

No. 8
STATE OF MICHIGAN
Journal of the Senate
103rd Legislature
REGULAR SESSION OF 2025

Senate Chamber, Lansing, Wednesday, January 29, 2025.

10:00 a.m.

The Senate was called to order by the President, Lieutenant Governor Garlin D. Gilchrist II.

The roll was called by the Secretary of the Senate, who announced that a quorum was present.

Albert—present
Anthony—present
Bayer—present
Bellino—present
Brinks—present
Bumstead—present
Camilleri—present
Cavanagh—present
Chang—present
Cherry—present
Daley—present
Damoose—present
Geiss—present

Hauck—present
Hertel—present
Hoitenga—present
Huizenga—present
Irwin—present
Johnson—excused
Klinefelt—present
Lauwers—present
Lindsey—present
McBroom—present
McCann—present
McMorrow—present

Moss—present
Nesbitt—present
Outman—present
Polehanki—present
Runestad—present
Santana—present
Shink—present
Singh—present
Theis—excused
Victory—present
Webber—present
Wojno—present

Senator Mark E. Huizenga of the 30th District offered the following invocation:

Heavenly Father, thank You for the gifts that You have given to each and every one of us; for life, for health, and for Your grace. Guide us in this body as we make decisions that impact the residents of our state. I pray that You provide us with both perseverance and wisdom.

Help us to be mindful from the words of the Apostle Paul in the Book of Romans, which states, “For there is no authority except from God.” Keep us humble, honest, and God fearing.

It is in Your holy name that we pray. Amen.

The President, Lieutenant Governor Gilchrist, led the members of the Senate in recital of the *Pledge of Allegiance*.

Motions and Communications

Senator Lauwers moved that Senators Theis and Johnson be excused from today’s session.
The motion prevailed.

Senator Singh moved that Senator Santana be temporarily excused from today’s session.
The motion prevailed.

Recess

Senator Singh moved that the Senate recess subject to the call of the Chair.
The motion prevailed, the time being 10:02 a.m.

11:29 a.m.

The Senate was called to order by the President, Lieutenant Governor Gilchrist.

During the recess, Senator Santana entered the Senate Chamber.

By unanimous consent the Senate proceeded to the order of

Third Reading of Bills

The following bill was read a third time:

Senate Bill No. 1, entitled

A bill to amend 1976 PA 442, entitled “Freedom of information act,” by amending section 2 (MCL 15.232), as amended by 2018 PA 68.

The question being on the passage of the bill,
Senator Lindsey offered the following substitute:
Substitute (S-1).

The substitute was not adopted, a majority of the members serving not voting therefor.

The question being on the passage of the bill,

The bill was passed, a majority of the members serving voting therefor, as follows:

Roll Call No. 1

Yeas—33

Albert	Daley	Klinefelt	Polehanki
Anthony	Damoose	Lindsey	Runestad
Bayer	Geiss	McBroom	Santana
Bellino	Hauck	McCann	Shink
Brinks	Hertel	McMorrow	Singh
Camilleri	Hoitenga	Moss	Victory
Cavanagh	Huizenga	Nesbitt	Webber
Chang	Irwin	Outman	Wojno
Cherry			

Nays—2

Bumstead

Lauwers

Excused—2

Johnson

Theis

Not Voting—0

In The Chair: President

The Senate agreed to the title of the bill.

Protest

Senator Lauwers, under his constitutional right of protest (Art. 4, Sec. 18), protested against the passage of Senate Bill No. 1 and moved that the statement he made during the discussion of the bill be printed as his reasons for voting “no.”

The motion prevailed.

Senator Lauwers’ statement is as follows:

Is this good policy? Yes, it is. I voted for it in the past. Is it good process? Hell no. You’re lucky I didn’t make you read the bill. Not a single committee again. By the sponsor’s own admission it could be a better bill, but we didn’t have a single committee. Why? Yes, it’s good policy but let’s stick to procedure. We’re here in the Senate to follow procedure and there’s a reason for that procedure—for debate, for education. Half the state’s not even going to know we’re doing this today because it came up so fast. We introduced it last week; now we’re passing it straight to the floor. It just—you know, I said I voted for it in the past, but I’m voting against it today because it’s a protest against the procedure we’re taking. This is not the way to start off a new session.

Senators Lindsey, Moss, Runestad and McBroom asked and were granted unanimous consent to make statements and moved that the statements be printed in the Journal.

The motion prevailed.

