

# CAPITOL NEWS UPDATE

WEEK OF APRIL 4, 2022



McAlvey Merchant  
& ASSOCIATES

## GOVERNOR WHITMER SIGNS \$4.8 BILLION INFRASTRUCTURE BILL

Gov. Gretchen Whitmer signed a supplemental infrastructure bill in Grand Rapids last Wednesday, March 30, that will use \$4.8 billion in federal funds to improve roads, dams, state drinking water, sewers, parks, and internet service. The bill will also help renters who experienced financial hardship due to the pandemic.

Senate Bill 565 passed the House and Senate the previous week with strong bipartisan support.

“The bipartisan Building Michigan Together Plan includes some of the largest investments in our infrastructure in Michigan history,” Whitmer said.

About \$3.1 billion of the money comes from federal coronavirus relief funds, with \$945.3 billion coming from the federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.

The money will be divided into the following improvement projects:

- Approximately \$1.8 billion is allocated for drinking water quality improvements including infrastructure projects, wastewater and stormwater projects and replacing lead service lines.
- Almost \$383 million in emergency rental assistance for renters who experienced financial hardships due to the pandemic
- About \$317 million for road and bridge projects
- Over \$250 million to improve high-speed broadband service
- \$207 million for dam improvements
- Over \$121 million for a Homeowner Assistance Fund
- \$97.8 million for airport improvements
- \$66.2 million for public transportation improvements

## CONGRESSMAN FRED UPTON ANNOUNCES RETIREMENT

U. S. Rep. Fred Upton (R-St. Joseph) announced on Tuesday that he is ending his 36-year career and not seeking a 19th term in office. Upton made the announcement two weeks before the deadline to file to run in the August primary.

The longest-serving member of the Michigan congressional delegation, Upton, 68, is a moderate Republican and is one of 10 House Republicans announcing their retirement from Congress who voted to impeach the former President Donald Trump.

Upton said that a final ruling Friday on redistricting and Michigan's congressional maps, left him with a small piece of his base and placed him in the same district as U.S. Rep. Bill Huizenga (R-Zeeland), who was endorsed by Trump before Upton made his announcement.

"It would have been raising millions of dollars — I can do that. It would have been many more millions that would've been spent by outside groups. They're always negative — do you want to go through that? And, you know, the death threats. They're all factors," Upton is reported saying.

Elected in 1986, Upton was well known for his work on health care, energy and taxes. He was the Republic lead on the auto rescue plan in the late 2000s and pushed for protecting the Great Lakes and funding the protections and is also known for working on the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Cures Act that quickened the distribution of COVID-19 vaccines.

### **GOVERNOR TURNS ATTENTION TO ABORTION AHEAD OF SCOTUS DECISION**

Gov. Gretchen Whitmer filed a lawsuit in the Oakland County Circuit Court Thursday, suing 13 county prosecutors in Michigan in an effort to get the state's 1931 abortion ban removed from law.

Whitmer filed the suit and named the prosecutors in the 13 counties with facilities that provide abortions, and then asked the Michigan Supreme Court to answer the questions posed by the case.

If the Supreme Court rules in favor of Whitmer, it would set a legal right to abortion at the state level, joining 16 other states and Washington D.C. The counties named are Emmet, Genesee, Grand Traverse, Ingham, Jackson, Kalamazoo, Kent, Macomb, Marquette, Oakland, Saginaw, Washtenaw, and Wayne counties.

Abortion is currently legal in the state due to the 1973 Roe v. Wade U.S. Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion nationwide. As the U.S. Supreme Court considers Dobbs v. Jackson, the ruling could potentially be overturned, making Michigan's 1931 ban on abortions enforceable.

The lawsuit argues the abortion ban is unconstitutional under the Michigan Constitution and unenforceable because of Michigan's Due Process Clause, and the state's Equal Protection Clause.

Abortion opponents denounced the bill as procedurally flawed and legally baseless.

### **MM&A BRIEFS**

#### **FORMER SENATOR JOANNE EMMONS, 88, DIES IN HOMETOWN OF BIG RAPIDS**

Former Sen. Joanne Emmons, who served 16 years in the state House from 1987-1990 and the state Senate from 1991-2002, died last week. She was 88.

Emmons, a native of Big Rapids, Mich., was a powerful member of the Legislature and a leading woman. She was the first woman to serve as chair of the Senate Finance Committee from 1993-2002, and the first woman to serve as Senate majority floor leader, from 2001-02.

Emmons was a conservative who could also cross the aisle to negotiate on issues such as school finance reform and the enabling the sales tax to address online sales at the beginning of the internet.

Emmons graduated with a degree in Home Economics from Michigan State University in 1956. She taught home economics at Mecosta High School before running for and winning the race for the Big Rapids Township treasurer from 1976 to 86, while also being involved in local Republican organizations. She her House seat at the age of 52 in in 1986.

She is remembered fondly by her former staffers, many of whom remain in top legislative staffing and lobbying positions in Lansing.

