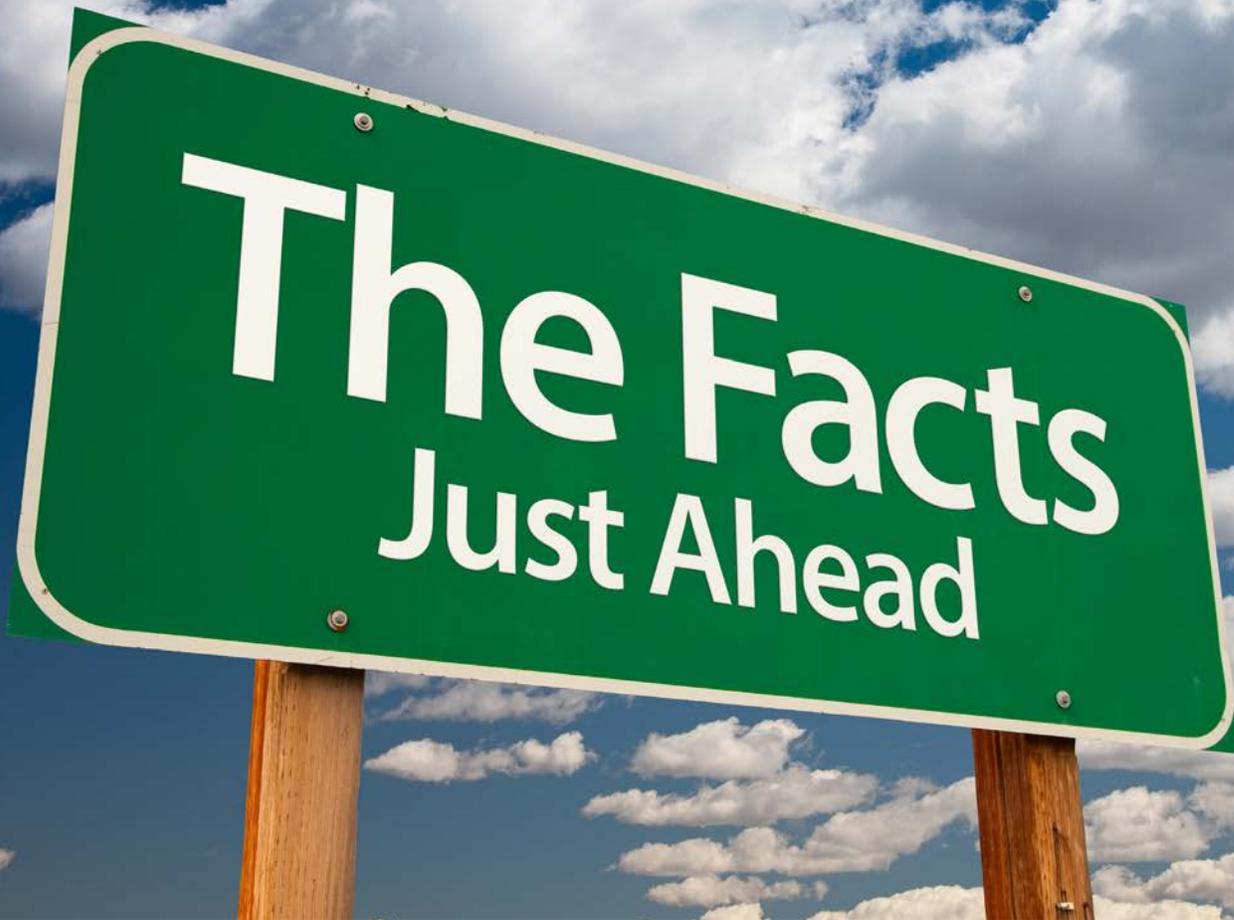




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**2018 MICHIGAN
FACTS & ISSUE GUIDE**

Introduction: Just the Facts in Michigan

“Everyone is entitled to his own opinion, but not to his own facts,” former U.S. Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan famously said.

With that sentiment in mind, the Center for Michigan and Bridge Magazine present this nonpartisan, easy-to-use guide. It’s about many of the facts and issues that matter most as the Michigan governorship, all 148 seats in the state legislature, and other statewide offices are all up for election at the same time in 2018.

Whether you’re Democrat or Republican, white or a minority, senior citizen or millennial, urban or rural, rich or poor, engaged or isolated, staunchly opinionated or skeptical of all, the actual conditions on the ground matter for your state’s future.

Each chapter of this guide is designed as a quick, five-minute read.

Get the facts...

