

CAPITOL NEWS UPDATE

WEEK OF FEBRUARY 3, 2025



FROM THE ASSOCIATE'S DESK

Stephanie Szymas

Lawsuits, Budgets, and Campaign Announcements—Oh My!

Michigan's political scene is already heating up, and we're just over a month into the new year. With a Senate lawsuit brewing, budget battles on the horizon, and election season kicking into gear, lawmakers are juggling more than just campaign promises.

On one front, Senate Majority Leader Winnie Brinks is taking legal action against House Speaker Matt Hall over his refusal to send final-session bills to the governor's desk. Meanwhile, Hall remains optimistic that a deal on minimum wage and earned sick leave can be reached before the February 21 deadline.

And in election news, Genesee County Sheriff Chris Swanson has officially entered the Democratic gubernatorial primary. With Governor Whitmer's latest budget making modest adjustments but boosting spending on key "kitchen table" issues—particularly education—this race is shaping up to be a defining moment for Michigan's future. Add in the ever-present debates over infrastructure funding, "sanctuary cities," and potential federal funding freezes, and it's clear we're in for a politically charged year.

Strap in, Michigan—this election cycle is going to be fast-moving and full of surprises. Read on for more about the key battles unfolding in Lansing.

NEWS

DESPITE SENATE LAWSUIT, HALL HOPEFUL DEAL ON MINIMUM WAGE, EARNED SICK LEAVE POSSIBLE BEFORE FEB. 21

Although the Senate has sued House Speaker Matt Hall over his delay in presenting nine bills from last session to the governor, Hall said he's still hopeful the two chambers will be able to reach a deal on legislation to preserve a lower wage for tipped workers and alter the Earned Sick Time Act.

"They just want to serve me for political reasons, to satisfy their rabid left-wing base," Hall (R-Richland Township) said at a Thursday news conference. "This is weaponization of state government."

Despite, or perhaps because of the lawsuit, Hall said he has not met much with Senate Majority Winnie Brinks (D-Grand Rapids).

"I've talked to her on the phone a couple of times, but I've not met with her," he said.

Although his conversations with Brinks have been limited, Hall said he spoke with Senate Majority Floor Leader Sam Singh (D-East Lansing) on Wednesday about the minimum wage and earned sick time legislation.

"There's about 20 things that need to be negotiated," Hall said. "What I'm going to do is I'm going to write a proposal that I think is in the middle between these corporations and these businesses and these union bosses. One that I think will work for Michigan workers."

Hall said he was hopeful that the House and the Senate would be able to meet in the middle and compromise on legislation (SB 8, SB 15, HB 4001, HB 4002) prior to February 21, when the laws are set to go into effect.

"The earlier we can resolve this, the more likely that workers will be able to follow what we come up with, the small businesses, the corporations will still be able to do it, and there'll be a smooth transition."

Regarding the nine bills from last session, Hall contended that he was under no obligation to present them, though he also said that wasn't his original argument.

"All the experts and the legal scholars, they're all saying that I don't have to present the bills," he said. "I haven't even taken the position that I don't have to present the bills. We were doing a very thorough legal review, and now there are all these other questions."

The lawsuit, filed Monday, notably involves HB 6058 of 2024, which requires public employers to pay a larger share of the health insurance premium for public employees.

Hall said it is not the obligation of the current Legislature to carry out the previous Legislature's work.

Further, he argued that previous speakers have held bills in the chamber for far longer than he has held the nine bills from last term.

"We do remember the time where Joe Tate refused to present that Grand Rapids hotel tax increase until Winnie Brinks moved an economic development bill?" Hall said. "That was months and months of holding on presenting."

A bill allowing Kent County to increase its hotel-motel tax waited in the House for more than four months after it had passed both houses in identical form before the House presented it to Governor Gretchen Whitmer as negotiations on related legislation continued (HB 5048 of 2023).

There is nothing in the Constitution, statute or the Joint Rules of the Legislature stating when a legislative house must present a bill. For unknown reasons, House Speaker Joe Tate (D-Detroit) and then-House Clerk Rich Brown allowed the 2023-24 House Democratic majority to end at noon January 1 without completing the enrollment and presentation of the bills to the governor.

