

CAPITOL NEWS UPDATE

STATE OF THE STATE JANUARY 23, 2018

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SNYDER REMAINS RELENTLESSLY UPBEAT DURING LAST STATE OF THE STATE ADDRESS

During his final State of the State address on Tuesday night, Michigan Gov. Rick Snyder kept with the familiar theme of “relentless positive action” which has been the hallmark of his eight years in office.

Beginning his speech by showing that the outside world has taken notice, Snyder held up placards of Wall Street Journal headlines – the first from 2009, calling Michigan “The State of Joblessness” and the second from the 2017, titled “The Michigan Comeback Story.”

Snyder went on to cover a wide range of topics including Michigan’s income and job growth; the demonstration of fiscal responsibility during his tenure; reversing the population drain; innovative changes to infrastructure, including the upcoming groundbreaking of the Gordie Howe International Bridge; bringing jobs to Detroit and Flint; and continuing to work to see good water results and replace lead service lines in Flint and throughout the state.

In addition to financial health, Snyder touted the upward trend of Michigan’s quality of life along with increases in Pure Michigan funding, investments in the arts and culture, and the Healthy Michigan program—all part of Michigan’s reinvention story.

Social programs also made the list of accomplishments, including the Silver Key Coalition, Veterans benefits, and programs such as Vocational Village which retrains prisoners, allowing them to gain career skills and partner with employers to get hired. Snyder also pointed to changes within the Michigan Dept. of Corrections that have transformed how the state’s prisons operate, along with the transformation of the state’s number of prisoners, which is the lowest since 1993.

Snyder did mention several challenges facing the state, with Opioid addiction being one of the biggest. Giving his hallmark “shout out,” Snyder recognized Lt. Gov. Brian Calley, legislators, and law enforcement for creating new laws and new ways to begin addressing the issue.

Scattered throughout the speech, Snyder took the time to recognize a diverse group of real world examples of success including a financial technology expert from California who is now making Michigan her home, a former prisoner who has found a career and new lease on life through the Vocational Village program, and a veteran now working for Rousch. The highlight of the guests, was Jeremiah Nelson, a Michigan toddler with Spina Bifida who zoomed through the doors with his robotics car built by high school robotics teams to show just how much technology and robotics training can help lives.

Although he reminded the audience that his term has been one of balanced budgets, retirement reforms, and reducing unfunded liabilities, it is clear from his to do list that he is not done yet.

Issues such as mobility, talent, education, infrastructure, and fiscal responsibility are next on his list. Snyder said the world's leader in the electrification of vehicles will "stay on the gas," as it works to change the way we build vehicles, drive and use our infrastructure. Although he mentioned talent, he did not go into much detail about the large-scale plan he will be introducing in February geared to help educate and produce more talent in Michigan.

He also spoke about his original decision to run for office, and to bring more opportunities for his children to stay in Michigan, and shared some advice for the next leaders, encouraging them to continue the course of fiscal responsibility and positive action.

Finally, Snyder ended the night with a lesson on civility and its place in our state's political arena by reminding legislators and residents that "fighting does have a role, and it's on the beaches of Normandy, not the beaches of Lake Michigan."

The Governor now turns his attention to his budget recommendation presentation in early February.

Highlights from "Michigan's Reinvention by the Numbers":

- 540,000 private-sector jobs created since December 2010
- 122,800 manufacturing jobs created since 2010
- 675,000 low-income residents enrolled in Healthy Michigan
- An average of \$10,000 more in annual income per Michigander
- The Rainy Day Fund went from \$2 million to \$889 million