100 Michigan Facts

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100 Michigan Facts

	MICHIGAN	US	RANK	FOOTNOTES
POPULATION FACTS				
see page 48				
Total population, 2016	9,928,300	323,127,515	10th highest	1
Percent of population that is white, 2016	75.7%	62.0%	22nd highest	2
Percent of population that is black, 2016	13.7%	12.3%	16th highest	3
Percent of population that is Asian, 2016	2.8%	5.2%	23rd highest	4
Percent of population that is Hispanic, 2016	4.8%	17.3%	38th highest	5
Percent of population that is American Indian, 2016	0.5%	0.7%	23rd highest	6
Percent of population that is two or more races, 2016	2.4%	2.3%	12th highest	7
Population growth, 2007 to 2016	-1.6%	5.6%	Worst in U.S.	8
Median age, 2016	40.2	38.4	11th oldest	9
Percent of population living in urban areas, 2015	74.6%	79%	23rd highest	10
Net migration, 2015	1.5%	2.4%	49th highest	11
Percent of foreign-born state residents, 2016	6.7%	13.7%	29th highest	12
Average household size, 2016	2.51	2.64	33rd highest	13
Percent of population who are military veterans, 2016	7.8%	8.2%	40th highest	14
HOUSEHOLD FACTS				
Share of children living with two parents, 2016	65.0%	65.3%	29th highest	15
Share of children living in single-parent household, 2016	35.0%	34.7%	25th highest	16
Share of adult children (aged 18-34) living with parents, 2016	34.4%	33.7%	15th highest	17
Median age at first marriage, 2016	28.8	28.6	15th highest	18
Divorces in past year per 1,000 women, 2015	8.9%	9.1%	32nd highest	19
INCOME AND PROSPERITY FACTS				
Median household income, 2016	\$52,492	\$57,616	34th highest	20
Median household income - one-year change, 2015-2016	2.8%	3.3%	N/A	20a
Median income of white residents (16 and older), 2016	\$31,490	\$34,940	41st highest	21
Median income of black residents (16 and older), 2016	\$22,373	\$26,487	35th highest	22
Median income of male full-time, year-round workers, 2016	\$50,869	\$50,586	21st highest	23
Median income of female full-time, year-round workers, 2016	\$39,825	\$40,626	22nd highest	24
Per-capita income, 2016	\$29,128	\$31,128	28th highest	25
Per-capita income - one-year change, 2015-2016	4.5%	3.8%	N/A	25a
Home ownership rate, 2015	70.4%	63.0%	8th highest	26
Median home value, 2016	\$147,100	\$205,000	41st highest	27
Median home value, - one-year change, 2015-2016	7.0%	5.4%	N/A	27a
Average hourly wage (employees in private industries), 2016	\$24.09	\$25.98	24th highest	28
Poverty rate, 2016	16.3%	15.1%	16th highest	29
Child poverty rate, 2015	23.5%	21.7%	16th highest	30
Working poor population, 2017	40%	N/A	N/A	31
Share of households receiving food stamps, 2016	15.9%	13.0%	10th highest	32
ECONOMIC FACTS				
Total state gross domestic product, 2016	\$433.5 billion	\$16.4 trillion	13th highest	33a
State gross domestic product - one-year change, 2015-2016	2.2%	1.5%	N/A	33c
Per-capita gross domestic product, 2016	\$43,372	\$50,577	37th highest	33d
State gross domestic product growth, 2007-2016 (adjusted)	2.7%	10.4%	41st highest	34
Share of state gross domestic product in manufacturing, 2016	19.6%	11.7%	4th highest	35
Unemployment rate, November 2017	4.6%	4.1%	35th lowest	36
Employed share of population, aged 25-64, 2015	68.8%	71.2%	42nd highest	37
Employed share of population, aged 25-34, 2015	73.0%	74.2%	32nd highest	38
Employed share of population, aged 55-64, 2015	52.7%	60.5%	45th highest	39
Working mothers as a percentage of all mothers 2015	67.5%	66.6%	27th highest	40
Percentage of households where all caregivers work, 2015	65.5%	71.2%	27th highest	41
Share of employed people who are union members, 2015	14.4%	10.7%	10th highest	42
Economic Transformation - New Economy Index, 2014	67.0	62.6	18th highest	43
New businesses created per 100,000 residents, 2016	0.26%	N/A	15th highest	44
Business tax burden (as a % of state GDP), 2016	3.5%	4.5%	Tied for lowest	45
Venture capital investment per capita, 2016	\$25	\$181	26th highest	46
Academic research & development expenditures, 2015	\$2.3 billion	\$68.7 billion	10th highest	47
Total research & development expenditures, 2014	\$19.8 billion	\$451.5 billion	6th highest	48
Research & development expenditures (% of state GDP), 2014	4.24%	2.53%	6th highest	49

