

STATE SENATOR • JOHN J. GLEASON • 27TH DISTRICT

Gleason Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Oct. 23, 2007

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Senate Approves Gleason Legislation to Give Disabled Individuals the Respect They Deserve

Change to School Code Eliminates Archaic and Inappropriate Language

LANSING—The Michigan Senate voted unanimously today to pass Senate Bill 730, legislation sponsored by Sen. John Gleason (D-Flushing) that will amend the Revised School Code language to change all references to “handicapped person” to “person with a disability.”

“Over time, we have come to realize that many of the common references we have come to use to refer to different people are no longer appropriate or acceptable to those individuals, or society as a whole,” said Sen. Gleason. “Just as we amend bill and law language to update technical terms and outdated concepts, we should make the effort to amend our legislation to include socially acceptable terminology as well.”

The term “handicapped” has long been recognized as being offensive to individuals with disabilities. Although the term has been replaced with more current language in sections of the Michigan Administrative Code dealing with disabled students, references to handicapped individuals or handicappers remain in some sections of the Revised School Code. This legislation will ensure those references are changed to reflect present usage.

“I have been working on behalf of people with disabilities for my entire legislative career, and they deserve to be addressed with the same dignity and respect we all expect,” Gleason said. “‘Handicapped’ is a once-common term that has accumulated a negative connotation and unduly limits the capabilities and spirit of people with a disability.”

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