SWANSON ENTERS DEM PRIMARY FOR GOVERNOR

Genesee County Sheriff Chris Swanson, a Democrat, sought to identify himself as an agent of change as well as a source of inspiration to residents in pushing the state in a more prosperous direction while announcing his gubernatorial campaign Thursday.

He did so with a pep rally-style campaign announcement at Mott Community College in Flint, his voice booming while outlining what he called the forward-thinking, customer-service style he wants to bring to Lansing.

"Lansing needs a fresh face, a new voice. The people are hungry for something," Swanson said. "I'm bringing 'Pure Energy' to Michigan."

He is the second Democrat to enter the race for governor, joining Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson. Detroit Mayor Mike Duggan, a long-time Democrat, is also running, but as an independent.

For the Republicans, Senate Minority Leader Aric Nesbitt of Porter Township has announced his candidacy, while former Attorney General Mike Cox has created a campaign committee and is expected to formally enter the race at some point.

Swanson thanked those who have also entered the race, saying they are not opponents, but other options for voters to consider.

He also acknowledged the increasingly heated political climate of recent years, noting people have lost faith in government and are burnt out.

"I personally am exhausted with hate speech and division," Swanson said.

A better way forward, Swanson said, is to bring people together and create policy wins for everyone through good faith efforts at compromise.

Swanson also pledged that his campaign would seek to defend his record and positions but would not go negative.

"We will shine the light and inspire the next generation of political leadership," Swanson said. "I don't need to point out what somebody did. ... I'm looking ahead, and we're going to do something and blaze a new trail."

Swanson joined the Genesee County Sheriff's Office in 2011 and was appointed as sheriff in 2019. He was elected to a full term in 2020 and reelected in 2024. He attended Mott Community College and earned his bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Michigan.

Swanson touted a pair of initiatives he spearheaded since taking office. In 2019, he helped create the Genesee Human Oppression Strike Team to combat human trafficking. In 2020, he created the Inmate Growth Naturally and Intentionally Through Education initiative, focused on improving educational attainment for Genesee County Jail inmates.

He said those programs have become national standards for similar programs elsewhere and are just small examples of his leadership. Swanson said the education program for inmates has reduced crime and enabled more people to return to society and get good jobs. The human trafficking program, he said, has taken more than 200 traffickers off the streets.

"My platform is simple because it's always worked," Swanson said. "I'm going to protect, I'm going to serve, and I'm going to unify."

Protecting families, people's personal and civil rights as well as collective bargaining rights are top priorities, he said, as are efforts at spurring innovation within industry across the state and growing the economy. He said more manufacturing needs to be brought back to the state and more housing is needed to meet demand.

"There's a lot of good things happening in Michigan," Swanson said. "We need to be prepared and ahead of the curve, because there's 49 other people that are competing for it. They won't win against Michigan."

HALL ON BUDGET, 'SANCTUARY CITIES,' FUNDING A ROADS DEAL

House Speaker Matt Hall said he has three priorities for this year's budget: funding a public safety trust fund, reducing the personal income tax and providing \$3.1 billion toward a long-term road funding solution.

The price tag on all that should be smaller than last year's \$80 billion budget.

"You do it by setting priorities," he said. "Why are we giving billions of dollars to the corporations every year? We should fix the roads first. We should make sure our communities are safe first and then we should put more money back in your pocket. Government has grown 43 percent under Whitmer."

During a Thursday press conference, Hall discussed Governor Gretchen Whitmer's budget proposal for the 2025-26 fiscal year, the potential for a deal on road funding and what he hoped to see out of the budget process in the coming months.

Hall said he was looking forward to hearing Governor Gretchen Whitmer's road funding plan next week, but he said it was odd that it wasn't represented in her budget.

"If they built this budget and then they came up with a roads plan, and they didn't integrate it into the budget, why?" he said. "I'll remind you — we get there, \$3.1 billion, without raising taxes."