	MICHIGAN	US	RANK	FOOTNOTES
Share of state population with a computer, 2016	88.4%	9.3%	32nd highest	50
Share of state population with broadband internet access, 2016	80.5%	81.4%	31st highest	51
Share of population with access to a personal vehicle, 2016	92.0%	91.0%	37th highest	52
PUBLIC HEALTH FACTS				
Life expectancy at birth, 2014	78.2 years	78.9 years	35th highest	53
Obesity rate, 2015	31.2%	29.8%	16th highest	54
Infant mortality rate, per 1,000 live births, 2016	6.8	5.9	38th best	55
Overall mortality rate per 100,000 residents, 2014	783.7	724.6	14th highest	56
Share of population without health insurance, 2016	7.3%	10.6%	10th best	57
Share of population on Medicaid, 2015	19.0%	20.0%	17th highest	58
Binge drinking among adults, 2015	18.5%	16.3%	10th highest	59
Smoking rate, 2015	20.7%	17.8%	11th highest	60
Cigarette per pack tax rate	\$2.00	\$1.69	14th highest	61
Physical inactivity rate, 2016	25.5%	26.2%	25th best	62
Asthma rate, 2017	10.9%	9.3%	7th highest	63
Adults who hadn't seen a doctor in past 12 months, 2014	27.2%	34.0%	4th best	64
EDUCATION AND TALENT FACTS				
Share of population with a high school diploma, 2016	89.9%	87.0%	23rd highest	65
Share of population with a bachelor's degree or better, 2016	28.3%	31.3%	36th highest	66
Share of population with a postsecondary degree, 2014	43.3%	45.3%	32nd highest	67
K-12 expenditures per pupil, 2014	\$10,799	\$11,222	26th highest	68
Growth in per pupil spending, 2005-2014 (inflation adjusted)	-7.0%	3.6%	49th highest	69
Share of 4th grade students at or above reading proficiency	29%	36%	41st highest	70
Share of 8th grade math students at or above math proficiency	29%	33%	37th highest	71
State and local per-capita support of higher education, 2015	\$233	\$283	35th highest	72
Average % of income needed for community college, 2013	14%	N/A	3rd affordable	73
Average % of income needed to attend 4-year college, 2013	28%	N/A	29th affordable	74
K-12 pupil-to-teacher ratio, 2014	18.1	16.1	8th worst	75
Average teacher salary, 2016	\$63,878	\$58,064	11th highest	76
K-12 students enrolled in public school, 2014	1,537,922	50,312,581	10th highest	77
Share of K-12 students in charter schools, 2015	9.6%	5.4%	6th highest	78
4 year olds in preschool, special ed, or Head Start, 2016	40.0%	43.1%	18th highest	79
3 year olds in preschool, special ed, or Head Start, 2016	13.8%	15.7%	25th highest	80
QUALITY OF PLACE FACTS				
Violent crime rate per 100,000 residents, 2015	415.5	383.2	16th highest	81
State air pollution (particulate micrograms/cubic meter), 2016	8.6	8.9	21st highest	82
Outdoor recreation participation rate, 2014	63.0%	48.6%	N/A	83
Rate of volunteerism among state residents, 2015	26.6%	24.9%	26th highest	84
Tourism marketing spending, 2016	\$33 million	\$20.1 million	6th highest	85
Roads rated "below acceptable", 2013	11.1%	19.6%	18th lowest	86
Bridges rated "structurally deficient" or "obsolete", 2013	27.6%	23.8%	36th lowest	87
Renewable energy consumption per 100,000 residents, 2015	1,521 BTUs	2,267 BTUs	37th highest	88
Public support for arts and culture per capita, 2017	\$0.91	\$1.02	22nd highest	89
Hunting licenses per 100,000 residents, 2016	18,983	11,266	17th highest	90
Fishing licenses per 100,000 residents, 2016	12,301	11,933	28th highest	91
Average commute time, 2015	24.4 minutes	24.4 minutes	25th highest	92
MICHIGAN GOVERNMENT FACTS				
Share of population who voted in 2016 presidential election	64.7%	59.3%	13th highest	93
Average state legislator salary	\$71,685	\$35,178	4th highest	94
State and local taxes per capita, 2014	\$3,774	\$4,675	17th lowest	95
State and local taxes as a percentage of income, 2015	9.4%	9.9%	26th highest	96
Number of governments per 100,000 state residents, 2017	18.8	12.4	18th highest	97
Share of total workers who work for government, 2017	4.2%	5.1%	6th lowest	98
State budget transparency rating, 2017	100 out of 100	N/A	Tied for best	99
Share of state budget spent on prisons/corrections, 2016	4.0%	2.7%	3rd highest	100
Incarcerated adults per 100,000 state residents	750	860	28th highest	101
State and local unfunded pension burden per capita, 2016	\$15,817	\$17,427	28th highest	102
State and local gov. employees/100,000 residents, 2014	1,837	2,285	2nd lowest	103

The Facts on K-12 Student Performance

By Ted Roelofs | Bridge Magazine

If K-12 achievement in Michigan were a trendline, it is clearly pointing the wrong direction. By just about any measuring stick, the state is losing the race to educational excellence.

The 2017 report from the Gov. Rick Snyder's 21st Century Education Commission¹ put it this way: "The urgency could not be greater. While it is difficult to face, the data are clear: Michigan children are falling behind."

Key K-12 Education Quality Indicators

EDUCATION & TALENT FACT	MICHIGAN	UNITED STATES	MICHIGAN RANK
Share of 4th grade students at or above reading proficiency, 2015	29%	36%	41st highest
Share of 8th grade math students at or above math proficiency, 2015	29%	33%	37th highest
Share of population with a high school diploma, 2016	89.9%	87%	23rd highest
Share of population with a bachelor's degree or better, 2016	28.3%	31.3%	36th highest
K-12 expenditures per pupil, 2014	\$10,799	\$11,222	26th highest
Growth in per pupil spending, 2005-2014 (inflation adjusted)	-7.0%	3.6%	49th highest
K-12 pupil-to-teacher ratio, 2014	18.1	16.1	8th worst
Average teacher salary, 2016	\$63,878	\$58,064	11th highest
K-12 students enrolled in public schools, 2014	1,537,922	50,312,581	10th highest
Share of K-12 students in charter schools, 2015	9.6%	5.4%	6th highest

Source: U.S. Census, American Community Survey data.

A Slide Across the Board

Contrary to some misperceptions, Michigan's K-12 achievement gap spans racial economic and racial spectrums. It's not just poor and minority students who are failing to learn.

