

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 344

Rep. Shannon offered the following resolution:

1 A resolution to urge the Michigan Department of Health and
2 Human Services to prioritize educators, school administrators, and
3 school employees for receiving the COVID-19 vaccine.

4 Whereas, The COVID-19 Pandemic has upended nearly every aspect
5 of the lives of people in Michigan and countries across the world.
6 It has caused a devastating loss of life and has struck a blow to
7 our schools, communities, and the economy; and

8 Whereas, The development of COVID-19 vaccines is a beacon of
9 hope that offers the possibility of returning to a world free from
10 the concern that providing in-person education to our children will
11 spread the deadly virus; and

12 Whereas, The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services
13 (MDHHS) is responsible for the distribution of COVID-19 vaccines in

1 the state of Michigan. MDHHS has outlined a phased approach for the
2 distribution of vaccines beginning with hospitals, health care
3 workers, and vulnerable populations. Following the initial
4 distribution, the Division of Immunization within MDHHS will
5 identify the populations considered essential personnel, including
6 grocery and food distribution workers, healthcare workers not
7 immunized during phase 1, high risk populations, and other critical
8 populations; and

9 Whereas, Many communities are pushing for schools to commence
10 in-person learning as soon as possible. Increasing evidence
11 suggests that in-person learning is far superior to remote
12 learning. The American Academy of Pediatrics has stated that
13 children not only learn best when physically in the classroom, but
14 they also receive numerous other benefits, including learning
15 social and emotional skills, receiving healthy meals, and accessing
16 mental health services. In addition, remote learning has been shown
17 to exacerbate existing inequalities, as different communities have
18 unequal access to the internet and other technologies that are
19 required for remote learning. Remote learning also puts a strain on
20 working parents, which has devastating ripple effects for our
21 economy; and

22 Whereas, In order to safely commence in-person learning,
23 educators and school administrators must receive the COVID-19
24 vaccine. Nearly a third of the educator workforce nationally is
25 over the age of 55, while another quarter has existing medical
26 issues that place them at higher risk for a more serious infection.
27 In addition, because children are more likely to be asymptomatic,
28 the risk of exposure for educators and school personnel may be
29 higher due to the silent spread of the virus. The risk of exposure

1 is heightened even further as many schools are opening without
2 adequate resources, such as personal protective equipment; and

3 Whereas, Several education groups, including the National
4 Education Association, the School Superintendents Association, and
5 the American Federation of Teachers, have already urged the Centers
6 for Disease Control and Prevention to give adults in school systems
7 priority for vaccinations. They argue that this is not only
8 critical to fully reopening school buildings for instruction, but
9 doing so will generate trust in the vaccination program with the
10 education community serving as a "trusted messenger"; now,
11 therefore, be it

12 Resolved by the House of Representatives, That we urge the
13 Michigan Department of Health and Human Services to prioritize
14 educators, school administrators, and school employees for
15 receiving the COVID-19 vaccine; and be it further

16 Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the
17 Governor and the Director of the Michigan Department of Health and
18 Human Services.