

STATE REPRESENTATIVE

RONNIE PETERSON

Toll-free: (855) 347-8054 | Email: RonniePeterson@house.mi.gov | Online: peterson.housedems.com



STATE REPRESENTATIVE RONNIE PETERSON
P.O. Box 30014, Lansing, MI 48909-7514



Get Capitol & Community
UPDATES
peterson.housedems.com

STATE REPRESENTATIVE RONNIE PETERSON

Dear Friends,

I want to thank you all for permitting me to be your advocate in Lansing. For the past 18 months it has been my pleasure to serve you as state representative for the 54th House District. I want to thank you for allowing me this opportunity to make a difference in the lives of our residents. I am proud of what we have accomplished together, but we still have a long way to go.

If you are a regular reader of my newsletters, you already know I believe that the role of government is to:

- Promote economic prosperity
- Preserve our rights and freedoms
- Protect our natural resources
- Provide for our most vulnerable citizens

It is my contention that to achieve these goals we really don't need a lot of new laws. I came to Lansing not only to pass new laws but rather to use my position as a member of the Appropriations Committee to leverage existing state resources to benefit our local communities – and, so far, I am relatively pleased with our progress.

It is part of my responsibility to oversee and influence policy decisions. I have assembled this newsletter to keep you apprised of key legislation that is pending at the state Capitol, and where I stand on those issues. I have also included information about some of the items of interest in our state budget.

Thank you for taking the time to read through this newsletter. If you have questions or comments, please be sure to give the office a call.

Sincerely,

Ronnie Peterson
Ronnie Peterson, State Representative

Toll-free: (855) 347-8054 | Email: RonniePeterson@house.mi.gov | Online: peterson.housedems.com

STATE REPRESENTATIVE RONNIE PETERSON

STATE BUDGET UPDATE

The state budgeting process begins with the governor's presentation of a budget recommendation. The process is then taken up by the Legislature. Appropriations subcommittees from both the House and Senate examine and debate the budget of each state department. Budgets are formed and approved by subcommittees, the full Appropriations Committee, and finally the full legislative body. Differences between House and Senate versions are resolved and the final budget is presented to the governor.

As a member of the House Appropriations Committee, much of my work in Lansing is focused on crafting the House's version of the budget. As with any document produced by a diverse body with competing interests, there are many areas I do not agree with. Below are some of the highlights of the House-approved 2018-19 budget I am most pleased with.

House Approves Funding for Sexual Assault Evidence Tracking System

After thousands of untested rape kits were found in Wayne County back in 2014, the state of Michigan formed the Sexual Assault Evidence Kit Tracking and Reporting Commission to ensure that every kit was tested and this serious breach of the public trust never occurs again. At the advice of the commission, the House version of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) 2018-19 budget includes \$800,000 to develop and implement a sexual assault evidence tracking system. The State Police budget includes an additional \$158,900 and one full-time employee to aid in the effort.

Runaway and Homeless Youth Funding Added

The House added language to ensure a \$750,000 funding increase would go to providing emergency shelters and services to homeless and runaway youth.

Employment First Program Enhanced

The mission of Employment First in Michigan is to establish the expectation and promote opportunities for all working-age individuals with disabilities. The House approved \$500,000 in one-time funding to develop best practices to increase competitive integrated employment for people with disabilities.

House Increases Crime Victims' Rights Services Grants

The state of Michigan compensates crime victims who suffer bodily injury for medical expenses, counseling, burial assistance and other services when all other sources of assistance have been exhausted. The House budget increases funding for this grant program by \$2 million from current year levels to \$18.9 million.

Senior Volunteer Service Programs Increased

Senior citizen initiatives such as the Foster Grandparent Program, Retired and Senior Volunteer Program and the Senior Companion Program are funded through state grants to local agencies. The House budget recommends an increase of \$300,000 over the current funding level to \$4.8 million.

Children's Trust Fund

The House budget increases CTF funding by \$1 million over the current year level including \$800,000 in CTF reserve funds to be used to provide grants to local child abuse prevention councils, providers and special projects as well as to cover administrative costs. An additional \$200,000 from the General Fund is appropriated to support neglected children in substance abuse disorder cases.

Community Dispute Resolution Centers Program Increased

In courts that have developed referral processes with local community mediation centers, judges are finding that in many cases parties are able to resolve their own disputes with the assistance of a trained mediator. This program helps reduce court costs and clear clogged court dockets. In the Judiciary budget the House provides \$500,000 over the governor's recommendation for the expansion of Community Dispute Resolution Centers.

Michigan Indigent Defense Commission Funded

The House provides \$61.3 million for Michigan Indigent Defense Commission grants to support four initial minimum standards designed to improve the statewide provision of indigent criminal defense services.

Michigan State Police Trooper Recruit School 2019

The House budget provides \$7 million to support training, salaries and benefits, and equipment and fleet expenses for 50 new state troopers as well as train and equip 80 troopers to fill the spots of retiring officers.

Campus Sexual Assault Prevention Funding Increased

\$1 million is provided for grants to colleges and universities to help prevent sexual assaults on campuses. The grants cover sexual assault awareness, prevention, reporting, and bystander intervention programs.