### **MICHAEL FINNEY, FORMER ECONOMIC LEADER IN MICHIGAN, DIES**

Flint native, and former president and CEO for the Michigan Economic Development Corporation, and former president and CEO of Ann Arbor SPARK died from a heart attack on Sunday, April 3. He was 65.

Finney was former Governor Rick Snyder's first president and CEO for the MEDC. He moved from Michigan to Miami-Dade County in Florida in 2017 where he served as the president and chief economic officer of the public-private economic development arm of the greater Miami area.

## **CALENDAR OF IMPORTANT EVENTS**

**April 9      Sen. Stephanie Chang (D-Detroit) Lafayette Park Reception**  
Location: 5:30 p.m., Home of Penny Bailer, 1324 Joliet Place, Detroit

**April 10     Rep. Julie Brixie (D-Okemos) for State Representative**  
Location: 2 p.m., Zoom information upon RSVP

**April 12     Rep. Mary Cavanagh (D-Reford Twp.) - Spring Reception**  
Location: 8 a.m., 14965 Aubrey, Redford

**Rep. Cynthia Johnson (D-Detroit) Happy Hour Fundraiser**  
Location: 5 p.m., Michigan Beer and Wine Wholesalers Association, 332 Townsend St., Lansing

**Rep. Joe Tate (D-Detroit) Leadership PAC Fundraiser**  
Location: 5:30 p.m., Jolly Pumpkin, 218 Albert Ave., East Lansing

**April 13**

**Rep. Ben Frederick (R-Owosso) Breakfast Reception**

Location: 7:30 a.m., Marketing Resource Group, 215 S. Washington Sq., Lansing

**Senate Majority Leader Mike Shirkey (R-Clarklake) Michigan! My Michigan!**

Location: 8 a.m., Michigan Beer and Wine Wholesalers Association, 332 Townsend St., Lansing

**Senate Majority Leader Mike Shirkey (R-Clarklake) Breakfast Event**

Location: 8 a.m., Michigan Beer and Wine Wholesalers Association, 332 Townsend St., Lansing

**Rep. Diana Farrington (R-Utica) Breakfast Reception**

Location: 8 a.m., Karoub Associates, 121 W. Allegan St., Lansing

**Rep. Yousef Rabhi (D-Ann Arbor) Spring Reception**

Location: 11 a.m., Michigan Association of Counties, 100 W. Michigan Ave. Suite 200, Lansing

**Rep. Kara Hope (D-Holt) Birthday Fundrasier**

Location: 11:30 a.m., Karoub Associates, 121 W. Allegan St., Lansing

**Sen. Rick Outman (R-Six Lakes) for State Senate**

Location: 3:30 p.m., Karoub Associates, 121 W. Allegan St., Lansing

**Rep. Timmy Beson (R-Bay City) Burgers and Brats Reception**

Location: 4:30 p.m., Capitol White House, 322 W. Ottawa St., Lansing

**Sen. Curt VanderWall (R-Ludington) Evening Reception**

Location: 5 p.m., Capital Prime, Gallery Room, 2324 Showtime Dr., Lansing

**84th House District Candidate Carol Glanville Fundraiser**

Location: 5 p.m., Kelly's Downtown, 220 South Washington Sq., Lansing

**April 14**

**Rep. Beau LaFave (R-Iron Mountain) Farewell Breakfast Reception**

Location: 7 a.m., Capitol White House, 322 W. Ottawa St., Lansing

**Rep. Rodney Wakeman (R-Saginaw Twp.) Breakfast Reception**

Location: 7:30 a.m., Michigan Beer and Wine Wholesalers Association, 332 Townsend St., Lansing

**Rep. Donna Lasinski (D-Scio Twp.) Breakfast Fundraiser**

Location: 8:30 a.m., Karoub Associates, 121 W. Allegan St., Lansing, 8:30 a.m.

- April 14**     **107th House District candidate Parker Fairbairn (R) Fundraiser**  
Location: 6 p.m., Petoskey Farms Vineyard & Winery, 3720 Atkins Road, Petoskey
- Rep. Rachel Hood (D-Grand Rapids) Campaign Kick-Off**  
Location: 7 p.m., River North Public House, 2115 Plainfield Ave., NE, Grand Rapids
- April 19**     **Sen. Sylvia Santana (D-Detroit) for Michigan**  
Location: 8:30 a.m., Michigan Beer and Wine Wholesalers Association, 332 Townsend St., Lansing
- April 20**     **Friends of Sen. Mark Huizenga (R-Walker)**  
Location: 7:30 a.m., Karoub Associates, 121 W. Allegan St., Lansing
- Sen. Curtis Hertel Jr. (D-East Lansing) Fundraiser**  
Location: 12 p.m., Michigan Beer and Wine Wholesalers Association, 332 Townsend St., Lansing
- Rep. Jim Haadsma (D-Battle Creek) Campaign Kick-Off**  
Location: 5 p.m., Barista Blues Cafe, 91 W. Michigan Ave., Battle Creek
- Sen. Stephanie Chang (D-Detroit) Evening Reception**  
Location: 6 p.m., Coriander Kitchen and Farm, 14601 Riverside Blvd., Detroit