Hall presented his own roads plan last month that includes eliminating tax breaks under the old Michigan Economic Growth Authority program. Among other funding sources, the plan also dedicated \$2.2 billion in funding from the Corporate Income Tax to roads, along with all money collected through taxes paid on fuel purchases.

During Thursday's press conference, Hall said he was open to a conversation on raising the 6 percent Corporate Income Tax for the purpose of providing incentives to large corporations.

"I would support raising the CIT or the corporate giveaways ... they're the ones that should pay for that, not working people," he said. "When it comes to roads, what I support is the plan I put forward, which is dedicating CIT to roads, and you see how we can do that without raising taxes. So, the raising taxes would be if it's needed for the corporations to give incentives."

With intentional budget cuts, Hall said there would be plenty of funding to fund roads and other House Republican priorities without increasing the size of the budget.

"You're going to have room for a Public Safety Trust Fund, you're going to have room to reverse the Democrat income tax hike back to 4.05 where it's supposed to be, and we'll fix the roads without raising taxes," Hall said. "We can do all of those things. ... My target is that we're going to be a smaller budget than we were last year, and we're going to fit the roads in there, and we're going to try to fit the income tax cut."

Hall said the House would introduce legislation to lower the personal income tax from 4.25 percent to 4.05 percent soon. The income tax fell to 4.05 percent in 2023 under a provision of the 2015 road funding package that said the income tax rate would fall to reflect superheated revenue growth should it occur. But then the Whitmer administration declared the rate was back to 4.25 percent in 2024 and won a court fight with Republicans on the matter.

The speaker also discussed reducing the number of earmarks included in the budget, which is something he proposed in his roads plan. Ideally, he said he'd like to see the price tag for earmarks fall from \$600 million to \$100 million.

One way to limit earmarks is the new House resolution, HR 19, that Hall introduced on Thursday which would ban communities with sanctuary policies and those that refuse to cooperate with federal immigration officials from receiving additional state funding.

The rule would prohibit any jurisdiction that refuses to comply with federal immigration enforcement measures from receiving additional state funding. The resolution does not prohibit municipalities from receiving constitutionally required revenue sharing.

"What I wanted to do with this resolution is basically send a message to these townships, these counties, these cities that are having these conversations right now, that if you have become a sanctuary jurisdiction, there are going to be consequences," Hall said.

Hall defined sanctuary jurisdictions as any municipality that does not help enforce federal immigration law.

"If they're willing to certify that they'll comply with federal law enforcement and federal immigration policy, and they'll work with ICE, then they're eligible for earmarks," he said. "If you look at this Democrat budget under Whitmer, where it averages \$600 million a year that they get from the taxpayers for things like splash pads, a hip hop academy in Lansing, a Zen center for the Novi Public Schools, I think we're on very solid footing if we say that there will not be taxpayer state-funded splash pads in sanctuary cities. If they want us to pay for their splash pads, then they can comply with federal law."

House Minority Leader Ranjeev Puri (D-Canton) criticized the resolution in a statement on Thursday.

"This proposed policy is irresponsible and reckless – it's nothing more than yet another act of Republican chaos in their ongoing political theater," he said. "Financially punishing cities for exercising their rights would be economically disastrous for these local communities – it could mean schools would have to close their doors, public safety could plummet and families could lose access to programs they rely on to keep a warm dinner on the

table. Simply put, increasing costs for these communities would increase costs for all the Michiganders who live there."

Realistically, Hall said that he expected the budget would get done by September 30 rather than July 1.

He said that the July 1 statutory deadline was something he voted for as part of a compromise with Whitmer during one of her early budgets to prevent her Administrative Board from making changes to what was passed by the Legislature.

"July 1 is a good aspirational goal, and that's why I voted for a bill that didn't include a penalty to get there," he said. "The reality with the people we're dealing with here is it's probably going to be September 30. ... With me as Speaker of the House working with Governor Whitmer, we will drag Winnie Brinks over the line, and we will get this budget done."

Hall said if Senate Democrats want to throw up roadblocks and cause a government shutdown, that's their prerogative.