"White, black, brown, higher-income, low-income – it doesn't matter who they are or where they live, Michigan students' achievement levels in early reading and middle-school math are not keeping up with the rest of the U.S. and world," stated the Education Trust-Midwest,² a Michigan education data-tracking and reform group.

In 2003, Michigan's white higher-income students ranked 17th in the nation in fourth grade reading. By 2014, they ranked 45th. By 2015, they ranked 50th. Overall, Michigan fourth grade students dropped from 28th in reading in 2003 to 38th in 2013 and 41st in 2015.

Michigan is one of only five states that declined in actual performance in reading since 2003. Experts agree that early reading is critical to success later in life, as reading proficiency is tied to overall academic and vocational achievement. Conversely, early illiteracy is linked to higher dropout rates and a greater probability of incarceration.

Similar problems persist in eighth grade math performance. Michigan's nationwide rank fell from 34th in 2003 to 38th in 2015. Higher-income eighth graders dropped from 34th in 2003 in math to 41st in 2015.

Last in Reading

Michigan's minority students continue to face a considerable K-12 achievement gap. Just 9 percent of black students were proficient in fourth grade reading in 2015, compared to 32 percent of white students. Michigan's African-American fourth graders rank last in the nation in reading. Michigan's low-income eighth graders rank 46th in math.

College Remedial Work

K-12 achievement deficits show up in costly ways down the road. High school grads who enroll in college without basic skills proficiency must take remedial coursework – at a cost to students, schools, and taxpayers of up more than \$100 million per year.³

Twenty-seven percent of Michigan college students take at least one remedial college class. That's projected to reach more than 50 percent by 2030 without education reforms. Remediation rates for African-American students already exceed 50 percent, reflecting a steady upward climb since 2010.

Falling Behind Other States

For global perspective, Michigan could look to Massachusetts⁴, which ranks just behind high-achieving nations like Japan and Singapore in eighth grade math. Michigan eighth graders trail even eighth graders in Slovenia and Lithuania in math.

Michigan could also look to Tennessee⁵ – a state with comparable demographics.

Tennessee fourth grade African-American students gained 11 percentage points in reading from 2003 to 2015. Massachusetts fourth grade African-Americans gained 10 points. Across the nation, the gain was 9 points. In Michigan, it was just 4 points.

Tennessee was far behind Michigan in math for all fourth graders in 2003, but by 2013 it had raced past Michigan, ranking 37th to Michigan's 42nd. It led the nation in highest improvement in several key subjects.

Analysis by Education Trust-Midwest attributed much of its progress to a statewide teacher evaluation system, major investment in a statewide performance data collection system and a rigorous program of teacher training.

Recent Michigan Reforms

In some respects, Michigan's elected leaders have, in recent years, attempted to take the long view in addressing education performance. They approved the nation's largest expansion of public preschool,⁶ enrolling thousands of additional four year olds to get a jumpstart on learning. They also approved a law requiring students to proficient readers⁷ before earning advancement to fourth grade.

Focus: Children? Or Adults?

Michigan's recent trend of K-12 investment is near rock bottom nationally – down 7 percent between 2005 and 2014 when, nationally, it rose 3.6 percent. With fewer Michigan college students pursuing teaching,⁸ recruiting and retaining high-quality teachers is a future concern. Teacher pay in Michigan is 11th highest in the nation. But the state's student-teacher ratios are eighth-worst in the country – meaning students in other states may get somewhat more individual time and attention from teachers.

Much education policy attention in Michigan centers on adults rather than students... School finance debates⁹... Teacher evaluation debates¹⁰... Teacher pension debates.¹¹

"Years of debate over funding, performance, equity, accountability and competition has resulted in significant mutual distrust," Karen McPhee, a veteran school administrator and the governor's former senior education adviser wrote in Bridge Magazine in 2017.¹² "Labor vs. management. Republican vs. Democrat. Educator vs. legislator. Traditional vs. charter. Business vs. education. There is no end to the arguments that divide us as we seek to convince others of what's really happening in our schools. Sometimes our 1.5 million students are barely mentioned in these sparring matches."

KEEP DIGGING: MORE INFORMATION ON K-12 PERFORMANCE

- 21st Century Education Commission: "The Best Education System for Michigan's Success"¹³
- Education Trust-Midwest: "Michigan Achieves! Becoming a Top-Ten Education State"¹⁴
- Bridge Magazine: "The Smartest Kids in the Nation – and How Michigan Falls Behind"¹⁵
- Bridge Magazine: "Lansing Fiddles While Schools Go to Hell"¹⁶

The Facts on K-12 School Reform Ideas



By Ted Roelofs | Bridge Magazine

Some 1.5 million students attend some 3,000 public schools in Michigan. As academic performance has lagged, competing school reform proposals have sprouted like Michigan summer corn.

At the K-12 level, Michigan leaders have long debated rigorous standards, reconfigured state achievement tests in controversial ways,¹ and worked on accountability measures like teacher tenure reform,² teacher evaluation systems,³ and third-grade reading proficiency.⁴ In higher education, the new Michigan Transfer Network⁵ aims to make it easier to transfer credits between colleges and help students move toward graduation.

Those steps are just the start. Stakeholders on almost all sides consider education reform unfinished business – and a topic of high public and political interest in the 2018 statewide elections.

