

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE 2015

DEAR NEIGHBOR:

The economic stop signs and flashing red lights are fading fast. In fact, there are clear signals that Michigan is on the road to a strong economic recovery.

Economic activity is at a 10-year high. Unemployment is at its lowest rate in 14 years. Job growth is among the best in country. Personal income growth is the highest among the Great Lakes states.

Clearly, Michigan is moving in the right direction, but there is still more to do. By working together, we can keep the momentum going and create an even better future, one that provides more opportunities for Michigan families.

This Legislative Report summarizes budgets and economic news, along with our work to balance the state budget. I hope you find it useful.

As always, please feel free to contact my office with any questions or comments, or if you need assistance with any state matter. I look forward to hearing from you!

Sincerely,



STATE SENATOR

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LEGISLATIVE UPDATE 2015

LEGISLATURE DELIVERS RESPONSIBLE BUDGET TO KEEP MICHIGAN ON THE RIGHT PATH

The Fiscal Year 2016 state budget plan once again provides a strong foundation for economic growth while investing in our state's future.

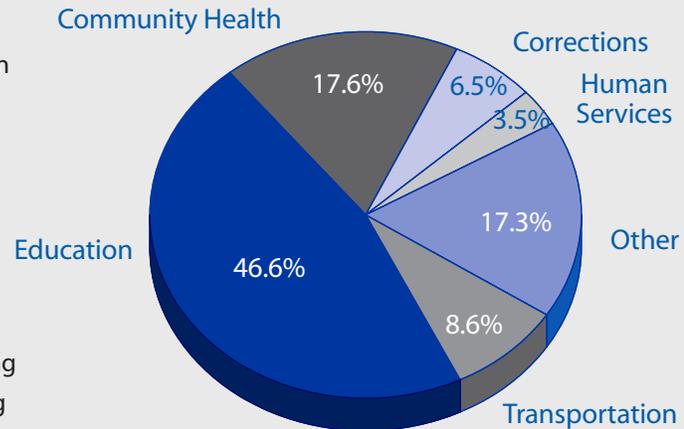
Our plan balances the books with a focus on the priorities important to Michigan families – schools, public safety and roads. Top highlights include:

1. **\$400 Million from existing revenues for road repair.**
2. **More than \$36 Million for skilled trades, career and technical education.**
3. **\$31.5 Million for a third-grade reading initiative.**
4. **Increased funding to hire 88 new state troopers for our communities.**

The budget also strengthens the state's finances by paying down debt and saving for the future in the Rainy Day Fund. As we move forward, I will continue working to make sure government lives within its means and your tax dollars are spent wisely and efficiently.

State Spending From State Resources

FY 2015-16 Conference Reports



Total: \$30,121,638,000

Senate Fiscal Agency

THE NUMBER ONE JOB IS JOBS!

Michigan continues to transform into a jobs first state. With common sense reforms, the goal is to make Michigan a top-tier state – one that attracts good paying jobs for our families.



HILDENBRAND: EDUCATION BUDGET INVESTS IN MICHIGAN'S CHILDREN

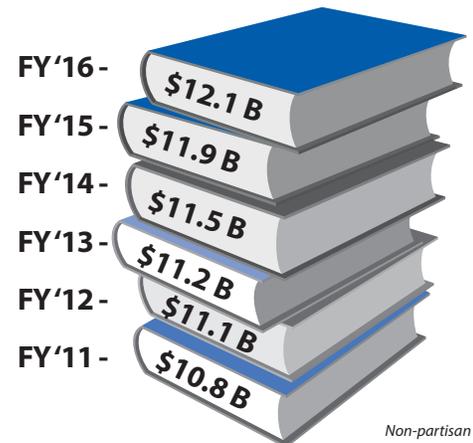
For the fifth year in a row, the Legislature increased funding for K-12 education. *That's more than \$1.3 billion in new state funding for our schools since 2011.*

Along with an increase in per pupil funding, money was added to improve early literacy and expand skilled trades training so all our students—from the youngest to the oldest—are better prepared for success.

Additional funding was also allotted to help pay the increasing costs of retiree benefits over and above the district share so more dollars can be focused on the classroom.

K-12 EDUCATION FUNDING

STATE FUNDING FROM STATE RESOURCES



Non-partisan
Senate Fiscal
Agency analysis data

BUDGET FOCUSES ON THIRD GRADE READING

Even in today's digital world, the ability to read is important to success in school and the workforce.

By the fourth grade, as students transition from learning to read to reading to learn, those who aren't proficient in reading have difficulty catching up and continue to struggle in school.

Reading proficiency has been identified as an area of concern for Michigan students. The budget invests \$31.5 million for a third grade reading initiative. The plan focuses on increased classroom time in reading for students in grades K-3, professional development for teachers, literacy coaches and parental support, including home visits.

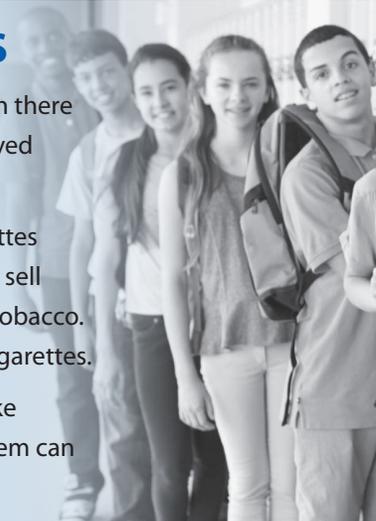


SENATE BILL PROTECTS MINORS

When it comes to keeping kids safe, it seems as though there are always new challenges. The Senate recently approved legislation to protect kids from nicotine abuse.

Senate Bill 231 would ban the sale of electronic cigarettes and nicotine cartridges to minors and treat stores that sell the products to minors the same as if they sold them tobacco. Minors would be prohibited from buying or using e-cigarettes.

Many of these products come in kid-friendly flavors, like chocolate, fruit and bubble gum. Yet the nicotine in them can be just as addictive as conventional cigarettes.



THERE'S AN APP FOR THAT!

For motorists, the *Mi Drive* traffic app offers up-to-date information on construction, traffic incidents and other factors that can affect travel.



The free app is available on iOS and Android devices; search the app store for MDOT or Mi Drive. The address for both the desktop and mobile versions of the website is www.michigan.gov/drive.



BUS SAFETY RULES

Bus stops and crossings can be hazardous, especially for young children. Use extra care around parked cars as kids may run from them to get to the bus.

MOTORISTS

- When the **YELLOW** overhead lights are flashing, prepare to stop.
- Flashing **RED** lights on a school bus mean one thing—**STOP**—at least 20 feet from the school bus. Remain stopped until the flashing **RED** lights are turned off or the bus resumes its travels.
- When the **YELLOW** hazard lights are flashing, move with caution.

It is not necessary to stop for a school bus stopped on the other side of a divided highway where the road is separated by a barrier, such as a concrete or grass median, island, or other structures that separate the flow of traffic.

Adapted from What Every Driver Must Know (www.michigan.gov/sos)