Senator Lindsey’s statement is as follows:

My substitute for Senate Bill No. 1 would tackle, I think, an issue that was an oversight in the drafting of this legislation. One of the things this legislation does is opens FOIA to the Legislature but in recent years, the Legislature of Michigan was redefined to not only include the House and Senate but also to include the Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission in certain circumstances as they’re drafting maps. In order to address that and make sure they would also fall under FOIA, this just adds them to the list of legislative bodies that would be under FOIA. I encourage a “yes” vote on my substitute.

Senator Moss’ first statement is as follows:

I just wanted to be on record—in the record—that I’m supportive of that concept and open to further conversations. Obviously we put a lot of work into the product here today and I request a “no” vote on the substitute just so we can keep the track going to pass these bills, but very willing to work with the sponsor of this substitute in the future on subjecting the redistricting commission to FOIA.

Senator Runestad’s statement is as follows:

Here we go again. While I guess these bills are better than absolutely nothing at all, I remain very disgusted that this legislation is much more bark than bite when it comes to truly shining light in Michigan’s

government transparency. Michigan ranks among the worst states in government transparency and taxpayers deserve to have real measures that will push open wide the door on government secrecy, not merely cracks in the blinds as this bill does.

A big concern is that many of these bills allow too many exemptions—namely, a barn door’s worth of potential mischief. The bills exempt “Records created, prepared, owned, used, in the possession of, or retained by the governor, the lieutenant governor, the executive office of the governor or lieutenant governor, or an employee of those offices for less than 30 days.” Therefore, delete it before the 30 days. Also, records prior to the effective date of this act. The Legislature also rips open a new barn door’s worth of potential politicizing of the FOIA process by allowing partisan Senate Majority Leader and House Speaker to appoint FOIA coordinators for the chambers. Anyone who knows anything about FOIA knows how much mischief there is if you don’t set real hard guidelines. FOIA coordinators across the state of Michigan fight you at every step when you want to get this information. The media and anyone who’s dealt with it knows that. At the very least, these coordinators should require the consent of a vote of 2/3 of the elected legislators.

While some simple changes to these bills could have easily provided much more fair government transparency, however, as written, I believe they limb themselves to the same old secrecy issues when it comes to truly open government. However, I guess, some light is better than no light at all. I will look at these bills—these, in my view, pathetic bills—with little shutters of secrecy open just a crack more, but I will give these bills my reluctant “yes” vote.

Senator McBroom’s statement is as follows:

Mr. President, I’m pleased to support this legislation and to see it receive such quick attention from this body. I want to especially express my gratitude to my colleague from the 7th District for his partnership on this effort for a very long time. When I first came into the Legislature and was approached by one of my Democratic colleagues at the time who was upset with Governor Snyder and wanted FOIA for the Governor’s office, I said, I’m surprised we don’t already have that. As time went by, I found out the original FOIA legislation did include the Governor’s office but that was stripped out at the 11th hour during Governor Milliken’s administration. We’re the only state in the country that explicitly exempts the Governor’s office from the FOIA statute, and one of only two that doesn’t have FOIA for its Governor—the other being Massachusetts.

I started that journey early on and went to another colleague in the majority and said, Why don’t we do this? He said, That was our bill when we were in the minority. It’s just a showpiece. It’s just something the minority party of either side gets out and waves around and cries about but nobody takes seriously, and the bill’s not written well. So, I set my mind to trying to figure out a way that we could write it well, to make it work, so it would be a real thing and not just a political football to be tossed around in the future. Most of you know that by 2015 and 2016 we had a whole coalition working hard to do just that with the Governor’s office, and include the Legislature as well. We voted on it that term in the House and we have seen the House vote on it in subsequent terms, and then we finally had our first vote on it last session in the Senate. Now, here it is again today and I am grateful to all of those who’ve worked so hard to make it happen.

I just want to add a few key points. There’s a bunch of exemptions for the Governor’s office and quite honestly, most of the exemptions that are in these bills are ones we had worked out in the original drafts ten years ago with the previous administration. There’s exemptions for dealing with those who apply to be judges or apply to be a director or be on one of the state university boards or things like that where people might apply and not be selected. Do we need to see every person who’s put their hat in the ring? There’s exemptions for investigations on political officials that the Governor’s office is constitutionally responsible for doing, such as perhaps your local mayor or local sheriff or a judge. If those investigations come to nothing, should those records simply be something that can be FOIAed for political purpose for the enemies against that person? I didn’t think they should. I supported that exemption when it was asked for and I continue to support it. When it comes to the 30 days, I appreciate what the previous speaker mentioned could happen with that 30 days, but the reason we put it there is because the Governor’s office needs the ability to have open and frank discussions internally with its people when they’re doing the budget process. If they need ideas on tough cuts and they want to hear all those ideas and have them put on the table, and then later on it could just be used as a political torch to go after because somebody from the Department of Natural Resources suggested we close all the parks. That’s not helpful and it doesn’t allow the Governor’s office to do their job in writing a budget. That exemption was created for that purpose explicitly.

