

## HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 184

Reps. Woolford, Robinson, Kelly, Kunse, Greene, Maddock, Alexander, Cavitt, BeGole, Rigas, Schmaltz, Outman, Johnsen, Bruck and VanderWall offered the following resolution:

1       A resolution to urge the United States Congress to swiftly  
2       pass House Bill 1156, the Pandemic Unemployment Fraud Enforcement  
3       Act, to ensure that federal and state authorities have sufficient  
4       time to hold fraudsters accountable and recover stolen taxpayer  
5       funds.

6       Whereas, During COVID-19, states across the country saw  
7       unprecedented levels of fraud in pandemic unemployment programs.  
8       These programs were targeted by organized crime rings and  
9       fraudsters, with losses estimated to be in the hundreds of billions  
10      of dollars nationwide; and

11      Whereas, Michigan was not immune from fraudulent claims for  
12      pandemic unemployment benefits. A 2021 report estimated that the

1 state's Unemployment Insurance Agency paid 8.4 to 8.51 billion  
2 dollars in potentially fraudulent unemployment benefits during  
3 COVID-19. This included 2.7 to 2.8 billion dollars paid in claims  
4 involving likely imposter fraud and 5.6 to 5.7 billion dollars paid  
5 in claims involving likely intentional misrepresentation fraud. In  
6 December 2023, the Office of the Auditor General found that between  
7 January 2020 and October 2022, Michigan paid out 245.1 million  
8 dollars to individuals potentially ineligible for benefits,  
9 including those who were incarcerated, deceased, or residing in  
10 long-term care facilities; and

11       Whereas, The statute of limitations on federal prosecutions  
12 for non-capital offenses is five years. However, pandemic  
13 unemployment fraud cases involve a multitude of layers, including  
14 identify theft, interstate crime, and money laundering schemes.  
15 These actions can take years to investigate and prosecute properly  
16 - five years is simply not enough time; and

17       Whereas, The Pandemic Unemployment Fraud Enforcement Act seeks  
18 to extend the statute of limitations for prosecuting fraud in  
19 pandemic unemployment programs from five years to ten years.  
20 Extending the statute of limitations will give investigators more  
21 time to track down fraud and recover misused funds. Without  
22 extended enforcement, many cases will expire before justice can be  
23 served; and

24       Whereas, Extending enforcement authority protects taxpayers  
25 from the long-term financial harm of these crimes. Honest taxpayers  
26 should not be forced to carry the burden of government  
27 mismanagement and criminal fraud. Every dollar recovered is a  
28 dollar that can go towards schools, infrastructure, and families in  
29 need. Ensuring fraud is punished strengthens public confidence in

1 government safety-net programs for families who truly need help;  
2 and

3       Whereas, Combating fraud should not be a partisan issue. Both  
4 parties should agree that protecting taxpayers and enforcing the  
5 law are fundamental responsibilities of government. By adopting  
6 this resolution, this chamber will not only demonstrate leadership  
7 in demanding accountability at the federal level, but it will also  
8 show that it stands with taxpayers; and

9       Whereas, Passing the Pandemic Unemployment Fraud Enforcement  
10 Act will be about accountability in government programs and  
11 deterring future acts of fraud, and it will protect taxpayer  
12 dollars and restore trust in public assistance programs. A longer  
13 enforcement window sends a strong message - fraud against taxpayers  
14 will be pursued relentlessly; now, therefore, be it

15       Resolved by the House of Representatives, That we urge the  
16 United States Congress to swiftly pass House Bill 1156, the  
17 Pandemic Unemployment Fraud Enforcement Act, to ensure that federal  
18 and state authorities have sufficient time to hold fraudsters  
19 accountable and recover stolen taxpayer funds; and be it further

20       Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the  
21 President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United  
22 States House of Representatives, and the members of the Michigan  
23 congressional delegation.