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February 26, 2025

Dear Ann Arbor Public School Board of Education:

This letter is regarding the proposed Thurston Elementary School expansion into the Thurston Nature Center.

My office has received consistent outreach from constituents who are concerned with the impact that this project could have on nearby green spaces and fragile habitats, which are vital for our local ecosystems. Beyond the direct feedback provided to my office, I am additionally aware of a community petition launched by Ann Arborites with similar anxieties, which has received over one thousand signatures.

Community members are apprehensive that several maintained habitats will be demolished with the expansion as proposed. Thurston Nature Center nurtures rain gardens, oak savannah, and prairie, which would be impacted by a new building. Following construction, the new building's proximity to the pond and wooded trails may lead to further noise and light pollution, stormwater runoff, and other damaging consequences for the remaining habitat space.

I request that the magnitude of the community concern regarding the safety, process, cost, and environmental impacts of this project is considered in your decision making.

Thank you for your consideration. If you have any further questions, please contact me or my staff.

Sincerely yours,



Debbie Dingell
Member of Congress