

Eaton County Democratic Party

January 2010

www.eatoncountymocrats.org



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THANK YOU REPRESENTATIVE MIKE SIMPSON

State Representative Mike Simpson (D-Jackson) passed away on Friday, December 18, 2009. He was suffering from a rare blood disorder called light-chain deposition. Simpson, 47, was in his second term representing the residents of Jackson County.

During his first term, Representative Simpson was hailed with these successes:

- Moving key legislation to protect millions in federal funding for the expansion of Jackson County Airport
- Playing a key role in assisting the Leoni Sewer authority in its efforts to secure a \$1 million grant and a \$34 million low interest loan to upgrade the sewer system that serves a large part of Jackson County
- Playing a key role in securing Capital Outlay funding for a proposed \$22 million expansion and renovation project at Jackson Community College
- Sponsoring legislation out of the House to repeal Michigan's one of a kind drug immunity law. The repeal would hold drug companies accountable when their products harm or kill our residents
- Worked with the Michigan Economic Development Corporation in assisting several companies in mid-Michigan to create or retain hundreds of jobs
- Passing legislation that allowed Jackson County to become designated as a SmartZone

<http://twitter.com/eatoncountydems>

HOUSE DEMS: 'RACE TO THE TOP' SCHOOL REFORMS NOW LAW

Earlier this week, Michigan House Democrats praised the signing of a law that will give Michigan an edge in qualifying for up to \$400 million in federal funding that Michigan's schools need in order to prepare students for 21st century jobs. The reforms will dramatically improve Michigan schools while positioning the state to receive a share of more than \$4 billion in education funding available through the federal "Race to the Top" program.

The "Race to the Top" program makes \$4.35 billion in federal education funding available to states that have raised student performance and show a commitment to making continued improvements by establishing innovative reforms. Michigan is in the running to receive up to \$400 million in federal funds.

Reforms signed into law today include:

- Adopting tough new standards that prepare students to succeed in college and the workplace;
- Building data systems that measure student growth and success;
- Recruiting, developing, rewarding and retaining effective teachers and administrators;
- Turning around the state's lowest-achieving schools.

Join us on
January 19
at 7:00 p.m. for
our monthly
meeting.

The meeting
will take place
at 2949 S.
Waverly -
Voiture 946 40
et 8

BENEFITS OF HOME WEATHERIZATION PROGRAM FOR MICHIGAN

Michigan's Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) is helping to reduce energy costs and improve energy efficiency in the homes of low-income families throughout the state. Michigan received more than \$243 million from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (Recovery Act), which will fund weatherization projects in more than 30,000 homes over the next three years.

The weatherization program works to permanently reduce energy costs for low-income families through the installation of household energy-efficiency measures, while ensuring their health and safety. The program is administered by the Michigan Department of Human Services (DHS) and implemented in communities by the state's 30 Community Action Agencies (CAA's), including Capital Area Community Services, which manages the weatherization program for Ingham, Clinton, Eaton, and Shiawassee counties.

On average, weatherization reduces heating bills by 25 percent and overall energy expenditures by \$350 to \$400 per year. Since the program began, 273,620 Michigan homes have been weatherized. Reduced energy costs have allowed families to spend their savings on groceries, doctor bills and other needs.

www.michigan.gov/dhs-weatherization

LATEST HEALTH CARE NEWS

Health Reform Websites

www.healthreform.gov

Forums - www.healthreform.gov/forums

President's Plan - www.whitehouse.gov/issues/health-care

Senate Plan - www.stabenow.senate.gov/healthcare

From Congressman Schauer - www.schauer.house.gov/Issues

On December 9, 2009, President Obama announced the release of nearly \$600 million to strengthen community health centers. The new funding will help health centers serve 500,000 additional patients and use health information technology.

HEALTH DISPARITIES: A CASE FOR CLOSING THE GAP

The United States spends more than any other nation in the world on health care - in 2007 we spent \$2.2 trillion.¹ Despite consistent increases in spending, disparities among demographic groups persist. Low-income Americans and racial and ethnic minorities experience disproportionately higher rates of disease, fewer treatment options, and reduced access to care. With unemployment on the rise, the disparities already apparent among these groups will continue to increase. It is vital that health reform reduces costs to make health care affordable; protects a patient's choice of doctors, hospitals, and insurance plans; invests in prevention and wellness; and assures quality, affordable health care for all Americans.

www.healthreform.gov/reports/healthdisparities