



Under the Dome

Legislative Update for Clinton County Democrats

August 9, 2026

Stalled by Speaker, Vetoed by Governor, Legislative Democrats Re-Introduce Bills to Lower Costs for Workers, Families

Vowing that “The Fight Isn’t Over,” Michigan House and Senate Democrats are re-introducing nine bills that would lower costs for thousands of working families in Michigan. The bills were passed by the House and Senate last legislative session but were never presented to the Governor for her signature. Incoming Republican Speaker Matt Hall sat on the bills for almost two years. Legislative Democrats filed a lawsuit that eventually forced Hall to forward the bills to Governor Whitmer for her consideration.



House Democratic Leader Ranjeev Puri and Senate Majority Leader Winnie Brinks join bill sponsors at a State Capitol press event.

In a shocking move, Whitmer vetoed the nine bills, citing technical issues. Her vetoes were roundly criticized by supporters of the bills, including the Michigan AFL-CIO, UAW and the Michigan Education Association. Her veto “betrays democratic values and abandons the very people who have supported her in office,” the unions said. “This veto is an insult to every hard-working Michigander fighting for economic justice.”

At a State Capitol press conference, Democratic leaders and bill sponsors pledged to push for passage of the package which addresses affordability issues for Michigan workers and their families in several areas, including:

- Exempting public assistance from wage garnishment (Reps. Hope, Brenda Carter; Sens. Irwin, Cavanagh)
- Allowing Michigan Department of Corrections officers to opt into the Michigan State Police pension plan (Reps. Mentzer, Snyder, O’Neal; Sens. Cherry, Greene, Shink)
- Expanding health insurance for public employees (Rep. Xiong, Sen. Hertel)
- Allowing for millage questions on ballots for history museum authorities (Reps. Steckloff, Tyrone Carter; Sen. Santana)

“While we were met with illegal political gamesmanship and obstacle after obstacle trying to get this legislation across the finish line the first time around — this fight is far from over,” said Senate Majority Leader Winnie Brinks, D- Grand Rapids. “We will not abandon the people we’ve been entrusted to serve, and we will not back down until these bills become law as they should have long ago.”

“Michigan residents are being squeezed more than ever, and rising costs are making it harder for those who work some of our most difficult and necessary jobs to just stay afloat,” said House Democratic Leader Ranjeev Puri, D-Canton. “Legislative Democrats are going to fix that.”

“For too long, we’ve seen a gap between the work Michiganders do and the security they deserve. These bills address that gap head-on,” said Ron Bieber, President of the Michigan AFL-CIO. “Michigan’s labor movement is committed to doing whatever is necessary to pass the stalled bills that were reintroduced today by our Democratic friends in the House and Senate.”

Tsernoglou Calls for Legislative Action After Investigation Shows Sexual Abuse at Interlochen

Representative Penelope Tsernoglou, D-East Lansing, is calling for legislative action in the wake of an external investigation by the Interlochen Center for the Arts showing that 50 adults in leadership roles have been accused of sexually abusing more than 70 former students.



Representative Penelope Tsernoglou, D-East Lansing, (at podium) calls for legislative action on sexual abuse allegations at Interlochen Center for the Arts.

Tsernoglou and Representative Betsy Coffia, D- Traverse City, have been calling for an investigation of sexual abuse at Interlochen and connections with Jeffrey Epstein.

“There are no words that can properly describe how awful, damning and upsetting the findings in this report are,” said Tsernoglou. “While I applaud Interlochen for allowing an external investigation to take place and for publishing those findings, it by no means excuses the actions of their past.”

“This report details a culture at Interlochen of dismissal, ignorance and pedophilia,” she said. “These are all actions that are inexcusable and unforgivable.”

Republican House Speaker Matt Hall previously removed Tsernoglou from her committee assignments for demanding that a state investigation into Interlochen sexual abuse take place. Hall said he wanted to see the results from an external and independent investigation before acting.

“The results are in, and they are horrifying,” said Tsernoglou. “I am once again calling for the Michigan Legislature to conduct an investigation into who knew what and when about the abuses happening at Interlochen.”