I can certainly understand the concerns about how the FOIA coordinator is appointed, but that’s how all the positions in this state are appointed—through a political process. Even the Auditor General is appointed by the Legislature through a political process, and I don’t see anybody accusing the Auditor General of being a partisan. Ultimately a FOIA coordinator, whether they’re here at the state or at your local unit of government, is supposed to be following the law. If you see them failing to follow the law, then there’s steps to take to act on that.

I encourage a “yes” vote and celebrate with you what I think is a significant accomplishment, not some mealy-mouthed barely-there legislation.

Senator Moss' second statement is as follows:

This is Senate Bill No. 1, the first vote of the new legislative term, and this chamber is prioritizing a more transparent state government. Residents in Michigan have been able to utilize the nearly-50-year-old Freedom of Information Act to request the behind-the-scenes documents from their city or township hall, from their school district, from county officials, from state departments, to better understand how the government decisions that impact them are made. These are e-mails, memos, schedules, agendas, who did your mayor meet with? What did your school board members send to each other during a meeting? Did the county actually follow through on the issue you brought up to them? Residents can find all of that out through a FOIA request. But this act excludes the Governor and state lawmakers from being subject to those same record requests. The public is blocked from seeing the inner workings of the Executive Office and the State Legislature. This is outrageous enough, but we are one of the only states in the country with these exemptions in the State Capitol. This contributes to the reasons why Michigan ranks the worst in the country in ethics and accountability and why scandals in this building are able to persist in the dark.

As you all know, the Senator from the Upper Peninsula and I have introduced these bills year after year to include the Governor and Legislature in FOIA. During the 2015-2016 session—a decade ago—our ten bills passed in the House when we served in the House, most with a 100-6 and some with a 99-7 vote. The next session, my second term in the House, those ten bills passed in the House unanimously, with a 108-0 vote. The next session, unanimously in the House with a 107-0 vote. The next session, unanimously in the House with a 109-0 vote. But each session, these bills were blocked by the then-Senate Republican leaders. Last term, our Senate Democratic majority for the very first time put these bills up for a vote in our chamber. We crafted the strongest version of this legislation yet and put it into two bills that passed 36-2, but then the House didn't take it up. If you're keeping score, there have been 4,310 votes in the last ten years in support of this legislation and 66 votes against, yet it is still not the law, the public is still left behind, and the opportunity for scandal is still ripe.

Today, we in the Senate will do our part to give residents the tools to shine light on state government and these bills will be sent over to the House. I compel the House to act on it. I don't have another floor speech to give on these bills. This is the last time that my colleague and I will be able to be a part of this journey and it's long past time to get it done. It should not take another ten years or another 4,000 votes for the Legislature to do the right thing for our constituents. I urge a "yes" vote on these two bills.

The following bill was read a third time:

Senate Bill No. 2, entitled

A bill to amend 1976 PA 442, entitled "Freedom of information act," by amending sections 6, 10, and 13 (MCL 15.236, 15.240, and 15.243), section 6 as amended by 1996 PA 553, section 10 as amended by 2014 PA 563, and section 13 as amended by 2023 PA 64, and by adding section 14a.

The question being on the passage of the bill,

Senator Lindsey offered the following substitute:

Substitute (S-1).

The substitute was not adopted, a majority of the members serving not voting therefor.

The question being on the passage of the bill,

The bill was passed, a majority of the members serving voting therefor, as follows:

Roll Call No. 2

Yeas—33

Albert	Daley	Klinefelt	Polehanki
Anthony	Damoose	Lindsey	Runestad
Bayer	Geiss	McBroom	Santana
Bellino	Hauck	McCann	Shink
Brinks	Hertel	McMorrow	Singh
Camilleri	Hoitenga	Moss	Victory
Cavanagh	Huizenga	Nesbitt	Webber
Chang	Irwin	Outman	Wojno
Cherry			

Nays—2

Bumstead

Lauwers

Excused—2

Johnson

Theis

Not Voting—0

In The Chair: President

The Senate agreed to the title of the bill.

