas, The Youth PROMISE Act creates a PROMISE Advisory Panel, which will help the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention select PROMISE communities. It will also develop standards for the evaluation of juvenile delinquency and criminal street gang activity prevention and intervention methods carried out under the Youth PROMISE Act. Further, it provides for the collection of data related to the juvenile delinquency and criminal street gang activity prevention and intervention needs and resources in each designated geographic area in order to facilitate the strategic geographic allocation of resources provided under the act; and

Whereas, The Youth PROMISE Act establishes grants to enable local and tribal communities, via PROMISE Coordinating Councils, to conduct an objective assessment regarding juvenile delinquency and criminal street gang activity, resource needs, and community strengths necessary to effectively address juvenile delinquency and criminal street gang activity. Based upon the assessment, the PROMISE Coordinating Councils will develop plans that include a broad array of prevention and intervention programs that are responsive to the specifics of the community, account for the cultural and linguistic requirements of the community, and utilize approaches that have been shown effective in reducing the likelihood of a young person becoming involved in or continuing delinquent conduct or criminal street gang activity. Upon completion of the plan, the PROMISE Coordinating Councils may then apply for federal funds to assist with implementation. The act also provides for national evaluations of PROMISE programs and activities; and

Whereas, The Youth PROMISE Act requires that local units of government or Indian tribes receiving grants shall provide from nonfederal funds, in cash or in-kind, 25 percent of the costs of the activities carried out with such grants; and

Whereas, The Youth PROMISE Act establishes a National Center for Proven Practices Research, which will collect and disseminate research to PROMISE Coordinating Councils and to the public (including via an Internet website), as well as other information regarding evidence-based promising practices related to juvenile delinquency and criminal street gang activity prevention and intervention. The act also provides the opportunity for regional research partners to assist with developing their assessments and plans; and

Whereas, The Youth PROMISE Act provides for the hiring and training of Youth-Oriented Policing officers to implement strategic activities to minimize youth crime and victimization and reduce the long-term involvement of juveniles in illicit activities, juvenile delinquency, and criminal street gang activity. The act also establishes a Center for Youth-Oriented Policing, which will be responsible for identification, development, and dissemination to law enforcement agencies the best practices for Youth-Oriented Policing techniques and technologies; and

Whereas, The Youth PROMISE Act provides additional improvements to current laws affecting juvenile delinquency and criminal street gang activity, including support for youth victim and witness protection programs and extended and increased authorizations for the Juvenile Accountability Block Grant program; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That we memorialize the United States Congress to enact the Youth Prison Reduction through Opportunities, Mentoring, Intervention, Support, and Education Act, the Youth PROMISE Act; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, and the members of the Michigan congressional delegation.