Key K-12 Education Quality Indicators

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Share of 4th grade students at or above reading proficiency, 2015	29%	36%	41st highest
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Share of population with a high school diploma, 2016	89.9%	87%	23 highest
Share of population with a bachelor's degree or better, 2016	28.3%	31.3%	36th highest
K-12 expenditures per pupil, 2014	\$10,799	\$11,222	26th highest
Growth in per pupil spending, 2005-2014 (inflation adjusted)	-7.0%	3.6%	49th highest
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K-12 students enrolled in public schools, 2014	1,537,922	50,312,581	10th highest
Share of K-12 students in charter schools, 2015	9.6%	5.4%	6th highest

Source: U.S Census, American Community Service data.

Reform Ideas Everywhere. Which, if any, Will Take Hold?

In 2016, State Schools Superintendent Brian Whiston released A Michigan Department of Education Strategic Plan⁶ calling for deeper student learning, more individualized learning, deeper professional development support for educators, and other things.

K-12 policy in Michigan is a jumble including a state superintendent and state board of education aimed at setting broad policy, and a governor and legislature with full control of the purse strings and lawmaking ability.

A year after Whiston launched his strategic plan, Gov. Rick Snyder's bipartisan 21st Century Education Commission⁷ issued its recommendations – including the idea of getting rid of the elected state board of education. The Snyder education commission, comprised of business and education experts, called for dozens of reforms, including better teacher preparation, efficiencies in school operations, school consolidations, higher school funding for poor communities, and universal access to both preschool and community college. The total cost of the recommendations: upwards of \$2 billion more per year.

Neither the Whiston strategy nor the Snyder commission strategy were implemented as of early 2018.

Making Michigan a Top 10 State

Education Trust-Midwest, an education data tracking and reform group, also has a strategy called “Michigan Achieves.”⁸ It calls for making Michigan a Top 10 education state by 2030. How? Equitable funding across school districts... Thorough and transparent tracking of student outcomes... Ensuring low-income students have access to high-quality teachers... Training teachers in all grades on college- and career-ready standards... Ensuring equitable discipline policies... And examining the role, functions and effectiveness of the Michigan Department of Education.

Reporting & Transparency Changes

Each state, by law, submitted plans in 2017 for meeting federal standards under the high-stakes education law called the “Every Student Succeeds Act,” which in 2015 replaced the former No Child Left Behind law. States that fail to meet standards could see their federal funding cut. The plans must show how states will make improvements in areas from teacher training to educating at-risk and special needs children.

Michigan's plan promises to reform the accountability system for rating schools and holding educators responsible for outcomes. The state will institute a data dashboard to show how each public school performs on a list of indicators. The state is getting rid of a past top to bottom ranking of schools. Instead, Michigan will use a 100-point system to identify the lowest 5 percent of poor-performing schools.

Detroit

The state's largest school system happens to be the worst-performing urban district in term of scores on the National Assessment of Educational Performance, also called the Nation's Report Card.

The Coalition for the Future of Detroit Schoolchildren,⁹ comprised of foundation, business, teacher union, community and parent leaders was influential in creating the 2016 law that reformed the governance of the Detroit Public Schools, paying off \$500 million in debt and restoring an empowered, elected board. The Coalition's next reform recommendations: reduce chronic absenteeism... improve third-grade proficiency... provide more vocational and career training... fully fund special education programs.

How Much Does It Cost to Educate a Child?

School funding debates are a constant across the state – from local school board meetings to the State Capitol. In 2018, a new “adequacy study” aims to clearly define how much it costs to educate students and propose new models for school funding in Michigan. The work of the School Finance Research Collaborative¹⁰ may further substantively frame school reform debate during the 2018 statewide election campaign – and in the State Capitol thereafter.

KEEP DIGGING: MORE INFORMATION ON K-12 SCHOOL REFORM

- 21st Century Education Commission Report¹¹
- Michigan Department of Education Strategic Plan¹²
- Education Trust-Midwest “Michigan Achieves” Reform Plan¹³
- School Finance Research Collaborative¹⁴
- Coalition for the Future of Detroit School Children¹⁵
- Michigan's New Third-Grade Reading Law¹⁶

The Facts on Early Childhood



By David Zeman | Bridge Magazine

As student performance in Michigan has plummeted,¹ one strategy where many elected officials, educators, business leaders and state residents agree is bolstering future student success through early childhood programs.

We all have a soft spot for young children, particularly the most vulnerable among us, but decisions on how much taxpayer money to spend on preschool, quality child care and the like can be as fraught at budget time as you might imagine. Here are the facts on the importance of early childhood programs and the cost of expanding opportunities for Michigan's children.

Michigan's Public Preschool Expansion

	2006	2012	2014	2016
Slots (classroom seats for children)	25,712	30,668	48,075	64,441
State Funding	\$84,850,000	\$109,275,000	\$174,275,000	\$243,000,000
Michigan 4 yr-olds in public Pre-K	16%	19%	26%	34%
National Pre-K Access Ranking	16th	22nd	21st	15th

Source: Michigan Great Start Readiness Program data; National Institute for Early Education Research Annual Preschool Yearbook Rankings.

Good news for young brains

Preschool is a proven strategy to improve school readiness. Kids receiving high-quality preschool are more likely to succeed² in school, graduate from high school, earn higher incomes and commit fewer crimes.³ The stakes are intensified in Michigan by poor school performance. Michigan's fourth-grade reading scores on the national assessment rank 41st in the nation. Michigan is one of only three states to suffer a decline in fourth-grade reading outcomes over the past 12 years – only West Virginia saw a larger drop.