Senator Lindsey asked and was granted unanimous consent to make a statement and moved that the statement be printed in the Journal.

The motion prevailed.

Senator Lindsey's statement is as follows:

We've already heard from several members today talking about how extending FOIA to the Legislature and the Governor is a good idea. Most people agree with that, most people have over the years. Most of the criticism that's been leveled at this legislation is that it either doesn't go far enough or it has too many exemptions, too many carveouts, or just a few points where it's going to fall short. These are the very reasons, by the way, that when this came up last year, I voted against these bills. I was one of the few people who did and took some heat for it. I think I was successful. I had a lot of media members call me, a lot of people call me, and it gave me an opportunity to highlight how I think we can do even better at what we're trying to do here. It frankly led to productive conversations with members from both sides of the aisle about fixing some of these things.

I'm offering this substitute that captures a few more changes I would like to see to the bill. Three of them in particular have already been discussed on the floor. The FOIA coordinator for the Legislature is not something that should end up being a political appointment that could potentially be weaponized in any fashion. My proposed solution to that is that we would have two coordinators. One would be assigned by the majority over all member offices and any legislative FOIAs that are not majority members, and the other coordinator would be assigned by the minority leader to handle the offices of the majority. What that would do is ensure both sides are taking the process seriously and nobody would be incentivized to weaponize the FOIA process or slow-roll it or hide things from the public.

A couple other technical changes inside this substitute. There's an exemption that exists for the Governor's office that if a FOIA request were made, it might not have to be responded to if there's an internal investigation. Well, I've added language to clarify that that investigation should have to have been started before the FOIA request comes in because I'm sure no one would like to see a situation where someone requests a FOIA, the Governor doesn't want to respond to it, and so she says, Oh, that is now under investigation and we're shielded from having to respond to FOIA. I think we should be as clear as possible with these to make sure we prevent those types of potential abuses.

One other change is that, you know, records that have not been retained for 30 days are going to be exempt from FOIA and I don't think there's clear language right now that would prevent a situation where records could be handed around every month or so and say, We actually never had them for 30 days. It should be 30 days total, whether they've been held consecutively or not.

These are a few of the changes, and I'm encouraged by a lot of the feedback I've gotten from members, again, on both sides, that after these bills are passed, we can continue the conversation to make FOIA even better. I encourage a "yes" vote on my substitute.

By unanimous consent the Senate returned to the order of

Motions and Communications

The following communication was received:
Office of Senator John Cherry

January 29, 2025

Please add my signature as a co-sponsor to the following bills:

- Senate Bill 1
- Senate Bill 2
- Senate Bill 3

- Senate Bill 4
- Senate Bill 5
- Senate Bill 6
- Senate Bill 7

If there are any questions or issues, do not hesitate to reach out to me or members of my staff.

Sincerely,
John Cherry
State Senator, 27th District

The communication was referred to the Secretary for record.

Resolutions

Senator Singh moved that rule 3.204 be suspended to permit immediate consideration of the following resolution:

Senate Resolution No. 4

The motion prevailed, a majority of the members serving voting therefor.

Senators Bellino, Lindsey, Santana, Huizenga, Theis, Webber, Lauwers, Nesbitt, Outman, Wojno, McMorro and Albert offered the following resolution:

Senate Resolution No. 4.

A resolution to recognize January 26-February 1, 2025, as Catholic Schools Week.

Whereas, There are 51,497 students attending 214 Catholic elementary and high schools throughout our great state; and

Whereas, The Constitution of Michigan states that “Religion, morality and knowledge being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged”; and

Whereas, Catholic school parents pay tuition in addition to supporting their local public schools through their taxes; and

Whereas, Catholic schools comply with the same health, safety, and general welfare regulations required of public schools; and

Whereas, Taking into account Michigan’s minimum public school foundation allowance of \$9,608 per pupil, Catholic schools will save taxpayers more than \$494 million in state spending during the current school year; and

Whereas, Catholic schools instill a broad, values-based education, emphasizing the lifelong development of moral, intellectual, and social values in young people, making them responsible citizens of our state and nation; and

Whereas, Catholic schools educate many students who are non-Catholic, many students who are economically disadvantaged, and exemplifies that a good education remains the single best way out of poverty; and

Whereas, With their traditionally high academic standards, high graduation rates, and commitment to community service, Catholic schools and their graduates make a positive contribution to society; and

