

Reps. McMillin, Sheltroun, Agema, Calley, Dean, Caul, Genetski, Haveman, Pearce, Crawford, Haugh, Rick Jones and Meekhof offered the following resolution:

House Resolution No. 115.

A resolution to urge Eastern Michigan University to respect the religious rights of its students and staff and halt all discriminatory practices and to urge the Michigan Attorney General to investigate the Julea Ward case to determine if her civil rights have been violated.

Whereas, Julea Ward, a student in the Eastern Michigan University Graduate School of Counseling, was dismissed from this program in March 2009, over her response to a client prior to a counseling session. Ms. Ward apparently did not agree prior to the session to affirm the client's homosexual behavior as morally acceptable. On the advice of her supervising professor, she referred the client to another counselor. Her case went before a review hearing, which resulted in her dismissal from the counseling program; and

Whereas, At the heart of this situation, which has drawn widespread attention and is currently the subject of a lawsuit filed with the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan, is whether Ms. Ward's dismissal was based on her religious beliefs. The university's policies on counseling practices regarding homosexual relationships run counter to the tenets of her faith; and

Whereas, The university's decision to discipline a student with dismissal near the conclusion of her program is most disturbing to many people. The actions Julea Ward did take, to refer the client to another counselor, do not at all seem disrespectful of the client or the client's rights. This is in apparent sharp contrast to the manner in which Ms. Ward was treated when she exercised her own rights to follow her religious beliefs; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That we urge Eastern Michigan University to respect the religious rights of its students and staff and halt all discriminatory practices and to urge the Michigan Attorney General to investigate the Julea Ward case to determine if her civil rights have been violated; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the President and Regents of Eastern Michigan University and the Office of the Michigan Attorney General.