



## Lawmakers react to State of the State address

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MICHIGAN (NEWSCHANNEL 3) – On Wednesday night Governor Rick Snyder delivered his second State of the State address.

Newschannel 3 was out in Lansing and got reaction to that speech from both Republicans and Democrats.

Snyder's camp as well as Senate and House Republicans say there's a buzz about Michigan outside of Michigan, thanks to Snyder's changes over the last year.

"I think the government really focused time and attention on creating a competitive environment while living within our means," said Sen. John Proos.

"We set out to reduce unemployment and we've done that without one time fixes or one time gimmicks," said Sen. Tonya Schuitmaker.

Democrats concede that there have been positive changes in the last year, but say Snyder missed the mark on Wednesday night.

"I thought some critical pieces were missing," said Rep. Sean McCann.

"The speech tonight lacked details," said Rep. Kate Segal. "We were looking for leadership and instead what we got is implementing government over the next year, and we don't have time for that."

Specifically, Democrats say they were looking for details on supporting K through 12 education and what to do with another school aid fund surplus.

"Being from the Promise community and seeing how that in turn, turns our economy around, it's really hard to not hear a stronger message about investing in education," said Rep. McCann.

A number of Michigan lawmakers have also issued statements in response to Governor Snyder's speech. You can find a number of those below.

Sen. Dave Hildenbrand issued the following statement;

"Just over a year ago, Governor Snyder delivered his first State of the State address. In that speech, the governor charted a bold course to reinvent Michigan. That same message resonated in this year's speech. While we have made great progress in Michigan, we still have much more work to do.

"Just as we did last year, the Senate will join with the governor and the House to create a more effective and efficient government while fostering an environment where jobs can be created and businesses can grow.

"I have every confidence that the reforms enacted last year will help create a positive job environment in Michigan and set the stage for a stronger, brighter Michigan.

"I will continue to work to ensure that tax payer dollars are spent wisely and that I do everything in my power to improve the economic climate of Michigan.

"I look forward to working with my colleagues in the Senate as well as with the Governor and the House to move Michigan forward."

Representative Jase Bolger issued the following statement;

"It is clear that Gov. Snyder is a man of his word and that's part of why we've been able to accomplish so much for Michigan in the past year by working with him. The governor said in his speech last year that we needed to honestly measure progress, celebrating the areas in which we've succeeded and clearly defining those areas that still need work. The House Republicans are proud of what we accomplished in 2011 with Gov. Snyder and our partners in the Senate and we look forward to continuing to solve the challenges facing Michigan's families.

"At the beginning of 2011, the news headlines were asking how we were going to solve a \$1.5 billion budget deficit and address a 13-percent unemployment rate. Today, the headlines are about a nearly \$500 million budget surplus and an unemployment rate that has fallen to 9.3 percent. By reforming government spending, we also eliminated \$5.6 billion in future debt for Michigan's children, which equals nearly \$2,400 per child.

"House Republicans focused on fiscal accountability, responsible leadership and honest evaluation last year and we plan to focus on those again this year. We agree with Gov. Snyder that to move Michigan forward we must be bold, not timid; be collaborative, not confrontational; and lead our nation in economic recovery. We must keep working hard at the Capitol so Michigan workers can find jobs in our communities and I was pleased to hear tonight that the governor feels that way, too."

Senator John Proos issued this statement;

"I applaud the governor for keeping his focus on fixing Michigan's economy, creating jobs and making government more efficient and effective. Last year the governor came out of the gate with a bold, innovative blueprint to transform our state. We are already starting to see the positive results of that plan, but more work needs to be done.

"Although Michigan unemployment has fallen to 9.3 percent, the lowest in more than 3 years, we must continue our efforts to get people back on the job. I am eager to work on ways to encourage Michigan businesses already here to expand and hire.

"Making Michigan a more competitive environment for jobs and improving government efficiency by cutting unnecessary red tape are vital steps to spur business investment and job creation.

"I am enthusiastic that the governor is moving to a 'customer-focused' approach to state departments. I called for this reform two years ago as chair of a House task force on job creation. It is a way to attract job creators to Michigan while also improving overall effectiveness of state government, and I thank the governor for embracing the idea.

"I look forward to working with the governor to continue the efforts to revitalize our economy, create jobs and set Michigan on the fiscally sound path to long-term growth."

Representative Dave Haveman issued the following statements;

"I am extremely pleased to hear that the governor has put a priority on improving public safety in Michigan. It is imperative to improve safety in Michigan's largest cities, which in turn will make them attractive places in which

to live, work and raise a family. Improving public safety in our most populous cities will make Michigan as a whole a more family-friendly state.