Whereas, January 26-February 1, 2025, has been designated as Catholic Schools Week, with the theme “Catholic Schools: United in Faith and Community” as denoted by the National Catholic Educational Association and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops; and

Whereas, The common good of the state of Michigan is strengthened through the continued existence of Catholic schools; and

Whereas Catholic schools are committed to community service, producing graduates who hold “helping others” among their core values; and

Whereas, A supportive partnership is created with each student’s family, encouraging the involvement of parents in the education of their children, so that Catholic students form productive lives which benefit future generations; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate, That the members of this legislative body recognize January 26-February 1, 2025, as Catholic Schools Week. We support the continued dedication of Catholic schools across Michigan toward academic excellence and the key role Catholic schools play in promoting and ensuring a brighter, stronger future for students; and be it further

Resolved, That a copy of this resolution be transmitted to the Michigan Catholic Conference with our highest esteem.

The question being on the adoption of the resolution,

The resolution was adopted.

Senator Bellino asked and was granted unanimous consent to make a statement and moved that the statement be printed in the Journal.

The motion prevailed.

Senator Bellino's statement is as follows:

Senate Resolution No. 4 celebrates the tremendous impact Catholic schools have had on thousands of Michigan children. Our Catholic schools were born out of a time when religious freedom was not well practiced. Schools were started to help educate Catholics and immigrants when Protestantism permeated the public schools and Catholic children were ridiculed and often punished for their beliefs and their looks. In 1846, the first Catholic school started in my community, started by the IHM nuns, and two years ago, the newest one I know of in Michigan started in Saline.

What resulted was the creation of the largest parochial school system in the world. Today, even with low enrollment, 51,000 students attend over 200 Catholic elementary and high schools throughout our great state. Catholic schools instill a broad, value-based education, emphasizing the lifelong development of moral, intellectual, and social values in young people, making them responsible citizens in our state and our Union. If you look around this room, look at all of us parents who send their kids to Catholic schools or who went out of the School Aid Fund.

These schools also educate many students who are non-Catholic and many of our students are economically disadvantaged. Here's a stat from my own Catholic high school: seventy-two percent of our 346 students get financial aid. Seventy-two percent—so throw out the window those thoughts of, Only rich kids go to Catholic schools. Indeed, Catholic schools educate our kids with the understanding that a good education remains the best single way to get out of poverty. Considering Michigan's minimum public foundation allowance of almost \$10,000, Catholic schools help educate all the students in Michigan, for they save almost \$500 million out of the School Aid Fund.

We support the continued dedication of Catholic schools across Michigan toward academic excellence and the key role they play in promoting and ensuring a brighter, stronger future for our students and our state. I ask for your support of my resolution to recognize January 26 through February 1 as Catholic Schools Week.

By unanimous consent the Senate proceeded to the order of
Statements

Senators Webber, Chang, Hauck, Albert, Daley, Irwin, Anthony, Lindsey and Nesbitt asked and were granted unanimous consent to make statements and moved that the statements be printed in the Journal.

The motion prevailed.

Senator Webber's statement is as follows:

Time is running out. Less than a month from now—on February 21—Michigan has a date with economic catastrophe, but there is still time to change our fate. More importantly, there is still time to save thousands of good jobs that will otherwise be put at risk. These are the jobs of real, hardworking Michiganders who are counting on us to protect their livelihoods.

What's unfortunate is that we have known about this looming crisis for over six months. The Legislature has both the ability and a responsibility to solve this pending disaster. Without action from this chamber, the Michigan Restaurant and Lodging Association estimates that one in every five restaurants will be forced to close and 50,000 jobs—67 percent of Michigan's vital hospitality workforce—will be lost.

For months, thousands of restaurant workers have been calling on lawmakers to take action to save their livelihoods. I have participated in several local forums where workers expressed their frustrations with the court's decision. Many servers and bartenders have told me they can make more than minimum wage under the tip credit system and rely on the flexibility of their profession. I know these servers don't just live and work in my district; they're in communities all across Michigan.

Thankfully, just weeks into the new legislative session, the newly-elected House majority acted quickly, passing bipartisan legislation to avert this oncoming economic disaster. I stand ready, along with my Republican colleagues, to work across the aisle and pass this legislation as soon as possible for the thousands of hardworking Michiganders who are counting on us. I call on the Senate majority to move these bipartisan bills through our chamber and bring them to the floor for a vote with a sense of urgency. The clock is ticking.

