

CAPITOL NEWS UPDATE

WEEK OF FEBRUARY 3, 2020

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WHITMER PROPOSES 2020-21 BUDGET

No new taxes, Increased School Funding

Governor Gretchen Whitmer proposed a \$61.9 billion 2020-21 fiscal year budget on Thursday that requires no new taxes, and includes increases for education, universities and colleges, environmental cleanup and families. It also proposes keeping a portion of the Pure Michigan Campaign.

The proposal, her second since she has been in office, is 3.9 percent more than the current year's budget, and was lauded for its simpler recommendations. This was a switch from last year when she proposed a jarring 45-cents per gallon fuel tax increase to fix the state's roads and took major issue with Republican spending priorities. In addition, this year's proposal only requires eight non-budget bills to be enacted, compared to 24 last year.

"Ultimately I do need a Legislature that is going to work with me on these things," Whitmer said. "I remain hopeful that maybe this is the year that we find some common ground, and if that's the case we can always do supplementals to make adjustments to a budget, but I don't tilt at windmills. I am realistic. I put a solution on the table last year. I'm moving forward, and I'm delivering on a lot of these fundamentals that I think are important for Michigan that I ran on and I know the people of Michigan care about."

Education

Whitmer proposed a 2.8%, or \$290 million increase to per pupil foundation allowance for school districts, bringing the minimum per-pupil funding to \$8,336, with lowest-funded districts seeing an increase of \$225 per pupil, and highest-funded districts an increase of \$150 per pupil.

She also proposed spending \$60 million to provide additional support for at-risk students and \$60 million to increase the state reimbursement for special education services. Additionally, the plan includes \$40 million to go to school infrastructure and \$25 million to reimburse teachers for school supplies costs.

She also proposed a 3% increase for intermediate school districts, and 2.5% increases for community colleges and statutory revenue sharing.

Families

Whitmer proposed to expand coverage of new mothers who have Medicaid coverage from 60 days to 1 year, and proposed \$37.5 million for a "Healthy moms, healthy babies" initiative to reduce infant mortality rates and racial disparities in birth outcomes.

An additional \$27 million in federal funding would be used to expand access to childcare for low-income families.

The budget has also proposed providing 12 weeks of paid parental leave for state employees at the cost of \$10 million General Fund.

Environmental Cleanup

Whitmer's proposal includes \$64 million for new environmental initiatives including \$40 million to help local governments battle climate changes like high water levels, \$20 million for rapid environmental contamination response to provide additional resources for the abatement of contaminated properties across the state, and \$4 million to go to the Attorney General's efforts to prevent chemical contamination of drinking water and commercial pollution.

Universities and Colleges

Also, Whitmer's proposal includes a 2.5 percent increase across the board for universities and community college budgets, as long as schools hold tuition increases below 4.25 percent. Overall, this would mean a \$46.2 million increase with an additional \$38.1 million split evenly between eligible universities and an increased \$8.1 million towards community colleges, divided by the current performance funding formula.

Pure Michigan

The Governor's proposal includes funding the Pure Michigan Campaign with \$15 million General Fund, which is less than half of the \$37.5 million that she vetoed at the beginning of the fiscal year.

Republican House Speaker Lee Chatfield (R-Levering), responded to the budget proposal by saying there were some areas the Legislature would have to improve on Whitmer's agenda, "where she continued to pick winners and losers with schoolchildren and rural Michigan families. But there are also many areas where we all agree and can work together to get things done for the people we serve, including fixing our crumbling roads and the help for shoreline erosion we requested."

WHITMER DELIVERS STATE OF UNION RESPONSE

National political figures applauded Governor Whitmer for being the face of the Democratic Party as the person chosen to answer President Donald Trump's State of the Union address.

Whitmer gave a 10-minute speech from East Lansing High School following Trump's State of the Union Address this past Feb. 4. About 300 guests including lawmakers and community members attended the broadcast of the response. Her remarks included pushing back against Trump's economic message, discussing her personal experience with the health care system and her policy promise to fix "the damn roads."

VITAMIN E ADDITIVE BAN MOVES TO SENATE

The House passed legislation this week banning companies from adding vitamin E acetate to vaping products in Michigan. The bills now move to the Senate.

If passed, violators would be charged a fine of up to \$10,000, which is the maximum fine the Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs can give.

Vitamin E Acetate is the ingredient that investigators believe are causing the severe cases of lung illnesses that have been recently seen in people who vape.

HOUSE OKS BILLS TO INCREASE REGULATIONS, BAN GREAT LAKES COMMERCIAL FISHING

The House passed three bills this week supported by sports fishermen and conservationists, increasing regulations and potentially banning commercial fishing on the Great Lakes.

