

## Dakota Soda

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**From:** Jody Maloney <jodym@ludington.org>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 14, 2024 5:38 PM  
**To:** Dakota Soda  
**Subject:** Support for SB 350 & SB 555 from Mason County Promise Zone

M. Soda,  
Please convey the following messages of support for SB 350 and SB 555 to the House Appropriations Committee members. Thank you!

To the esteemed leadership, Chair Witwer, Vice Chair O'Neal, and Vice Chair Lightner, and to the honorable members of the Michigan House Appropriations Committee,

My Name is Jody Maloney, Director of the Mason County Promise Zone. I am writing to express our Promise Zone's enthusiastic support of Senate Bill 350, and to strongly encourage the members of the House to support its passage. On behalf of Mason County's Promise Zone, I am writing to emphasize that we urgently need broader support for post-secondary educational attainment in rural Michigan to combat persistent poverty, to grow innovation, and to improve access to long-term earning opportunities for our young people. Our rural youth depend on you to take the necessary steps to enable them to greet their futures with hope. Please pass Senate Bill 350.

To the esteemed leadership, Chair Witwer, Vice Chair O'Neal, and Vice Chair Lightner, and to the honorable members of the Michigan House Appropriations Committee,

My Name is Jody Maloney, Director of the Mason County Promise Zone. I am writing to express our Promise Zone's enthusiastic support of Senate Bill 555, which will allow Promise Zones to develop innovative post-secondary success activities to better support our Promise Scholars' completion of certification, degree and transfer requirements. Currently, 31% of our first three cohorts of students have graduated or completed a certification; Our Zone's goal is 75%. The Mason County Promise Zone has identified success coaching as a growth opportunity that would better support diverse scholar needs, and help improve scholar completion rates. However, the current limitations of Promise Zone legislation do not make funding college-level educational activities like employing Zone-based success coaches or developing Zone-driven success programming to support scholar achievement possible. Approving Senate Bill 555 will allow Michigan's Promise Zones to use their current and future funding to better serve their scholars, and to offer the programming and supports to enhance scholars' college-experiences through educational improvement activities. The Mason County Promise Zone strongly encourages the honorable members of the House to make this work possible by passing SB555.

Cheers,  
Jody Maloney, M.A. Ed.  
Mason County Promise Zone Director & College Access Network Specialist  
231-239-8224  
119 S. Rath Ave., Ludington, MI 49431  
Ludington & Scottville Area Chamber of Commerce  
119 S. Rath, Ludington, MI 49431



## Dakota Soda

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**From:** Miller, Melissa <msmiller@ncresa.org>  
**Sent:** Friday, February 16, 2024 11:30 AM  
**To:** Dakota Soda  
**Subject:** Card of Support for SB 350 and SB 555

Dear Dakota,

Hope you are well. My name is Melissa Miller and I serve as the Administrator for the Newaygo County Area Promise Zone and wondered if you might be able to share the below note of support for SB 350 and SB 555? Please let me know if you might have any questions or concerns.

Thank you,  
Melissa Miller

Representative Angela Witwer, Chair, House Appropriations Committee

Dear Representative Angela Witwer,

We are writing to express our strong support for Senate Bill 350 and Senate Bill 555, both of which are integral to advancing our shared goals within the Promise Zone community. As the Newaygo County Area Promise Zone Chair and Administrator, we have witnessed firsthand the positive impact these bills will have on our constituents and broader community. SB 350 will allow Promise Zones flexibility to address the full range of student needs as defined by their institution's Cost of Attendance, while upholding the current law's minimum scholarship requirement – a tuition-free path to an associate degree for all eligible high school graduates.

Similarly, Promise Zones collectively recognize that our students need support that promotes readiness for college and success in post-secondary education. SB 555 specifies that Promise Zones can support these activities. It also ensures that legislative appointees to local Promise Zone boards come from the communities served by the Promise Zone.

Together, these bills represent a significant step forward in our efforts to revitalize Promise Zone communities and empower residents to thrive. We urge you to support SB 350 and SB 555 and encourage its passage, recognizing the transformative impact they will have on our constituents' lives.

Thank you for your attention to these critical matters.

Sincerely,

Blake Prewitt, Newaygo County Area Promise Zone Chair  
Melissa Miller, Newaygo County Area Promise Zone Administrator

Melissa Miller  
Administrator of Career and College Readiness  
Newaygo County RESA | Newaygo County Area Promise Zone | WE CAN! Newaygo County  
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