Senator Chang's statement is as follows:

I just want to wish all my colleagues a happy Lunar New Year. As you likely know, Lunar New Year is celebrated by many folks in the Chinese, Taiwanese, Korean, Vietnamese, and other communities across the world. Today marks the beginning of the Year of the Snake. The snake symbolizes wisdom and transformation and provides opportunity for all of us for personal growth and change. I'm wishing all Michiganders across our state lots of joy, health, and prosperity as we begin the new Lunar New Year and I hope that all of us in this chamber can work together to further those goals as well. Happy Lunar New Year!

Senator Hauck's statement is as follows:

Mr. President, when you see the Governor today, would you please ask her why she hasn't called for a special election in the 35th Senate District?

Senator Albert's statement is as follows:

On July 31 of last year, the Michigan Supreme Court made its misguided ruling related to the tip credit, minimum wage, and paid sick leave laws. That left 205 days until February 21, 2025, the day the new mandates take effect. One hundred eighty-two days ago, I introduced a plan to address this issue that has sat idle for the remainder of the 2024 term. Now, we have only 23 days left before the February 21 deadline, and businesses and workers have no certainty of what's going to happen next. This should have been addressed long ago, and it's been incredibly frustrating to watch this chamber do nothing, even though jobs of thousands of Michigan workers are on the line. We are running out of time. Workers, particularly servers in the restaurant industry and small businesses, are begging we take action to save their jobs.

I call on the Senate to approve House Bill Nos. 4001 and 4002 as soon as possible. These bills preserve the tipped credit, sustainably continue to raise the minimum wage, and continue to provide common-sense and workable earned sick time that keeps exemptions for small businesses. If we do nothing, there will be dire consequences.

A survey from the Michigan Restaurant and Lodging Association, related to the loss of the tip credit, estimates one in five full service restaurants will close and between 40,000-60,000 jobs could be lost. If a restaurant survives, they would expect to raise costs by 25 percent. That would come on top of the inflationary pressures Michiganders are already dealing with every day. Restaurant servers have told us time and time again, they didn't ask for the tip credit to be eliminated and they want it preserved. They do better financially with the tip credit than they would expect to do without it. Advocates of eliminating the tip credit support a so-called One Fair Wage. That ideology misses the mark on a couple of fronts.

First off, in a free society, many fair wages are determined when people freely choose a job that offers an income based on many factors; chiefly, merit and effort. Unfortunately, some misguided ideologues seek to achieve economic parity by using a bulldozer instead of a ladder. Under the guise of benevolence, they advocate for changes that would price some people out of jobs.

The second front these ideologues miss is that all Michiganders, including those in the tip credit system, are subject to our state's minimum wage laws. If, for whatever reason, a tipped-wage employee earns an hourly rate less than the state minimum wage, then their employer must pay the employee the difference. This rarely happens because tipped employees work hard to keep their customers happy, and the vast majority have told us they earn an income exceeding the state minimum wage.

The sick time changes are equally troubling. The new mandates would affect every Michigan employer of any size. On top of that, there are a number of technical issues with the bill which wreak havoc for large and small businesses alike. And at times, these new mandates may lead to less flexible time-off options than businesses are currently offering its employees.

I was slightly encouraged earlier this month to see that Senate Democrats introduced a proposal related to wages and sick time as well. While I do appreciate the acknowledgement that changes are needed, the Democratic proposal does not go far enough to save jobs. They are moving entirely too slow. This is not the time to drag our feet or to give false hope to those about to face a loss of income or a way of life. This is not the time to barter and use the livelihoods of Michigan workers as a bargaining chip to advance some other progressive agenda. This is the time to do the right thing and fix a problem before it fully manifests.

Time is running out. The clear, obvious, and workable solution for Michigan is the House bills which won bipartisan support when they came up for a vote last week. We should follow suit and pass those bills as soon as we can. We must avoid the unrealistic mandates that would cripple the restaurant industry and hurt many workers across our state.

Senator Daley's statement is as follows:

I rise today on behalf of the more than 270,000 Michiganders who have lost their voice in government in the State Senate. They are the neighbors of the 26th District which I represent, living within the boundaries of the 35th District in Bay, Saginaw, and Midland counties who no longer have a representative in this chamber. Of course, this vacancy didn't come as a surprise. We have known since November that the previous Senator from the 35th District would resign from her seat for a new desk in Washington. We also knew ahead of time that she planned to officially resign from the seat on January 3.

