



96TH DISTRICT
STATE CAPITOL
P.O. BOX 30014
LANSING, MI 48909-7514

MICHIGAN HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

TIMOTHY BESON

STATE REPRESENTATIVE

PHONE: (517) 373-0158
FAX: (517) 373-8881
TimothyBeson@house.mi.gov
www.RepBeson.com

4/23/2025

To Whom It May Concern,

I write in strong support of a \$100,000 Legislative Directed Fund allocation to *Gideon Corporation US (501c3)*—a vital investment that will have a lifelong impact on Saginaw's youth.

Saginaw, Michigan, faces serious challenges. In 2021, the FBI ranked it as the fourth most violent city in the U.S., and in 2018, its violent crime rate was 473% above the national average. In response, Gideon Corporation launched *Gideon's Gym* in 2020 to serve as a haven and a catalyst for change—providing mentorship, structure, and purpose through fitness, life coaching, and military-style discipline.

Gideon serves over 30 members, ages 6 to 35, offering five courses that range from introductory fitness to competitive training. The gym operates 12 hours a day, providing one-on-one mentorship, individualized fitness sessions, and a safe space to develop coping strategies, emotional intelligence, and respect. Its staff—military veterans who themselves grew up in Saginaw—connect with youth authentically, building trust and modeling success.

To reach even more youth, Gideon seeks to purchase a travel van to eliminate transportation barriers. The van will run twice daily, ensuring that lack of transportation doesn't keep kids from this critical support system.

The requested funding will also cover membership fees, stipends for youth, USA Boxing costs, and ongoing facility improvements. Gideon's coaches—including President Joe Mendez—volunteer their time, and many members come from families who can't afford even basic program costs.

What Gideon is doing works. Their deep community roots and lived experience give them unmatched credibility and influence. When Saginaw youth look at their coaches, they see a future they can believe in. This funding is more than an investment—it's a lifeline.

Please direct any questions to my office at TimothyBeson@house.mi.gov or (517) 373-0158.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Timothy Beson".

State Representative
96th State House District