"As chair of the Corrections Appropriations Committee, I can see how reducing crime on a local level in Michigan's cities would translate into future savings in the corrections budget. A strong public safety presence will serve as a deterrent to crime, which in turn will reduce the number of criminals serving time in our state prisons, saving taxpayer money.

"I am also encouraged that the governor is again putting a priority on continuing to improve the economic climate in Michigan. In Ottawa County, we have already seen a tremendous turn-around from the past. Ottawa County leads the state in economic recovery, and boasts the lowest unemployment rate in Michigan. As the policies the Legislature enacted last year take effect and we fine-tune the recovery with new legislation, the rest of the state will follow Ottawa County on the road to recovery. We have turned the ship around and are headed in the right direction."

Representative Sharon Tyler issued this statement;

"The governor's State of the State speech tonight was encouraging as he looked at the many key reforms we made last year and challenged us to continue working hard to improve our economy and strengthen our state.

"I look forward to meeting this challenge. Things are looking better--Michigan added 67,000 net new jobs in 2011--but we must continue our push to create an environment for jobs to flourish.

"Part of this includes creating a reliable environment. Passing a balanced budget on time, eliminating a \$1 billion deficit, paying down our debt and building up our rainy day fund are all actions that make Michigan an attractive place to do business. This is also good government.

"Finally, as a member of the Governor's Talent Investment Board, I look forward to continuing our work to ensure our residents are qualified for better jobs and growing industries. Also, as the mother of a son in the service, I appreciate the Governor's focus on helping bring down the high unemployment rate for recently returned veterans and helping them obtain health care.

"There is much work to be done, and a long road ahead. But we are focused, and committed to creating a better Michigan."

Senator Mark Jansen issued this statement;

"I came to public service from Habitat for Humanity, where they build houses on strong foundations. In 2011, Michigan worked on setting a new, stronger foundation to rebuild our state.

"Every step of the way, we have focused on jobs, jobs, jobs. We eliminated the Michigan Business Tax and replaced it with a simple and fair plan: A tax of 6 percent on corporate profits. The result has been job creation that is outpacing the rest of the country.

"In Grand Rapids, we have seen the unemployment rate plummet from 12 percent in March 2010 to 6.5 percent in November 2011. That is documented progress, and I am committed to continuing that record of success.

"Michigan citizens shared in reducing a \$1.5 billion deficit last year, and by approving a gimmick-free budget, we now have a structurally balanced one.

"We still have more to do to address the state's debt and long-term liabilities. By 2022, the state's school

employee pension system is expected to provide \$7.5 billion per year in benefits to almost 250,000 retirees. If the investment returns of the past 10 years repeat, we will be in real trouble. We cannot just pass this debt onto our grandchildren, and I will work with the governor to get our arms around this problem while we still can."

Representative Matt Lori issued this statement;

"It is encouraging to hear the governor put an emphasis on improving public safety in Michigan. As a former sheriff, I can understand the importance of reducing crime in our largest cities to benefit the state as a whole. If our most populous areas are turned into safe havens in which people feel comfortable living, working and raising a family, that sense of well-being will spread across the state.

"I applaud the governor's conviction to continue on the path that he began last year of downsizing government and saving taxpayer money. Michigan is back on the right track to economic recovery, and the Legislature must build on the successes of the past year to ensure future prosperity.

"Lawmakers and the governor made some very tough decisions during the last session, and we are just beginning to see the economy improve. I am pleased to hear Gov. Snyder is going to continue on his mission to reinvent Michigan and restore it to its past economic status."

Senator Margaret O'Brien issued this statement;

"The governor continues to be a powerful example of the leadership Michigan needs right now. I share his continued optimism, especially in light of all we've accomplished in the past year.

"Working together, the administration and the Legislature have made Michigan a better place for job creation, garnering lots of press from around the country for the state's new, positive outlook. Thanks to smart budgeting and careful reforms, Michigan is becoming more attractive to both job providers and the families they employ. While no important change is ever easy, residents continue to reach out to my office to offer encouragement for our focus on jobs and fiscal responsibility.

The House Republican caucus remains committed to an active agenda, looking at issues such as fairness and regulatory structures. We will continue to take advantage of this great opportunity to make Michigan a great place now and for future generations."

Representative Ken Kurtz issued this statement;

"The governor's message tonight showed not only that we see a more positive business climate in Michigan now than a year ago, but also the reality is that we will face challenges for continued growth.

"Gov. Snyder committed himself to further work with the legislature to continue his job of making Michigan more a prosperous and attractive place to do business. He acknowledged the progress that has been made and also recognized that recovery will take even more time. We must be fiscally responsible while rolling back unnecessary regulatory obstacles to better face present and future obligations for the people of our State.

"I look forward to working with Gov. Snyder to help create more opportunities in a better, stronger and more prosperous Michigan."

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