"If Democrats want to shut down the government over pork projects for sanctuary jurisdictions, I guess they can do that, but the public would not be behind them," he said.

AMID FEDERAL UNCERTAINTY, WHITMER'S BUDGET BUMPS SPENDING, MAKES NO MAJOR CHANGES

Governor Gretchen Whitmer's seventh budget proposal created few ripples Wednesday, a steady as she goes blueprint for the 2025-26 fiscal year, lacking in big new programs and major changes in taxes.

Underscoring the lack of attention-grabbing items in the \$83.5 billion (\$15.3 billion General Fund) recommendation, Whitmer neither appeared in person for the budget presentation to a joint meeting of the House Appropriations Committee and the Senate Appropriations Committee, nor did she hold a press conference afterward to take questions about her proposals.

It's more of a recent innovation for governors to attend the budget presentation. Former Governor Rick Snyder attended all eight of his, but his predecessors generally did not. This is the third time Whitmer has left it to her budget director to make the presentation (2021 and 2022 the other times). This was the first time since former Governor John Engler's final budget proposal in 2002 that a governor did not take questions from reporters afterward, however.

"My balanced budget recommendation for fiscal year 2026 doubles down on the kitchen table issues that make a real difference in people's lives," Whitmer said in a statement distributed by her press office. "This commonsense budget will lower costs, create good-paying jobs, grow our economy, improve academic results, and support Michigan seniors. Together, I know we can find common ground and deliver another balanced, bipartisan budget. Let's get it done."

Whitmer was at Grand Rapids Community College on Wednesday morning touring facilities and speaking with Michigan Reconnect graduates, WXMI-TV, the Fox affiliate in Grand Rapids reported.

Considerable uncertainty surrounds the budget. There were many questions and no immediate answers at the presentation about the effect President Donald Trump's actions to withhold federal funding could have on the

state. Some 41.7 percent of the \$83.5 billion in Whitmer's budget recommendation comes from federal funds. Budget Director Jen Flood said the budget is built on the assumption federal funding will flow as usual.

"There's obviously been a lot of chaos out of Washington, D.C., the last couple of weeks," Flood said. "Should there be changes, we're going to have to work together on the next steps."

Flood was asked about the possibility of the federal government sending the state money as block grants with fewer restrictions.

"I think we've got to be prepared for all scenarios," she said.

Besides the federal uncertainty, there's the new dynamic with Republicans in charge of the House. Expectations are House Republicans will push for more spending restraint this year, meaning the final version of the budget will likely look much different than what Whitmer proposed.

Whitmer is holding back her biggest budget news until next week when she will offer her first new plan for long-term road funding since her ill-fated 45-cent per gallon fuel tax increase of 2019 that never got traction in the Legislature. Whitmer used the State Transportation Commission to sell \$3.5 billion in bonds in 2020 to expedite a large number major projects on state roads, but those funds will soon be exhausted and didn't help local roads.

The budget represents a 1.2 percent increase from the 2024-25 current fiscal year (2 percent General Fund), though the governor also filed a request for a supplemental appropriations bill that would raise current year spending by \$510.5 million (\$380.4 million General Fund), which if approved would reduce the size of the increase for the 2025-26 fiscal year.

The bulk of the supplemental is to accommodate rising Medicaid caseloads.

For some of the flagship spending items in the 2025-26 fiscal year, Whitmer recommended slightly above inflation increases:

- 4.1 percent for the K-12 per pupil grant;
- 4 percent for the state's 28 public community colleges (disbursed via formula);
- 4 percent for the state's 15 public universities;
- 3.6 percent for statutory revenue sharing to cities, villages, townships and counties.

There are a large number of proposed fee increases and elimination of sunsets on other fees to implement the budget, especially in the Department of Natural Resources (see separate story).

Whitmer is trying again on a proposed increase on the tipping fee paid for landfilling trash from other states in Michigan. She's also again proposed making the Recreation Passport an opt-out instead of an opt-in, meaning motorists would automatically pay for the passport that gets them access to all state parks unless they opt out. Currently, motorists must choose to buy the passport.

