

Rep. Howze offered the following resolution:

House Resolution No. 107.

A resolution to express the sense of this legislative body that the state of Michigan should intensify its efforts to reduce the high rates of teen pregnancies.

Whereas, Almost 800,000 teenagers become pregnant each year in the United States; and

Whereas, In 2008, there were 12,277 births to mothers between the ages of 15 and 19 in our state. In certain communities of Michigan, the rates of pregnancy far exceed the national and state averages. Detroit is a leader among American cities with the highest rates of births to teens. The recession has increased the difficulties stemming from teen pregnancies; and

Whereas, Despite progress over the last decade, nearly one-third of teenager girls in the United States become pregnant. This is the highest teen pregnancy rate among industrialized countries, and more than twice the rate of Canada; and

Whereas, Latina and African American teen girls are more likely than not to become pregnant at least once before the age of 20, and Native American teens have a birth rate more than double that of non-Hispanic white teens; and

Whereas, Teen pregnancy is closely linked to a number of critical social issues, such as poverty, educational attainment, involvement in the criminal justice and child welfare systems, and more. Teen childbearing is estimated to cost taxpayers in this country \$9.1 billion each year, most of which is due to costs associated with negative social and health outcomes for the children of teen parents; and

Whereas, A child is 9 times more likely to grow up in poverty if he or she is born to unmarried teen parents who have not yet completed high school. Less than half of mothers who have a child before they turn 18 ever graduate from high school, and less than two percent of mothers who have children before 18 have a college degree by age 30. Children of teen mothers are more likely to be born prematurely and at a low birth weight. Children of teen parents are twice as likely to suffer abuse and neglect than would occur if their mothers had delayed childbearing; and

Whereas, Fully 73 percent of adults and a plurality of teens wish that teens were getting more information about both abstinence and contraception; now, therefore be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That the members of this body believe that the state of Michigan should intensify its efforts to reduce the high rates of teen pregnancies and births by raising awareness about the importance of this critical issue, promoting parent-child communication, and investing in programs that have been proven to reduce teen pregnancy; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the Department of Community Health.