



NEWS RELEASE

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AUDIO TRANSCRIPT 2026 REPUBLICAN RESPONSE TO THE STATE OF THE STATE

Hi. I'm Aric Nesbitt, the Republican leader in your state Senate. But more than that, I'm a husband and a dad.

Like many of you, I'm working hard to make our great state even better for our kids.

We just heard Gov. Whitmer deliver her final State of the State address from the Capitol in Lansing.

But I'm speaking to you from my family's sixth-generation dairy and grape farm here in Lawton in Southwest Michigan. This is where my parents taught me that it takes early mornings and hard work to get the job done.

Too much of what we heard tonight doesn't pass the smell test, not even here on the farm.

For eight years, Gov. Whitmer has had a bad habit of saying all of the right things, and then doing all of the wrong things, and she's hoping you'll forget. But we haven't forgotten because we're living with the consequences.

It's harder and harder than ever to make it in Michigan. Too many families are struggling to heat their homes, put food on the table and stretch their paychecks each month.

That's why, in 2024, you made your voice heard. You put Republicans back in control of the state House and sent President Trump back to the White House.

Eight years ago, Gov. Whitmer promised to "fix the damn roads."

Yet despite a nearly 50% increase in state spending, higher taxes and a \$9 billion surplus, less than 10% of our roads have been repaired.

While you were budgeting to buy groceries, her administration lost more than \$8 billion to unemployment fraud.

While you were following the rules, her team gave a \$20 million grant to a fake charity run by one of her friends.

But the costs of her failed leadership aren't just measured in dollars and cents.

We will never forget the thousands of seniors who died in our nursing homes because of her orders.

We will not forget the small businesses and the workers crushed by mandates she now admits were “based on bad information.”

And we will never forget that our children were locked out of their classrooms for two years.

Now, a staggering majority of our students can’t read at grade level, three-quarters of eighth graders have fallen behind in math and Michigan schools rank near the bottom nationally. And that’s wrong.

Gov. Whitmer finally wants to talk about solving the literacy crisis. It’s about time.

But what she won’t talk about is how she gutted standards with Lansing Democrats or how she vetoed millions and millions of dollars to help kids recover lost learning after her COVID lockdowns.

By nearly every metric, Michigan is worse off today than when Gov. Whitmer first took office.

You deserve leaders who share your values and understand your struggles. And that’s why Republicans in the House and Senate are fighting every day so you and your family can make it in Michigan once again.

We are rooting out the waste, fraud and abuse in your state government, reining in the size of state government and putting more of your money back in your pocket, where it belongs.

We will end Democrats’ Green New Scam that’s destroying our forests and farmland for solar panels and making it more expensive to heat your home.

We will tackle housing, child care and health care shortages by getting government out of the way and taking a blowtorch to Whitmer’s bloated bureaucracy and crippling red tape to make Michigan more affordable.

It’s time to declare Michigan open for business and good-paying jobs once again.

And we will raise the bar for students and teachers and restore Michigan’s reputation as one of the best education systems in the nation.

It’s time to enact a read-by-third-grade guarantee and trust parents to make the best choices for their kids and bring back the trades to our high schools.

We’ll make sure that our children’s first letters are ABC and not DEI.

And we will fix the roads without cursing about it.

Gretchen Whitmer’s Michigan has left too many hardworking families behind.

But tonight, fellow Michiganders, I want to encourage you: Don’t lose hope.

Republicans are cleaning up her mess by focusing on the things you care about.

We’re going to make the state of our state strong again, so that everyone can make it in Michigan.

Good night. May God bless you, and may God bless the great state of Michigan.

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