Neither proposal survived the then-Democratic Legislature in 2024. With Republicans in charge of the House this year, both are likely dead on arrival.

Whitmer did offer one new revenue proposal, to tax electronic cigarettes the same as other tobacco products.

Flood, speaking to reporters afterward, was asked how the budget proposal squares with Whitmer's transportation infrastructure plan she intends to unveil next week, given the small ending balances the recommendations would leave if enacted.

"We put forward a budget today that's going to continue to double down on the things that matter most to Michiganders, so that's cutting taxes for working families, lowering costs of education, protecting seniors and improving student outcomes," she said. "The budget we put forward today is balanced, fiscally responsible. We look forward to picking up conversations on road funding next week."

When pressed further on the governor's road funding proposal, Flood said she would not get out in front of the governor on the details.

Flood was asked if residents should be concerned about a budget proposal that, if enacted, would leave about \$18 million in the School Aid Fund and \$11 million in the General Fund.

She said that such numbers are "pretty standard." She added that the proposal takes into account tax cuts put into place from previous sessions, \$3 billion in state debt to be paid down during the 2025-26 fiscal year and a rainy day fund deposit.

Senate Appropriations Chair Sen. Sarah Anthony (D-Lansing) said more details on the governor's road funding plan would have been helpful.

"Having a road plan baked into the large budget presentation is helpful so we can actually start getting some of these conversations and decisions at a formal negotiations point," Anthony said. "I look forward to hearing more, hopefully in the weeks to come."

In 2019, the governor's fuel tax increase was central to the entire budget. It appears this year, it will not be integrated in the same way.

How the math would add up for covering a road funding plan was not clear, Anthony said, when considering the budget proposal outlined Wednesday.

As to concerns about federal funding, Anthony said appropriators will need to monitor what is happening at the federal level and prepare accordingly. She was glad the budget office was looking at the issue, but it will be up to lawmakers to craft and adopt any plan if needed.

"Our office is also looking at ways that we can fill the gaps, if and when there's some significant changes on the federal level," Anthony said.

Several Republicans pointed to the \$83.5 billion budget, noting it was \$56.55 billion in the 2017-18 fiscal year.

"Since Governor Whitmer has taken office, government spending has grown by 43 percent – this budget proposal continues that trend. We are ready to take a hard look at her proposals, some of which are good ideas, but House Republicans will not grow government at the expense of hardworking taxpayers," House Speaker Matt Hall (R-Richland Township) said in a statement. "Instead of just adding more taxes, fees and hundreds of new bureaucrats, we should be evaluating her new programs – and the programs we already have – to ensure we are providing value for tax dollars. There are clear priorities we must focus on, like investing in a Public Safety Trust Fund, fixing our roads, and reversing the Democrats' income tax hike."

House Appropriations Chair Rep. Ann Bollin (R-Brighton) said she was glad to see the governor express a desire to make life more affordable for Michigan residents, but she questioned how an \$83 billion budget would accomplish that.

"As we dig into the budget, the (full time employees), what is the efficiency? Are we starting to coalesce around consolidating some of the office buildings? State government costs a lot of money," she said. "Director Flood referred to tax cuts, but I didn't actually hear about any tax cuts in the presentation, so we'll be looking for those."

Cuts will be needed, Bollin said "We really have to roll back. We have to look at, what are we required to do constitutionally? What are we required to do by court order? Statutorily? Then, what's a priority and what's a preference?" she said. "That is the order that I'm going to be looking at the budget and going and building from that baseline. There are a lot of programs that seem very great on the surface, but are they going to give us the best bang for the buck, and are they the role of government?"

House Appropriations Majority Vice Chair Rep. Matt Maddock (R-Milford) also advocated for budget cuts.

"We have two sister states in this nation, Georgia and North Carolina ... each one of those states, our sister states, is still providing the same government services to all their citizens," he said. "Georgia spends \$20 billion less than Michigan does, and North Carolina spends \$19 billion less than we do."

He also criticized the governor for not being in Lansing to present her budget.

"Where was she? She's so proud of her budget, why wasn't she there?" he said.