Michigan dramatically increased access to state-funded preschool through the Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP).⁴ The move followed a 2012 Bridge Magazine investigation⁵ which found that nearly 30,000 4-year-olds who qualified for free, high-quality preschool weren't in the program because of inadequate funding and poor coordination of services. In response, Gov. Rick Snyder and the Michigan Legislature doubled⁶ annual GSRP funding and later added another \$31 million⁷ for early literacy programs.

More Work to Do on Pre-K?

The GSRP expansion resulted in more than doubling the total classroom slots for four year olds. The percentage of state four year olds served by the program also has doubled since 2006. Still, 14 other states still rank higher than Michigan in preschool access. And Michigan's 21st Century Education Commission⁸ last year recommended offering universal preschool statewide. That hasn't happened, in part, because of the additional cost: \$400 million more per year.

Child Care: A Tough Puzzle for Families and the Economy

Beyond preschool, where Michigan has made progress, lies child care, where Michigan faces serious problems for both families and the state economy.

The Michigan Association of United Ways estimates⁹ that child care eats up about a quarter of the household budget of economically vulnerable families in Michigan.

Michigan's child care subsidy program is legendary for problems such as lack of access, lack of quality caregivers, and low reimbursement rates compared to other states. The Michigan program serves only about one in five¹⁰ low-income families.

Increasingly, Michigan business leaders are framing child care access as an issue of economic growth rather than human services.¹¹ Many companies have faced labor shortages in recent years – especially for low-wage positions. Without viable child care options, potential job applicants don't enter these labor pools.

But solutions are costly. Michigan families spend on average \$824 a month for center-based infant care. At nearly \$10,000 a year, this can rival the cost of housing or college tuition.¹² Improving access and quality in Michigan's subsidized child care program would cost hundreds of millions of dollars per year.¹³

KEEP DIGGING: MORE INFORMATION ON EARLY CHILDHOOD

- Michigan Association of United Ways: The ALICE Project¹⁴
- Public Sector Consultants and Citizens Research Council of Michigan: "Policy Options to Support Children from Birth to Age Three"¹⁵
- Bridge Magazine: "How state's new early education funding fill help boost student learning"¹⁶

The Facts on College Education & Affordability



By Ted Roelofs | Bridge Magazine

A commonly shared premise among economic experts: a well-educated work force is key to high-wage jobs and prosperity in the 21st century.

In that regard, Michigan is far from the head of the class. It in fact ranks in the bottom half among the states in college attainment. Fewer than 30 percent of Michigan adults hold at least a bachelor's degree.

What's at Stake

In Minnesota, nearly 35 percent of adults¹ hold a bachelor's degree or higher. Its median household income was nearly \$8,000 higher than the national average of \$57,627 in 2016. Michigan's stood at about \$5,000 lower. If Michigan had the same college graduation rate as Minnesota, the state would have 493,000 more adults with a degree than it does now.

Higher Education Indicators

EDUCATION & TALENT FACTS	MICHIGAN	U.S.	RANK
Share of population with a bachelor's degree or better, 2016	28.3%	31.3%	36th highest
Share of population with a postsecondary degree or credential, 2014	43.3%	45.3%	32nd highest
State and local per-capita support of higher education, 2015	\$233	\$283	35th highest
Average percent of family income needed to attend community college, 2013	14%	N/A	3rd most affordable
Average percent of family income needed to attend 4-year college, 2013	28%	N/A	29th most affordable
Total student loans taken out at Michigan's 15 public universities, 2014	\$1.9 billion		
Increase in student loan amounts at Michigan's 15 public universities (2001-2014)	123%		

Source: U.S. Census American Community Survey, state fiscal agencies, Institute for Research on Higher Education.

Those with college degrees earn on average about \$1 million more² over the course of a lifetime than high school graduates. Their median weekly earnings in Michigan are nearly twice³ that of high school graduates. They are 70 percent less likely to be unemployed⁴ than high school graduates.

The broader economic consequences of this education gap over time could be considerable. A 2016 Michigan Talent Forecast⁵ by Business Leaders for Michigan concluded that "demographic trends, an aging workforce, shrinking talent pipeline, and low education attainment will continue to threaten our ability to meet future demand." Three-quarters of job openings paying above average wages require an associate's degree or higher, the BLM study concluded. Past job projections⁶ by Bridge Magazine reached similar conclusions: more degree completions generally mean more opportunities for individual workers and statewide economic growth.

Big Hurdle: Rising College Costs

College is increasingly hard to afford for Michigan residents. Students are leaving campus with higher debt loads. In 2016, 64 percent⁷ of Michigan college graduates left school with debt, an average of \$30,327. That was 11th highest in the nation.

In the early 1990s, Michigan was among the top 10 states in spending for needs-based financial aid. But it has fallen by more than half since then – and Michigan is now among the bottom half of states for needs-based grant spending. The Michigan League for Public Policy⁸ found Michigan spends \$223 per undergraduate student on needs-based grants, compared to the national average of \$533. That ranked lowest among Midwest states

At the same time, Michigan’s colleges and universities have raised tuition far faster than the rate of inflation. Adjusted for inflation, tuition at Michigan’s 15 public-university soared⁹ by anywhere from 91 percent to 171 percent from 2003 to 2015. Its average tuition ranked sixth highest in the nation. In 1990, Michigan students paid 39 percent of college tuition. By 2015, they were paying nearly 70 percent of tuition – again, sixth highest in the nation.