Increased Road Funding

The House provides an overall \$213 million increase for road and bridge programs over the current fiscal year. This is due to increased fuel and registration tax revenue

and the income tax revenue earmark that were part of the transportation funding package passed in 2015. \$121 million of the increase is for local roads and \$92 million is for state roads. This increase is significantly reduced by \$160 million, however, if the road funding included in the recently enacted Fiscal Year 2018 supplemental is considered. Ultimately, though, the funding included in this budget for our road repairs still falls short of what is needed to fully fix our dilapidated roads and bridges due to the mismanagement and poor policy passed over the years. I will continue fighting to increase this funding throughout the budget process so that we can help our communities afford the road repairs we so desperately need.

While these are important elements for success in Michigan, ultimately this budget fails in far more places than it succeeds. My House Democratic colleagues and I will continue fighting for a budget that prioritizes working families by providing them the tools they need to create the future — and Michigan — that works for them.

FY 2017-18 APPROPRIATIONS

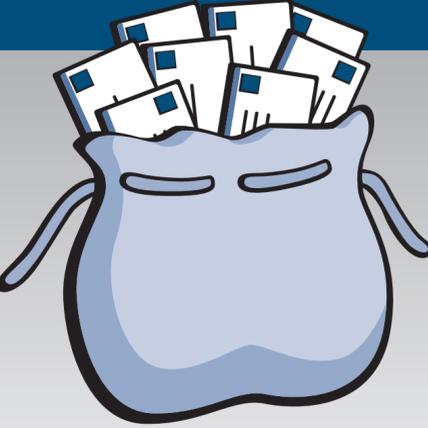
(Millions of Dollars)
As of 2/1/2018

	GF/GP	ADJ GROSS
Agriculture & Rural Develop.	\$66.30	\$114.40
Community Colleges	1.0	399.3
Corrections	1,946.6	2,001.9
Education	81.7	352.2
Environmental Quality	63.1	548.4
General Government	1,250.7	4,268.1
Health & Human Services	4,380.5	25,495.7
Higher Education	1,279.3	1,629.2
Insurance & Financial Services	0.2	66.0
Judiciary	192.6	298.5
Licensing & Regulatory Affairs	44.4	386.8
Military & Veterans Affairs	62.6	179.4
Natural Resources	58.0	409.8
School Aid	215.0	14,584.3
State Police	439.6	672.7
Transportation	0.0	4,345.4

TOTAL APPROPRIATIONS \$10,081.50 \$55,752.20

Note: Adjusted gross appropriation amounts include all fund sources: federal, local private, restricted, and GF/GP.
Information prepared by House Fiscal Agency

STATE REPRESENTATIVE
RONNIE PETERSON
Online: peterson.housedems.com



From the Mail Bag

My office receives hundreds of phone calls and thousands of letters and emails from constituents each year. These are my thoughts on some of the issues that I have received the most inquiries about.

Online Voter Registration Package Passes the House



Michigan is one of only 13 states that does not permit online voter registration. To change this, House Bills 5548 and 5549 and Senate Bills 425-429 were introduced and have recently been reported from the House Ethics and Elections Committee. The bipartisan bill packages would set up an electronic voter registration system. In addition to allowing easier access to voter registration, a 2010 case study in Arizona of the cost-savings electronic voting systems provide found that Arizona experienced a reduction in per-registration costs from 83 cents per paper registration to 3 cents per online registration. Not only are these bills ethically sound legislation that reduce barriers to voting, but they are also sound fiscal legislation during a time when Michigan struggles to properly fund public services like road repair and public education. It is now up to the full House to pass the legislation and pave the way for full citizen participation in our political process. I fully support these bills and will encourage my colleagues to implement them and other reforms which make voting more accessible to the qualified electorate.

Resolution Urges Governor to Shut Down Line 5



Many of you have written to me with concern over the potential environmental disaster posed if a breach of Enbridge Energy's Line 5 pipeline in the bottomlands of the Straits of Mackinac were to occur. The pipeline is 64 years old, and transports nearly 23 million gallons of light crude oil and natural gas liquids daily. Recent reports of corroded support braces and damage from a ship's anchor only emphasize the threat of catastrophe we have so far eluded. Modeling conducted in 2016 by University of Michigan hydrodynamics researchers determined that a rupture of Line 5 would likely contaminate at least 700 miles of coastline. House Resolution 51 urges the governor and attorney general to exercise their authority immediately to terminate the pipeline easement and shut down Line 5.

Statewide Septic Code Bills Introduced



The failure of Michigan's antiquated water infrastructure has had a devastating impact on our citizens. The Flint water crisis has harmed tens of thousands of innocent people and sparked further investigation which has revealed drinking water issues across the state. As your representative, supporting legislation that protects our water from pollution is very important to me. That is why I am so encouraged to see a bipartisan package of bills introduced recently to address this problem. House Bills 5752 and 5753 would add to the Public Health Code to establish state and local standards for onsite wastewater treatment systems. Among other things, the bills would require the Dept. of Environmental Quality (DEQ) to develop a statewide code to govern the installation, operation, maintenance, and inspection of septic systems; require regular septic system inspections, assessments, or evaluations; require inspection results to be maintained by the DEQ in a statewide database; and establish a Technical Advisory Committee to advise the DEQ regarding septic system standards. A statewide septic system code will make our water cleaner and healthier now and for future generations ensuring that Michigan remains the Great Lakes State.

