

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 234

Rep. Wakeman offered the following resolution:

1 A resolution to memorialize the Congress of the United States
2 to repeal the federal ban on Pell grants for prison-based
3 education.

4 Whereas, The federal Pell Grant Program provides need-based
5 grants to low-income undergraduate and certain postbaccalaureate
6 students to promote access to postsecondary education. Pell grants
7 have been helping millions of low-income students across the
8 country access postsecondary education for 45 years; and

9 Whereas, The federal Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement
10 Act denied all incarcerated individuals' eligibility for federal
11 financial aid in 1994, making prisoners ineligible to receive Pell
12 grants and therefore less likely to obtain a postsecondary degree
13 while incarcerated. Until 1992, Pell grants were available to



1 incarcerated individuals. As a result, education programs expanded
2 throughout the prison system, and by 1990, there were 772 prison
3 college programs in more than 1,000 correctional facilities; and

4 Whereas, Postsecondary courses and training for incarcerated
5 people will make them more likely to secure jobs and succeed
6 economically upon release. While currently only 24 percent of
7 people in federal prison have had access to some postsecondary
8 education, 65 percent of all new jobs nationwide now require a
9 postsecondary degree; and

10 Whereas, Postsecondary education and training programs lead to
11 lower recidivism rates, less crime, and improved public safety.
12 Incarcerated people who participate in postsecondary education and
13 training programs are 43 percent less likely to recidivate than
14 those who do not participate; and

15 Whereas, Prison education reduces violence within the prison
16 system. Prisons with college programs have fewer violent
17 incidents, which allows corrections officials to do their jobs in a
18 safer environment; and

19 Whereas, Prison-based education is cost-effective. Every
20 dollar invested in prison-based education yields \$4.00 to \$5.00 in
21 taxpayer savings in reduced long-term incarceration costs; and

22 Whereas, Removing the federal ban on Pell grants for prison
23 education would expand access to postsecondary education for people
24 in Michigan's prisons; now, therefore, be it

25 Resolved by the House of Representatives, That we memorialize
26 the Congress of the United States to repeal the federal ban on Pell
27 grants for prison-based education; and be it further

28 Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to
29 President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United



- 1 States House of Representatives, and the members of the Michigan
- 2 congressional delegation.