Higher Ed Cuts

In large part, schools turned to escalating tuition to compensate for declining state funds for higher education. From 2003 to 2015, state higher ed appropriations fell by \$262 million a year, adjusted for inflation. That’s a 30 percent drop. And as they were saddled with higher tuition, thousands of borrowers slipped into default. Federal data showed 12.9 percent of Michigan borrowers who entered repayment between 2013 and 2016 were in default¹⁰ - up from 11.8 percent the year before.

Community College a Bargain

Community college remains a good bargain. Michigan’s community colleges have the lowest tuition¹¹ in the Midwest and 16th lowest in the nation. Community college students nationwide are more likely to graduate without student loans – more than 60 percent nationwide graduate without taking out loans.

In 2017, Michigan’s legislature and governor boosted funding for the state’s public universities, adding \$28 million, a 2 percent increase. That’s a relatively modest hike in light of larger cuts in recent years.

Differing Reform Approaches

There’s plenty of unresolved debate about how best to produce more Michigan college grads and assure students and families can afford it. Michigan residents have declared college affordability a major public priority.¹² Public universities plead for more state funding.¹³ Gov. Rick Snyder asked for more innovation and efficiency on campus.¹⁴ Business groups call for better collaboration¹⁵ between colleges and employers to create a more effective school-to-work pathway for students.

Michigan’s next governor and legislature elected in November 2018 will surely have to face these talent development and college un-affordability issues.

Student/Family Share of College Expenses

STATE	PERCENT	RANK
Michigan	69%	6th highest
Ohio	61%	14th highest
Iowa	60%	16th highest
Minnesota	58%	18th highest
Indiana	57%	20th highest
Wisconsin	48%	30th highest
Illinois	32%	47th highest

Source: Michigan League for Public Policy

KEEP DIGGING: MORE INFORMATION ON HIGHER EDUCATION

- The Center for Michigan: “Getting to Work: The Public’s Agenda for Improving Career Navigation, College Affordability, and Upward Mobility in Michigan”¹⁶
- Michigan League for Public Policy: “Back to School Report: Rising Tuition and Weak State Funding and Financial Aid Create More Student Debt”¹⁷
- Pew Research Center: “The Rising Cost of not Going to College”¹⁸
- Business Leaders for Michigan: “Michigan’s Talent Forecast”¹⁹

The Facts on Michigan's Business Climate

By Lindsay VanHulle and Ted Roelofs | Bridge Magazine

Michigan's economy has long centered around manufacturing — especially autos. But reliance on a single industry produces boom and bust cycles. That's certainly true of recent Michigan history. The state lost hundreds of thousands of manufacturing jobs during the Great Recession. Yet the auto industry has also helped drive economic recovery in recent years.

Michigan Business Climate Indicators (2006-2015) - Inflation adjusted in 2015 dollars

	2006	2010	2015	2015 vs 2006	2015 vs 2010
State Population	10,036,000	9,877,000	9,923,000	-1.1%	0.5%
Statewide Gross Domestic Product (total value of all goods/services produced)	\$463.6 billion	\$415.5 billion	\$472.3 billion	1.9%	13.7%
Total Wage & Salary Employment (Jobs)	4,326,800	3,863,600	4,243,700	-1.9%	9.8%
Unemployment Rate	7.0%	12.6%	5.4%	-22.9%	-57.1%
Total Statewide Personal Income	\$395.7 billion	\$375.1 billion	\$424.8 billion	7.4%	13.2%
Per Capita Income	\$39,426	\$37,990	\$42,812	8.6%	12.7%

Source: All figures except GDP from State of Michigan 2016 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report, pages 286-287; GDP data from U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics; All dollars inflation-adjusted and presented in 2015 dollars using Consumer Price Index calculators.

Michigan's Business Climate Entering 2018

On some key measures, Michigan's economy has returned to or surpassed pre-Great Recession levels. The state's Gross Domestic Product (the value of all goods and services produced) was 2 percent higher in 2015 than in 2006 — and nearly 14 percent higher than 2010. Total employment grew by nearly 10 percent from 2010 to 2015. Total personal income grew by 13 percent over the same time period.

The state has diversified its economy and reduced unemployment during the current economic expansion, though Michigan hasn't yet regained all the jobs it lost in the Great Recession. Manufacturing, while still among the state's dominant industries, has lost some ground as sectors such as health care and professional and business services¹ have grown.

Schools struggle to improve student performance, and many companies say they have trouble finding enough skilled employees to fill job openings. Infrastructure is failing, which poses problems for businesses that rely on adequate transportation to move products and healthy communities to lure workers.²

Michigan's unemployment rate stood below 5 percent at the end of 2017, roughly mirroring the national rate. That's far better than the 15 percent, worst-in-the-nation unemployment of 2009. Yet Michigan's labor participation rate is low, with many workers having given up looking for jobs³ over the past decade. And wages haven't grown as fast as some economists believe they should, given the length of the current recovery.

Policy Changes in Recent Years

Governors often get credit for a good economy, and blamed for a bad one. But government leaders don't create jobs. Their role is to create the environment in which business can grow. Gov. Rick Snyder and the Michigan Legislature have passed a wide range of measures (some of them highly controversial) with the intention of improving Michigan's business climate.