Bollin said she intended to work on the budget for the state's core services first, including education, law enforcement and corrections. She again stated that the constitutional requirement for the Legislature was to present and adopt a balanced budget by September 30, though she acknowledged that July 1 was a good target.

"But we have a lot of work to do," she said. "There wasn't a lot of transparency in the last two budget cycles. We spent very few days here in Lansing."

Senate Minority Leader Aric Nesbitt (R-Porter Township), a candidate for governor, called for the state to mimic the actions President Donald Trump is taking on federal spending.

"President Trump is leading from the front and cutting massive amounts of waste at the federal level," he said in a statement. "It's time for Michigan Democrats to heed the mandate issued by voters: No more corporate handouts, no more anonymous pet projects, and no more giveaways to radical far-left causes."

Farhat said although House Republicans have been tentative about getting a budget in place by July 1, House Democrats on the Appropriations Committee were committed to doing the work to get it done and that the new transparency measures wouldn't be a hinderance to the process.

"We have the experience on the committee with several previous majority chairs," he said. "We got it done the last two years, we can do it again. I'm ready to roll up my sleeves and get to work with Chair Bollin and Chair Anthony to get it done. I know the governor's team is serious. ... We're all ready. The folks are at the table."

BRINKS ANNOUNCES LAWSUIT AGAINST HALL OVER REFUSAL TO PRESENT FINAL SESSION BILLS TO GOVERNOR

Senate Democrats announced Monday the chamber has filed a lawsuit against House Speaker Matt Hall, alleging that he is in violation of the state Constitution for not presenting the final nine bills of the last legislative session to the governor.

Senate Majority Leader Winne Brinks (D-Grand Rapids) announced the lawsuit in a Monday afternoon virtual press conference.

"The Michigan Constitution makes it abundantly clear: every bill passed by the Legislature is required to be presented to the governor," Brinks said. "No one, especially an elected public servant in legislative leadership, is above the law."

Monday's lawsuit involves, most notably, HB 6058 of 2024, which requires public employers to pay a larger share of the health insurance premium for public employees.

Other remaining legislation still being held in the House includes three bills allowing Detroit history museums to seek a property tax millage from Wayne County voters (HB 4177

of 2023, HB 5817 of 2024 and HB 5818 of 2024); bills that would put corrections officers into the State Police pension system (HB 4665 of 2023, HB 4666 of 2023 and HB 4667 of 2023) and exempting public assistance, disability and worker's compensation from garnishment to repay debts (HB 4900 of 2024 and HB 4901 of 2024).

The legal review by Hall's office isn't over just whether and when the House must send the legislation. There has also been a focus on possible technical errors in some of the bills and errors related to tie bars.

Monday's lawsuit seeks a writ of mandamus compelling the House to present the nine bills to the governor and also seeks a declaratory judgment that the House has a constitutional duty to present the bills. It also seeks permanent injunction to permanently enjoin the House from failing to present the legislation.

In the complaint filed with the Court of Claims, Brinks cited Article IV, Section 33 of the Michigan Constitution, which says, "Every bill passed by the Legislature shall be presented to the governor before it becomes law, and the governor shall have 14 days measured in hours and minutes from the time of presentation in which to consider it."

"The clause contains no exceptions. The Michigan Supreme Court has held that 'shall' means 'shall,' that presentation is mandatory, and that the Legislature cannot interfere with the constitutional mandate in any way," the complaint states.

It also references past examples of bills from a previous session being presented early in the following year in a new session.

"To permit the House to withhold presentation would undermine the integrity of the bicameral lawmaking process mandated by Section 33 by allowing one house and one legislator to veto the work of both houses after a legislative session has ended," the complaint states. "The right to veto is the sole constitutional prerogative of the governor and it cannot be usurped by a legislative body or a legislator after a legislative session is over."

However, there is nothing in the Constitution, statute or the Joint Rules of the Legislature stating when a legislative house must present a bill. For unknown reasons, House Speaker Joe Tate (D-Detroit) and then-House Clerk Rich Brown allowed the 2023-24 House Democratic majority to end at noon January 1 without completing the enrollment and presentation of the bills to the governor.