The bills, which increase regulations on the commercial fishing industry in the state and ban the commercial fishing of yellow perch, walleye and lake trout, are on their way to the Senate.

The increased fees and fines from the bills could lead to more than an annual \$60,000 for the DNR. Currently, the department issues 49 commercial licenses annually with 26 of the 49 reporting a harvest last year. The 26 licenses are for 16 separate businesses.

MM&A Briefs

Former Rep. LaFontaine Named Executive Director of Trails Group

Former State Rep. Andrea LaFontaine was recently named executive director of the Michigan Trails and Greenway Alliance. LaFontaine served in the House from 2011-16, spending her last four years as the chair of the Natural Resources Committee. She has also served as a senior policy advisor in the Department of Natural Resources.

Calendar of Important Events

Feb. 10 Rep. Alex Garza (D-Taylor) Fundraiser

Location: 6 p.m., Big League Brews, 20428 Ecorse Road, Taylor

Feb. 11 73rd House District Candidate Brandon Sinclair (R) Fundraiser

Location: 8 a.m., Lambert, 114 West Allegan St., Lansing

Rep. Kara Hope (D-Holt) Fundraiser

Location: 5:30 p.m., Buddies Grill, 2040 Aurelius Road, Holt

Feb. 12 Rep. Mark Huizenga (R-Walker) PAC Fundraiser

Location: 8 a.m., Karoub Associates, Lansing

Sen. Mike Shirkey (R-Clarklake) PAC Fundraiser

Location: 8 a.m., Michigan Beer and Wine Wholesalers, Lansing

Rep. Sarah Anthony (D-Lansing) Fundraiser

Location: 12 p.m., Michigan Municipal League, Lansing

Sen. John Bizon (R-Battle Creek) PAC Fundraiser

Location: 12 p.m., Michigan Beer and Wine Wholesalers, Lansing

34th House District Candidate Cynthia Neeley (D) Fundraiser

Location: 4:30 p.m., Michigan Beer and Wine Wholesalers, Lansing

Feb. 13 Rep. Annette Glenn (R-Williams Twp.) Fundraiser

Location: 7:30 a.m. Michigan Health and Hospital Association, Lansing

Rep. Andrea Schroeder (R-Independence Twp.) Fundraiser

Location: 8 a.m. Grand Traverse Pie Company, Lansing

Rep. Leslie Love (D-Detroit) Fundraiser

Location: 10:30 a.m., Michigan Municipal League, Lansing

- Feb. 13** **Rep. Christine Greig (D-Farmington Hills) PAC Fundraiser**
Location: 6:30 p.m., 21031 Eastfarm Lane Court, Northville, 6:30 p.m.
- Feb. 18** **19th House District Candidate Martha Ptashnik (R) Fundraiser**
Location: 11 a.m., Michigan Beer and Wine Wholesalers, Lansing
- 10th U.S. House District Candidate Doug Slocum (R) Fundraiser**
Location: 12 p.m., 620 South Capitol Avenue, Lansing
- Feb. 19** **Rep. Bronna Kahle (R-Adrian) Fundraiser**
Location: 7:30 a.m., Karoub Associates, Lansing
- Rep. Eric Leutheuser (R-Hillsdale) Fundraiser**
Location: 7:30 a.m., Michigan Restaurant and Lodging Association, Lansing
- Sen. Ed McBroom (R-Vulcan) PAC Fundraiser**
Location: 8 a.m., Lambert, 114 West Allegan St., Lansing
- House Republican Campaign Committee Fundraiser**
Location: 11:30 a.m., Karoub Associates, 121 West Allegan St.
- Rep. Yousef Rabhi (D-Ann Arbor) PAC Fundraiser**
Location: 12 p.m., Michigan Health and Hospital Association, Lansing
- Sen. Ken Horn (R-Frankenmuth) Fundraiser**
Location: 3:30 p.m., Karoub Associates, Lansing
- Rep. Bradley Slagh (R-Zeeland) Fundraiser**
Location: 4:30 p.m., Michigan Beer and Wine Wholesalers, Lansing
- Feb. 20** **Rep. Tommy Brann (R-Wyoming) Fundraiser**
Location: 7:30 a.m., Michigan Municipal League, Lansing
- Rep. Triston Cole (R-Mancelona) Fundraiser**
Location: 8 a.m., Karoub Associates, Lansing
- Rep. Jewell Jones (D-Inkster) Fundraiser**
Location: 10:30 a.m., Karoub Associates, Lansing
- Feb. 21** **Rep. Nate Shannon (D-Sterling Heights) Fundraiser**
Location: 4:30 p.m., Ike's Restaurant, 38550 Van Dyke Ave., Sterling Heights
- Rep. Sarah Lightner (R-Springport) PAC Fundraiser**
Location: 6 p.m., 13355 Pope Church Road, Springport