

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 7

Senators Zorn, Daley, Theis, Runestad, Bizon, MacDonald, Nesbitt, Bumstead and VanderWall offered the following resolution:

1 A resolution to urge the Governor and the Michigan Department
2 of Health and Human Services to lift the suspension on high school
3 sports and allow play to resume immediately.

4 Whereas, The COVID-19 Pandemic has upended nearly every aspect
5 of the public and private lives of people in Michigan and across
6 the world. The disruption of school closures in particular has had
7 a devastating impact on students as they grapple with academic
8 challenges and suffer from a lack of social and emotional benefits
9 that traditional in-person schooling provides; and

10 Whereas, In response to the Pandemic, the Governor and the
11 Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) have
12 ordered various suspensions of both contact and non-contact high

1 school sports for different lengths of time. Most recently, MDHHS
2 announced that winter sports, including competitive cheer,
3 wrestling, and boys and girls basketball, will be suspended until
4 February 21st - a full month after the previous suspension was set
5 to expire; and

6 Whereas, While the order is intended to be in the best
7 interests of the students, these types of prohibitions ignore other
8 very serious harms that students are facing from the continued
9 suspension of high school sports. As a result of school closures,
10 students are suffering from crippling isolation which is severely
11 harming their mental health. According to a national survey of more
12 than 3,000 high school and college students regarding coronavirus,
13 87 percent reported stress and anxiety, while 57 percent reported
14 that their mental health had worsened. In addition, experts are
15 concerned about potential increases in youth suicide and argue that
16 it is critically important for teenagers to have regular contact
17 with their peers. Allowing students to participate in high school
18 sports would help reduce social isolation and could significantly
19 improve their mental health; and

20 Whereas, There is little data available that demonstrates why
21 the continued suspension of high school sports is necessary.
22 According to the Executive Director of the Michigan High School
23 Athletic Association, the negative rate for over 30,000 rapid
24 Covid-19 tests conducted over the last three months with fall
25 sports was 99.8 percent. Furthermore, without school sports,
26 students will seek outside activities through club sports, which
27 could potentially lead to a larger spread of the virus as students
28 travel to various locations. In addition, other neighboring states
29 have allowed their students to participate in winter sports for

1 several weeks without any significant Covid-19 outbreaks; now,
2 therefore, be it

3 Resolved by the Senate, That we urge the Governor and the
4 Michigan Department of Health and Human Services to lift the
5 suspension on high school sports and allow play to resume
6 immediately; and be it further

7 Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the
8 Governor of Michigan and the Director of the Michigan Department of
9 Health and Human Services.