Greg Manz, spokesperson for Hall, in a statement said the legal review of the legislation is still underway. He also took aim at Brinks over the lack of action on legislation to amend the state's minimum wage and paid sick time laws set to take effect later this month.

"Speaker Hall is carrying out a thorough, comprehensive legal review of an entirely unprecedented situation to ensure the House acts constitutionally," Manz said. "Sadly, Senator Brinks' inaction on tipped wage and earned sick time legislation is jeopardizing 50,000 family-sustaining jobs – she hasn't even read the bills into committee two weeks after they passed the House. She should be focused on helping those people in need, not rushing to the courts."

Senate Minority Leader Aric Nesbitt (R-Porter Township) in a statement accused Senate Democrats of living in the past and called on them to enter productive conversations on policies including infrastructure funding and amending the paid sick time and minimum wage laws.

"Instead of focusing on the future prosperity of struggling Michiganders, Senate Democrats are focused on the past failures of their own party's fumbled leadership," Nesbitt said. "The people of Michigan don't need petty political gamesmanship; they want real leadership and real results. I implore Senate Democrats to stop living in the past and join us in the present."

Brinks told reporters the Constitution is clear in that all bills must be presented to the governor.

"Speaker Hall has deliberately defied legal precedent and long-established legislative practice, and while we were hopeful that House Republicans would do the right thing and present this critical legislation to the governor by law, they have again failed to act," Brinks said. "Speaker Hall's gamesmanship is not just disrespectful to the sanctity of our Constitution; it is an outright disservice to the residents of Michigan."

She was asked why the bills were not presented during the final weeks of 2024.

"Regardless of who was there before, the person with the power to do that now, or the people, are the current clerk and the current speaker, so our goal here is simply about ensuring that the Constitution is followed," Brinks said.

Brinks said she and Hall have had conversations and have an open line of communication.

"There will be things that we disagree on, but I would point out that this is not a matter for negotiation," Brinks said. "This is a matter of following the Constitution."

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Feb. 11** **Sen. Joe Bellino (R) - Valentine's Fundraiser**
Governors Room, Karoub Associates, 121 West Allegan Street, Lansing, 8:30 a.m.
- Rep. Cynthia Neeley (D) - Valentine's Breakfast**
Michigan Municipal League, First Floor, 208 North Capitol Avenue, Lansing, 9:30 a.m.
- Feb. 12** **Rep. Greg Alexander (R) - Reception**
Governors Room, Karoub Associates, 121 West Allegan Street, Lansing, 8 a.m.
- Rep. Helena Scott (D) - Valentines Fundraiser**
Kelley Cawthorne Bar Area, 3rd Floor, 208 North Capitol Avenue, Lansing, 8:15 a.m.
- Rep. Jason Morgan (D) - Fish Fry Fundraiser**
322 West Ottawa Street, Lansing, 11:30 a.m.
- Rep. Bryan Posthumus (R) - "No Time to Waste" Lunch Reception**
Governors Room, Karoub Associates, 121 West Allegan Street, Lansing, 12 p.m.
- Rep. Kristian Grant (D) - Valentine's Day Happy Hour**
Hop & Vine, Michigan Beer and Wine, 332 Townsend Street, Lansing, 4 p.m.
- Feb. 13** **Rep. Jamie Thompson (R) - Valentine's Day Breakfast**
Michigan Municipal League, First Floor, 208 North Capitol Avenue, Lansing, 8 a.m.
- Rep. Jay DeBoyer (R) - Breakfast Reception**
TBA, 8 a.m.
- Sen. Roger Hauck (R) - Lansing Fundraiser**
Governors Room, Karoub Associates, 121 West Allegan Street, Lansing, 8 a.m.
- Feb. 18** **Rep. Sarah Lightner (R) - Margarita Party**
Michigan Beer and Wine Wholesalers Association, 332 Townsend Street, Lansing, 5 p.m.
- Feb. 19** **House Speaker Matt Hall (R) - Evening Reception**
Michigan Realtors, 720 North Washington Avenue, Lansing, 4:30 p.m.

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