STATE OF MICHIGAN
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
LANSING

JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM
GOVERNOR

JOHN D. CHERRY, JR.
LT. GOVERNOR

May 31, 2005

Darien Wirick, Timmy Mead, Chase Hullinger,
Dakota McDonald and Brooke Hojara
c/o Mrs. Best's 4th Grade Class
Howard Elementary School
2788 Mannix Street
Niles, MI 49120

Dear Darien, Timmy, Chase, Dakota and Brooke:

I was so pleased to hear that you and your fourth-grade class visited the State Capitol Building recently. What an exciting trip that must have been for you. I remember the first time I ever walked inside the Capitol – I stood in awe as I looked up at the star-filled ceiling. It was so beautiful.

As your teacher probably told you, my schedule is very busy, and I am not always in my Capitol office. I am frequently traveling around the state, giving speeches or attending meetings – which is what I was doing the day you visited. I hope you had a great time when you were in Lansing – Michigan's capital city.

In your letter, you asked me several questions which I will try to answer.

1) **Is my job fun?** Yes! I love my job. I have the *best* job in the state of Michigan. I love it because I get to help people. That is one of the most important things that any one of us can ever do – to be of service and to help one another. If I could give you just one piece of advice as you grow into adults, it would be to devote yourself to helping those in need.

2) **How am I doing at my job?** I think I'm doing a pretty good job. Michigan was recently ranked as the nation's third best-run state by *Governing* magazine. Our report card gave us a B+ and said that Michigan is an outstanding leader in several areas: managing money, people, infrastructure, and information. Only Virginia and Utah scored higher than Michigan – both received an A-. Michigan was among four other states receiving a B+. What this grade means is that Michigan is doing its very best to make sure every Michigan citizen gets every penny of value out of every one of their tax dollars.

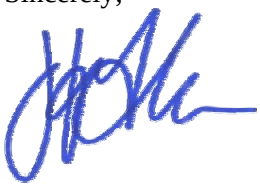
3) **Do I like coffee?** I sure do. I have a cup – black – every morning when I meet with my staff and often another one when I meet with constituents.

4) **Do I play video games in my spare time?** You know boys and girls, I don't have a lot of spare time, but when I do, I like to spend it with my family doing things as a family – like going to my daughters' basketball games or reading to my son. My son, who is seven, enjoys video games, and I watch closely when he plays, because there are so many games out there that I think are not appropriate for children his age.

5) **Who are my favorite football and basketball teams?** Oh boy, this is a tough one, because I like so many teams. Of course, my favorite pro teams are the Lions and the Pistons. My other favorites are the teams on which my kids play.

Thank you so much for writing to me. I encourage you to make it a habit to stay in touch with your leaders in government and to become involved. We are so fortunate to live in a country where everyone's voice matters. Being able to participate in the governing process is both a privilege and a responsibility. It is our responsibility to nurture it and care for it so that it continues on for our kids and our grandkids.

Sincerely,



Jennifer M. Granholm
Governor

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