Medicaid Coverage Threatened



Recently, the state Senate passed legislation to take health care away from nearly 1 million residents who use Medicaid, more than 683,000 of whom are enrolled in the Healthy Michigan Plan that expanded Medicaid access. Under the bill, able-bodied adults that do not have a disability, are not pregnant, and are between the ages of 19-64 would have to meet certain requirements outlined in the legislation in order to receive their health care coverage under Medicaid.

The requirements created by this legislation impose bureaucratic red tape that will prevent Michiganders who meet arbitrary criteria from keeping their health coverage. According to a study published by the University of Michigan last December, nearly half of Medicaid enrollees in Michigan are already employed.

Another quarter of Medicaid enrollees are either in school, retired, unable to work or acting as a homemaker. Those individuals who receive health care coverage under Medicaid typically do so because their jobs do not offer health insurance coverage. This legislation will only rob hundred of thousands of Michiganders of their health coverage, putting the well-being of them and their families at risk.

It should be no surprise that this legislation will only serve to hurt the most vulnerable among us. People who are trying to find work but can't will now have their health coverage threatened. People who work in seasonal or low-wage jobs and have no control over their schedule may have their coverage taken from them thanks to this legislation, despite holding a job.

There is no shortage of statistics and research available to dispel the need for this legislation. But beyond the facts and figures, erecting barriers to health care for our residents who face the greatest need for coverage is downright heartless. Robbing, or threatening to rob, people of the health care coverage they need to lead successful and healthy lives does not lead to positive outcomes. I am disappointed to see this misguided and callous proposal making its way through the Legislature currently, but I will do all I can to fight against it. Michigan deserves better.

Prevailing Wage Repeal



Recently, backers of repealing the prevailing wage law, which guarantees union-scale wages for public construction workers, gathered enough valid signatures to have their petition introduced to the Board of State Canvassers. Pending a court ruling, it will then go in front of the Legislature where our elected officials will have 40 days to enact the petition into law or present the petition as a referendum before the voters in November.

Prevailing wage is a necessary component of the appropriate treatment of workers by area businesses. Although I understand the sentiment of fair and open competition in the job market, I believe we must protect workers from having their wages slashed by the managers and CEOs of their respective companies. The expansion of community prosperity through economic development is vital to the success of each of our

neighbors, but if the jobs we possess do not provide the wages necessary to live a decent life, then our community as a whole will not thrive. I will not accept the repeal of the prevailing wage law as a method to greater prosperity, and I will keep you updated on my fight to protect worker's rights.

Arts Funding in our Community

The arts spark our curiosity, fire our imaginations and inspire our creativity. They also have the potential to bridge cultures and draw people together. I have been working closely with the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs (MCACA) not only to capture funding for the arts but also to help encourage collaboration and diversity of arts projects, performances and exhibitions in our community.

Art instruction in our public schools is another issue I have been working on with the MCACA. Teaching the arts not only allows children to be creative and have fun at school, it also has been linked to improvements in core subject test scores. While the discussions are still in the early stages, I am excited about a possible collaboration with

the MCACA to bring more art instruction to our schools. I will keep you updated as details unfold.

The MCACA recently announced a series of grants for the arts in our district. I am so proud of the organizations that were able to capture these awards, they are: The Corner Health Center (\$21,000); Riverside Arts Center (\$15,820); Ypsilanti District Library (\$2,970); Ypsilanti Youth Orchestra (\$7,641); Ypsilanti Community Schools (\$12,000); All Things Artistic Ministries, Inc. (\$1,600); Dreamland Theatre (\$1,551); Estabrook Learning Community (\$500); Holmes Elementary (\$500); Perry Early Learning Center (\$500); Voice in Harmony Chapter Sweet Adelines (\$1,200); Washtenaw International Middle Academy (\$1,500).



FY 2017-18 REVENUE ESTIMATES*

(Millions of Dollars)

GENERAL FUND/GENERAL PURPOSE (GF/GP)

Income Tax	\$ 7,068.2
Sales Tax	1,271.6
Use Tax	558.7
Insurance Company Tax	412.1
MI Business Tax/Corporate Income Tax (net)	197.3
Tobacco Taxes	185.0
Liquor, Beer, & Wine Taxes	108.5
Other Sources	506.3
Beginning Balance	622.5
TOTAL GF/GP	\$10,930.2

SCHOOL AID FUND (SAF)

Sales Tax	\$5,841.6
Income Tax	2,831.00
State 6-Mill Education Tax	2,027.10
Lottery & Casino Wagering Tax	1,039.00
Use Tax	548.30
Tobacco Taxes	353.00
Other Sources	444.50
Beginning Balance	377.40
TOTAL SAF	\$13,461.9

Information prepared by House Fiscal Agency

STATE REPRESENTATIVE
RONNIE PETERSON
Online: peterson.housedems.com