

Rep. Dianda offered the following resolution:

House Resolution No. 280.

A resolution to declare the Michigan Department of Transportation Director Kirk Steudle unfit to lead the department and express our lack of confidence in his leadership.

Whereas, Kirk Steudle has served as Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) Director since 2006, under both Governor Granholm and Governor Snyder. As Director, Mr. Steudle oversees the construction, maintenance, and operation of state roads and bridges, along with local agency federal aid, public transportation, and aeronautics and rail services. The department directly employs over 2,500 people and has a budget of more than \$3 billion; and

Whereas, The Michigan Department of Transportation Director Steudle has not proven to be a good steward of Michigan taxpayer dollars or MDOT employees; and

Whereas, In 2010, the Michigan Department of Transportation refurbished and began leasing twenty-three railcars for proposed future rail passenger service between Ann Arbor and Howell and Ann Arbor and Detroit. The cars were rented for \$1.1 million a year and sat in a rail yard in Owosso for five years, racking up costs to taxpayers of almost \$12 million in refurbishing and lease charges. MDOT has terminated the lease but the cars still sit, available for the Great Lakes Central Railroad to lease or sell. MDOT has yet to secure funding or an operator for the rail service, complete environmental studies, or upgrade track for the proposed rail projects. The passenger rail service will not be ready until 2019 at the earliest. MDOT officials have admitted the cost has been more than they wished. It appears that, at worst, MDOT has put money toward projects that may never come to fruition, and at best, is guilty of poor timing between securing equipment and beginning the rail service; and

Whereas, In 2010, MDOT spent \$9.5 million on a landscaping project along I-696 between I-75 and I-94 in Macomb and Oakland counties. Two years later, there was a die-off of plantings over large stretches of the area due to erosion, partly caused by mowing, which leached eroded soils into the storm drainage system. MDOT spent \$2.3 million for mulch plus \$620,000 in a replanting effort to repair the damage. Poor planning and lack of foresight exacerbated this problem; and

Whereas, In 2015, an Auditor General's report cited MDOT for not following up on road warranties which hold contractors responsible for their work. The department often failed to inspect work and ensure that contractors corrected deficiencies. Over half of warranties expired before MDOT followed up, which put the responsibility and cost for any corrective action on the state instead of the contractor. Similar issues were raised in a 2010 audit and were not comprehensively addressed; and

Whereas, The Michigan section of the American Society of Civil Engineers recently gave Michigan roads a grade of D-. Thirty-nine percent of the 120,000 miles of paved roads in Michigan are rated in poor condition, 43 percent rated in fair condition, and just 18 percent rated in good condition. Furthermore, Michigan has 1,234 structurally deficient bridges, and the Michigan Department of Transportation estimates the number of state-maintained bridges currently rated in poor condition will increase by 50 percent in the next five years. Even in light of a shortage of funding, the priorities set by Mr. Steudle and MDOT are questionable; and

Whereas, His mismanagement of scarce state funds in the face of the current road funding deficit are unacceptable and demonstrate a failure to properly administer the office and responsibilities of Director of the Michigan Department of Transportation; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That we declare the Michigan Department of Transportation Director Kirk Steudle unfit to lead the department and express our lack of confidence in his leadership; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the Governor of Michigan.