

Rep. Calley offered the following concurrent resolution:

House Concurrent Resolution No. 33.

A concurrent resolution to create an ad hoc committee to study and recommend standards regarding the use of policy advocacy Internet websites by elected officials.

Whereas, The resources of the state of Michigan are meant to promote the well-being of all the citizens of our state in a fair and reasonable manner; and

Whereas, Elected officials have a need and a right to express their policy positions and to make those expressions known and available to the public at large; and

Whereas, Internet websites operated under the auspices of the state of Michigan are an important tool for elected officials to express and advocate for their policy positions; and

Whereas, When issues or matters of policy arise where citizens--including legislators, executive officials, and other state employees--disagree, advocacy for such matters should be reserved for websites and other forums that are not part of the official institutional websites for the state of Michigan; and

Whereas, Recent incidents involving state of Michigan websites, both executive and legislative, as well as staff time and computer assets being utilized to promote only one side of a controversial issue, have exposed potential conflicts of interest that are troubling to many Michigan taxpayers; and

Whereas, The use of such state-sponsored forums, including on-line petitions, which gather identifying information about individual citizens that can later be exploited for political or commercial purposes, represents a breach in public service ethics and a betrayal of the goodwill of unsuspecting citizens who are not warned that their information can be obtained by political organizations, commercial marketers, or other private interests; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That there be created an ad hoc committee to study and recommend standards regarding the use of policy advocacy Internet websites by elected officials. This ad hoc committee is to be comprised of five members of the House of Representatives, appointed in the same manner as standing committees of the House are appointed, and five members of the Senate, appointed in the same manner as standing committees of the Senate are appointed. It is charged with the task of issuing a report that includes standards for website advocacy and shall address the issue of properly notifying citizens who provide identifying information that such information will be a matter of public record that can be obtained by private parties for political, charitable, or commercial use. The committee shall complete its report no later than March 31, 2008; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the Office of the Governor, the Michigan Attorney General, the Michigan Secretary of State, the Chief Justice of the Michigan Supreme Court, and the head of each of the departments within the executive branch.