



Michigan AFSCME Council 25 News Release

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For immediate release
October 23, 2009
Michigan Circuit

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AFSCME:

Cuts in Education Funding Jeopardize Michigan Recovery

Detroit MI October 23, 2009 -- Albert Garrett, President of Michigan Council 25 of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), AFL-CIO, issued the following statement:

“The education of children around the state is in jeopardy because of the deep cuts resulting from the Legislature’s inability to muster the courage necessary to properly fund our K-12 system,” stated Garrett. “The Legislature cut all schools \$165 per student in the disastrous Dillon-Bishop all-cuts budget. The Governor is required to cut all schools another \$127 per student because of lack of funds – a ‘proration’ required by law. That cut jeopardizes the education of all Michigan students and may even jeopardize federal stimulus money. And, despite all the buzz about a cut to the wealthiest school districts, if we restore the “20j” funding to 39 school districts, another \$30 per student cut to **ALL** school districts would be required!

“While part of the problem is the overall decline in the economy, that is not the whole story,” Garrett continued. “Thirty years ago the people of the State voted to set the limit on how much money the State could raise to fund necessary public services. Today we are collecting \$7.4 billion **LESS** than that amount. (Fiscal experts expect that we will collect \$9 billion less than that limit next year with a General Fund of \$6.9 billion or less.) Yet some Legislators continue to spread the myth that Michigan is a high tax state!

“The constitutional tax limit is a percentage of personal income,” added Garrett. “Personal income has fallen and that forces reductions in government services and government spending, but what is really threatening those services is that our current tax system is raising a smaller **percentage** of that smaller personal income. Part of that is because the State keeps giving away billions of dollars in tax breaks to businesses that promise us jobs that we never get.

“We are not all pulling together to protect those things most needed to grow a healthy state, and one of those things is excellence in public education,” concluded Garrett. “Businesses will not come to a state that does not invest in its education system. The next generation will not be trained for the jobs of the future without investing in our education system. Our state government must raise the funds needed to protect our future. It must act and it must act now.”

Albert Garrett is also Michigan Vice President for AFSCME International. Michigan AFSCME Council 25 represents more than 90,000 public workers across Michigan. AFSCME International represents 1.4 million public workers nationwide. News releases issued by Michigan AFSCME Council 25 are available at <http://www.miafscme.org/Releases.htm>