Yet here we are, almost a month later, and our Governor has still not fulfilled her duty to call for a special election. I remember it was just two years ago when the Governor called for a speedy special election on the very same day after two House seats were vacated. One of the esteemed Capitol news services recently published data showing that our Governor generally takes 17 days to call a special general election when it becomes necessary. We have now passed that mark.

What's the holdup? All Michigan residents deserve representation at all levels of government. I urge the Governor to take a break from her national book tour and presidential race preparation to return to Michigan to act like a true leader, fulfill her duty, and call for this special election. We owe it to the people of the 35th District to have representation in the State Senate and have the ability to choose their next State Senator as soon as possible.

Senator Irwin's statement is as follows:

Michigan, we are facing a new and unprecedented threat against our people, our health, and our economy. Donald Trump has issued an executive order blocking federal support for critical programs that serve kids, seniors, veterans, public safety officers, and our entire healthcare system, along with every person and every one of our communities here in the state of Michigan. This is our money. This is taxpayer money appropriated by Congress. The U.S. Treasury is not a slush fund for Trump and his rich buddies. This reckless and illegal order will do real harm to our people and our state, indeed it already is. We have an obligation here in the Senate and as the state of Michigan to warn and prepare our residents for the devastation that Michigan will face if Trump gets his way.

People across Michigan—the nation—are already feeling panic and confusion as layoff notices are going out, and workers are wondering if they will have a job. Vets and seniors are wondering if they'll have access to the programs that they need. Of course, this threatens to blow a massive hole in our state budget, but more importantly, if Trump gets his way, it's seniors who are wondering if they're going to get the food and attention they need, for programs like Meals on Wheels, and it's also the people who deliver those meals who are wondering what's going to happen. They're under attack from our own government.

If Trump gets his way, it's veterans who depend on suicide prevention programs and grants that help veterans prevent homelessness through eviction. Do we want more homeless vets? Has homeless vets become a partisan issue? If Trump gets his way, it's kids and their families who depend on Head Start, and if you don't care about those kids, what about the employers of those parents who are wondering what they're going to do tomorrow or next week or the week after?

If Trump gets his way, Medicaid portals are already going down and payments aren't going to happen, leaving patients and providers without care and without the payments that prop up our whole healthcare system—2.6 million residents alone in Michigan are on Medicaid. Even if you don't think this affects you, these federal payments are critical to keeping our hospitals operating, to keeping doctors' offices open for those of us who don't rely on Medicaid. Your premiums are going to go up; access is going to go down.

If Trump gets his way, critical funding for public safety, victim's services, as well as cancer research that can save lives, is all being sidelined on behalf of his desire to sow chaos in our nation. Come on, has cancer research become a partisan issue now? Is that what Republicans are taking on now, is trying to stop cancer research? This is craziness.

I don't have time to cover all of the ways in which this dangerous executive order attacks the people of Michigan, but if Trump gets his way, he's also going to eliminate the Inspector Generals, a non-partisan office meant to prevent fraud and corruption. Now, why would he do that, while he and his billionaire buddies have their hands on the U.S. Treasury? Once again, you may not be on Medicaid, you may not get an ACA subsidy, you may not have a kid in Head Start, but nobody is safe from the chaos and devastation that Trump is proposing when the impact of this is so sweeping.

This is going to hit tribal nations. We have 12 federally-recognized tribes in Michigan. They're going to lose money for public safety and health care. Even if you're not a tribal member, these tribes provide public safety, healthcare services, and access in rural areas all over our state.

Now thankfully, a federal judge has blocked—temporarily—Trump's disastrous plan to crash our economy and leave people behind, but there's no certainty. There's a hearing on Monday, and in the meantime, our people are twisting in the wind. People are getting pink slips. Parents are being told their Head Start program is closing. Researchers are being told to stop looking into how we can stop cancer and other ailments.

We can't let Trump get his way. Trump's plan to dismantle these critical supports is dangerous and stupid. It's like pulling the pin on a hand grenade and throwing it into the middle of our national living room. It's reckless. It's illegal.

Senator Anthony's statement is as follows:

Over the last 48 hours, a series of executive actions taken by this president has thrown our country into disarray as state leaders, legal experts, and community organizations have scrambled to determine what these orders mean for them. I have personally heard from community leaders and members of my own family who were, overnight, laid off and left without childcare as we figure out the details of the freeze on federal grants. Now, whether or not these freezes are temporary or permanent, whether or not the federal government can legally hold your Medicaid payments, Head Start classrooms, or Meals on Wheels deliveries hostage, or whether or not Donald Trump will wake up and understand the impact these actions have on you, is yet to be determined.

