



HB 4074

HOUSE EDUCATION STANDING COMMITTEE MEETING

APRIL 27, 2021

Agenda Item: HB 4074 (Rep. Brann) Education; curriculum; program of instruction in free enterprise and entrepreneurship; encourage in school districts and public school academies.

The Michigan Council on Economic Education (MCEE) stands in opposition to HB 4074.

MCEE believes in the importance of free enterprise and entrepreneurship and bedrocks to our economic system. Our stance against this bill is not a position against the material being taught in schools. We believe these two topics need an increased focus. Where and how is more of the questions that needs to be asked. The bill seems to be encouraging a free enterprise and entrepreneurship curriculum project in a social studies course and even lays out the requirements of that project. It seems outside the purview of the legislature to be encouraging what is essentially a project in a specific course. More so, social studies teachers have very little experience with business plans and business vocabulary. Wouldn't this project be better in a CTE or business course?

If this bill is enacted it would mean that this would likely have to be taken on in a class such as economics. These concepts are already addressed in the state standards for that course. Teachers determine how to best teach their students these concepts. A project-based business plan would likely take 3 weeks or more of instruction. That would mean there is an opportunity cost to this requirement. Perhaps the teacher would eliminate the personal finance part of the standards since they aren't tested so they get to this requirement if so implemented by their district. Is that what we want as a state? If not removal of personal finance, what do we want removed to provide for this instructional time?

This bill is encouraging a specific assignment in a specific subject area. It seems like an overreach to me. Why not have students complete a personal budget, come up with an investing plan, risk avoidance plan, or other activity. I have an endless list that I could put right up there or higher in importance than a business plan. You won't find many more in favor of free enterprise instruction than me, but this doesn't seem like the right solution to any problem you may be seeing.

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