

GOV WHITMER DELIVERS FINAL STATE OF THE STATE ADDRESS – *Governor Gretchen Whitmer* delivered her eighth and final *State of the State Address* on Wednesday night.

The bigger picture: Throughout the 40-minute address, the *Governor* highlighted goals for 2026, celebrated recent USA Olympic success, reminisced on her tenure within the state Capitol, and spoke from the heart in her final *State of the State Address*. *Governor Whitmer* paused her speech numerous times for standing applause from both *Republicans* and *Democrats*, hitting bipartisan issues throughout the speech. The three main priorities outlined Wednesday night for the year ahead include housing, healthcare, and literacy.

To read more, please click [here](#).

SPEAKER HALL PROPOSES TAX OVERHAUL PLAN – After proposing a nearly \$5 billion tax cut centered around property taxes, *House Speaker Matt Hall (R-Richland Township)* proposed a 6% sales tax on services this week in an attempt to generate \$4.73 billion in revenue for the state.

The bigger picture: The tax plan would implement a tax on numerous services, which *Speaker Hall* said are typically used by high-income individuals and tourists. In the announcement of the proposal, *Speaker Hall* said taxable services would include limousines, country club memberships, private jets, marinas, tourist services, travel agencies, skiing, golf, artificial intelligence services, newspaper publishing, performing arts, environmental consulting, and political ads. *Speaker Hall* did not provide a concrete list of services under the plan, but stated that services he deems essential will not be included, and only discretionary services will be taxed under the proposal.

To read more, please click [here](#).

LEGISLATIVE RESPONSE TO GOVERNOR'S SOTS – Following *Governor Gretchen Whitmer's* final *State of the State Address*, legislators from both parties and chambers provided reporters with their immediate reactions.

The bigger picture: *Democrats* in the *Legislature* largely shared positive feelings about the *Governor's* proposals to improve literacy, increase affordable housing, and cut medical debt. However, some *Democrats* remained skeptical on how the goals will be achieved under the current divided government. *Republicans* questioned the *Governor* and her spending priorities following the address. Many members stated that under *Governor Whitmer's* administration, Michigan residents have been struggling with the rising cost of living and students have had a harder time succeeding. The official *Republican* response was provided by *Senate Minority Leader Aric Nesbitt (R-Lawton)*.

To read more, please click [here](#).

ELECTIONS

- Former *Representative Gary Woronchak* announced he is running for the *15th House District*. *Mr. Woronchak* served in the *House* from 1999-2004 as a *Republican* but announced his new campaign as a *Democrat*. He will be seeking the seat in the *15th House District* which is currently held by *Representative Erin Byrnes (D-Dearborn)*, who is running for the *Senate*.
- *Erin Schor* announced that she is running for the *74th House District*. In the announcement, *Ms. Schor* said she will use her previous public policy experience and existing relationships to “hit the

ground running” to make an impact within the district. The seat is currently held by **Representative Kara Hope (D-Holt)**, who is not seeking reelection. **Ms. Schor** is married to **Lansing Mayor Andy Schor**, and also serves as legislative director for **Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson**.

ODDS AND ENDS

- The **House** passed legislation this week that aims help bottle distributors fund bottle collections. **House Bill 5517** would amend the **Income Tax Act** to create tax credits for distributors that originate deposits on beverage containers. The bill passed 94-12.
- **House Bills 4593** and **4594** also passed the **House** this week. The bills would clarify who is allowed to present themselves as a dental specialist. Both of the bills passed 108-1 with **Representative Steve Carra (R-Three Rivers)** being the sole vote against them.
- The **House** unanimously passed **House Bill 5102** which would eliminate the dental specialty task force from the Public Health Code. The elimination was a recommendation from the **Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs** since the task force has been dormant for a while.
- The **House** passed **House Bill 4909**, which removes a provision that requires cosmetology school or apprenticeship programs to send daily attendance records to the **Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs** each month. The bill passed 105-1 with **Representative Dylan Wegela (D-Garden City)** voting no.
- The **House Judiciary Committee** took testimony **House Bills 5425** and **5426** on Wednesday. The bills would prevent registered sex offenders from working at places that primarily serve minors such as dance studios, summer camps, and tutoring services among others. Currently, sex offenders are prohibited from working in schools, but are still able to work with children through other employment opportunities.