

Mackinac Center 2020 Policy Priorities, Revised

The COVID-19 pandemic has dramatically reshaped the economic and policy landscape in Michigan. The crisis our state is going through has exposed serious and longstanding deficiencies in our health care and education systems. Outdated and burdensome regulations interfered with our state's ability to respond nimbly to a fast-moving crisis until they were waived. As Michigan prepares for the post-COVID recovery from an unprecedented shutdown of the economy, state leaders must apply the lessons learned from this experience so that we are better prepared for the next crisis. Accordingly, the Mackinac Center has revised its 2020 policy priorities to reflect the most important and time-sensitive issues state leaders should address during the remainder of this legislative session to protect public health and promote economic recovery.

Expand Access, Quality and Affordability of Health Care

- Pass legislation that would make permanent the governor's temporary relief of Certificate-of-Need laws
- Reform medical scope-of-practice requirements by codifying certain temporary suspensions implemented by the governor's executive order
- Pass legislation to allow for expanded telehealth access
- Remove licensing requirements for medical personnel that are arbitrary, unnecessary, or prevent them from practicing to the top of their training and abilities
- Increase the duration and flexibility of short-term, limited-duration health plans from three months to 12, and allow such plans to be renewed for up to three years — maximizing their versatility to the fullest extent allowed by federal law
- Pass legislation to protect patients against surprise medical billing

Expand Digital/Blended Learning and Competency-Based Education

- Direct a portion of Emergency Relief Grants in the federal CARES ACT to:
 - Fill inequitable gaps where student access to broadband internet and useful digital devices is limited or lacking
 - Provide reading scholarships for at-risk students, who tested at least one level below proficient in either of the last two school years (scholarships should be directed to families through a third-party nonprofit organization)
 - Offer teacher stipends for professional development in online instruction, especially for teaching students with disabilities
 - Underwrite a share of remedial education expenses for next fall's college freshmen whose learning was disrupted

- Move Michigan toward a system that strongly supports personalized, mastery-based learning by:
 - Building on the governor’s executive order, statutorily remove the Labor Day start date requirement and provide incentives for districts to adopt balanced calendars and other flexible learning schedules (districts may need more flexibility in labor relations to execute these initiatives)
 - Expand the state’s pilot exploration into competency-based education through the establishment of an “innovation zone” that creates individual learning plans, develops assessments, assigns course credit through multiple pathways and enables more funding to follow students across multiple districts as they learn at their own pace
- Guarantee returning students the opportunity to take an August 2020 benchmark assessment to determine their progress and proper placement in the fall, and parents the opportunity to help determine their child’s placement
- Prioritize the foundation allowance and funding streams that directly follow at-risk students over categorical grants in the 2021 school aid budget, limiting the gap that benefits property-rich districts as much as possible

Reduce Occupational Licensure Burdens

- Pass legislation that makes permanent the relief to licensing requirements the governor used in her executive orders
- Restrict state licensure agencies from denying occupational licenses to individuals with a criminal history that is unrelated to the tasks of the occupation
- Institute a process to regularly review the necessity and propriety of all state occupational licenses
- Conform licensure requirements and establish license reciprocity agreements with the U.S. military and other states



Ensure the Permanent Defeat of “Good Jobs for Michigan” and Other Proposed Corporate Welfare Schemes



Reduce Overcriminalization and Overregulation

- Reduce the total number of criminal laws and administrative offenses that contain criminal penalties



Reform Alcoholic Beverage Regulations

- Allow any licensee to offer to deliver alcoholic beverages, including liquor
- Add florists and other merchants to list of businesses allowed to sell beer and wine
- Legalize the direct shipment of beer, [wine](#) and liquor from out-of-state merchants to Michigan residents
- Allow alcoholic beverage distributors to deliver other products
- Enact the legislative package that would increase a brewery’s self-distribution limit and exempt its taproom sales from it
- Pass repeal of minimum shelf-price law



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