What I can say with 100 percent certainty is that these dollars that we're talking about are your tax dollars. They were meant to provide services for the people of this state and this nation. No matter if you're a Democrat, Republican, or have just said the heck with all of partisan politics, you deserve elected leaders who have your back. You deserve the peace of mind that these services you have paid into and have counted on will be there for you when you need them. At the very least, you deserve politicians who care enough about you, that when they see the decision they're making, they understand the impact that they'll have.

Today, we demand that this administration consider the impact they're having on real people before making one additional haphazardous decision in the name of "wokeness." While we continue to weave through this chaos and disfunction at the federal level, I want the people of Michigan to know that the Senate Democrats are here for you. I can speak as the appropriations chair that Michigan has proven time and time again that we can effectively govern, even within divided government. We will work together, across the aisle, both here in Lansing as well as in D.C., to make sure that the people of Michigan continue to thrive, not just survive. As we enter this pivotal time in the budget cycle, we will continue to fight for the people of Michigan, not the special interests in D.C.

We want to make sure that we continue the legacy that we've built year after year under this majority to provide accessible and affordable housing, health care, and quality education for our children. We will continue to try to wade through and figure out this federal disfunction and what it means for Michigan families, and what it means for Michigan's budget, but today we are going to start doing the work of the people by crafting a state budget that centers the needs of people first.

Senator Lindsey's statement is as follows:

Just over a week ago, Donald Trump was sworn in as the 47th President of the United States. I think it's safe to say that that is great, it created great excitement for this entire chamber—both sides. In the week since, President Trump has taken swift action to secure America's borders and to fulfill his campaign promise of deporting aliens who are here in violation of the law. The American people and the people of Michigan spoke clearly in November when they decisively elected President Trump, and no issue motivated them more than the simple idea that our nation should have control over who enters and who has a right to be here.

I'm proud to announce today, new legislation I have drafted and introduced to help Michigan do our part in addressing illegal immigration. My legislation would create an advisory task force dedicated to maximizing the safe and effective deportation of illegal aliens in our state. The developing effective policies on removal and transportation—or DEPORT task force—would be a group of law enforcement, prosecutors, state and local officials, and even experts on combatting drug and human trafficking, who would identify critical areas of overlap between federal deportation efforts and state and local policies and make recommendations to align them. The DEPORT task force would be a critical tool that could help ensure Michigan is doing our part to make our communities safer.

I hope my colleagues here in the Senate will help me advance this important legislation.

Senator Nesbitt's statement is as follows:

I rise to share somber news from the 2024 Nation's Report Card which tracks school test results from around the country. It again shows Michigan students falling further behind their national peers. Seventy-five percent of 4th graders—three out of four 4th graders—and seventy-six percent of 8th graders in this state—three out of four 8th graders—cannot read at their grade level. Three out of four kids, Mr. President. Shame on us if we ever become numb to such appalling numbers. This, I fear, will be one of the lasting legacies of this former so-called Democratic trifecta. Coming out of the pandemic and the disastrous shutdowns of our schools, our students desperately needed more help and higher standards, but Democrats did the exact opposite.

Over the past two years, Mr. President, there were celebrations across the aisle when Democrats eliminated read-by-third-grade laws, when they watered down standards for teachers, when they eliminated the A through F grading standards for schools. There were yelps, there were selfies that were being taken on the other side. Something tells me none of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle will be taking selfies with today's results. Those votes you celebrated have set up the children of Michigan, the children of this state, for failure. Those votes you celebrated have set up not just failure for them but a failure for our state's future if things don't change. An education expert quoted in Bridge Michigan's coverage said, "...a lot more kids than we would hope are going to struggle with later life schooling and labor market outcomes. Because there is a pretty strong connection between how well kids do on tests and their later life outcomes."

Where is our Governor while the educational outcomes in this state continue to plummet? In an especially cruel display of tone deafness, she's jetting around this country selling her book, aimed at kids, when three out of four kids in our state cannot read at grade level. She should be ashamed.

Anyone associated with watering down standards, with lowering the bar for our kids, should be ashamed, and we must reverse course immediately.

Senator Singh moved that the Senate adjourn.
The motion prevailed, the time being 12:22 p.m.

The President, Lieutenant Governor Gilchrist, declared the Senate adjourned until Thursday, January 30, 2025, at 10:00 a.m.

DANIEL OBERLIN
Secretary of the Senate