



35TH DISTRICT  
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MICHIGAN HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
**KYRA HARRIS BOLDEN**  
STATE REPRESENTATIVE

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January 21, 2020

Mark Uyl  
Executive Director  
MHSAA  
1661 Ramblewood Drive  
East Lansing, MI 48823

Dear Mr. Uyl,

On behalf of constituents of the 35<sup>th</sup> House district and the 11<sup>th</sup> Senate district, we respectfully urge you to continue with the process of making MSHAA swimming more inclusive for para-students at state championship events with physical and cognitive disabilities.

According to the State of Michigan's Education Department website, there are 18,455 students with cognitive impairments, 2,663 students with hearing impairments, 1,695 students with physical impairments, 789 students with visual impairments and 29 students with deaf-blindness. The National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) has a membership of 51 state associations (including Washington D.C.) and serves 19,500 high schools and 12 million young people. It has published guidelines, "Best Practices for Disability Swimming and Diving Para Sport for High School Students" which also includes options of scoring models and advancement to the state championship.

In addition, Michigan Swimming, which is a part of a larger organization, USA Swimming, governs amateur competitive swimming in the United States. Michigan Swimming's Para-Swimming Committee adopted rules and time standards for the inclusion of swimmers with a disability. Furthermore, 12 states, including five Midwest states: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Missouri, and Nebraska have adopted rules, regulations, and time standards for swimming to be more inclusive for para-student athletes to be able to compete. We hope that you would consider adopting rules, regulations, and time standards for swimming for para-athletes.

We support the continued conversation to make MSHAA sports more inclusive for all Michigan students and hope more students have the chance to compete.

Sincerely,

Kyra Harris Bolden  
State Representative  
35th District

Jeremy Moss  
State Senator  
11th District