Michigan Ranking

Employment Growth	14th
Labor Force Participation	37th
Per Capita Personal Income Growth	10th
Per Capita GDP Growth	7th
Population Growth	38th
Corporate Tax Climate	8th best
Overall Business Tax Climate	12th best
Labor Costs	43rd
Overall Business Climate Rankings	25th best
Career & College Readiness	29th

Source: Business Leaders for Michigan 2017 Economic Competitiveness Benchmarking Report.

Those changes include:

- Repealing the unpopular Michigan Business Tax and providing a major business tax cut. The state collected \$2 billion less in business taxes in 2016 than in 2008. The state paid for the business-friendly cut largely by shifting the tax burden to individuals.
- Passing right-to-work laws prohibiting labor unions from collecting dues as a condition of employment. Supporters claim right to work gives workers more freedom over their employment. The results so far are unclear. The state has not provided evidence that a company has moved to Michigan because of right to work.
- Phasing out the state's personal property tax on some manufacturing equipment.

Michigan is not yet a top-10 state when it comes to jobs, income and the economy,⁴ according to Business Leaders for Michigan, a roundtable of statewide CEOs.

Competing Ideas for the Future

The next governor and legislature elected in November 2018 will face a bounty of recommendations⁵ on how to improve the Michigan economy going forward.

The Snyder-appointed 21st Century Economy Commission in May 2017 issued policy recommendation: Building a talent pipeline by increasing Michigan residents' skills development and recruiting talent from elsewhere... Infrastructure investment, including "social infrastructure" systems such as housing and child care... Government efficiency and customer service to support business growth.. Promote quality of life, from natural resources to placemaking.

Business Leaders for Michigan includes as its policy priorities investing in long-term infrastructure projects,⁶ building a stronger business climate through improving government fiscal stability and strengthening Michigan's education system from early childhood through high school. Michigan Future Inc., an Ann Arbor-based think tank, thinks policymakers should focus on increasing Michiganders' educational attainment,⁷ attracting young talent to cities and expanding the social safety net in order to boost Michigan's household income and its prosperity.

Yet those newly elected leaders entering office in January 2019 may also face a ticking clock. Leading economists openly wonder how much longer Michigan's recovery (mixed as it may be) will continue – and when the next recession⁸ looms.

The Talent Puzzle

One of Michigan's biggest challenges to business attraction is talent. The state ranks 37th for labor force participation among residents 16 and older. Michigan has an estimated 6,700 job openings in the skilled trades⁹ annually through 2022. Yet since 2010, the vast majority of new U.S. jobs have required some postsecondary education – and just 39.4 percent of Michigan adults have at least an associate's degree.

Urban and Rural Economies

Recovery has been uneven in recent years across the state.¹⁰ Among urban areas, Grand Rapids has been a recovery star – 90,000 new jobs from 2012-2015. Ann Arbor, the Detroit metro region, Lansing-East Lansing, and Kalamazoo also have fared relatively well. Other old manufacturing cities like Flint and Saginaw have continued to struggle.

Michigan's rural communities are buoyed by jobs in natural resources-based industries such as timber and mining, agriculture, and tourism. But sparsely populated communities lack the necessary infrastructure, namely high-speed internet access, that can attract new residents and help businesses compete in a 21st-century economy.

Property Values

Real estate markets have improved in the past several years. But it's a long climb back to pre-Great Recession levels. From 2008 to 2016, statewide property values fell by billions of dollars.¹¹ Flint lost three-quarters of its taxable property value. Detroit lost 60 percent. Statewide, some 1.4 million residents live in communities where taxable property values dropped by more than half over that eight-year period. On the bright side, agricultural property values saw a considerable rise over the same period.

The Facts on Michigan Jobs & Labor Force



By Mike Wilkinson | Bridge Magazine

Michigan paydays aren't what they used to be. Many paychecks are smaller than a generation ago. There are fewer paychecks, too. Still, the current climate for workers is measurably better than the depths of the Great Recession in 2009-10. Looking ahead, the path to prosperity looks rocky for many future workers.

Pulling Out of the Great Recession Tailspin

As anyone who lived and worked through it remembers, Michigan lost hundreds of thousands of jobs in the Great Recession. The glass half-empty view... At the end of 2015, total Michigan employment was still 2 percent lower than in 2006. The glass half-full view... After several years of recovery, Michigan had 9.8 percent more jobs in 2015 than in 2010.

Michigan has experienced eight consecutive years of payroll growth and better than the national average¹ gains the last few years. But the recovery has been uneven, and, unlike previous recoveries, didn't include a full return to widespread, high-paying manufacturing employment. As of the beginning of 2018, Michigan's unemployment rate is below 5 percent, near historical lows, and largely mirrors the national rate. But that raw number masks the fact that a wide range of Michigan adults simply stopped looking for work. Michigan's adult workforce participation rate ranks near the bottom nationally.

Key Michigan Job Indicators

	2015	VS 2006	VS 2010
Total Wage & Salary Employment (Jobs)	4,243,700	-1.9%	9.8%
<i>Source: 2016 State of Michigan Comprehensive Annual Financial Report, p. 286-287.</i>			
	MICHIGAN	U.S.	MI RANK
Unemployment Rate (November 2017)	4.6%	4.1%	37th lowest (tie)
<i>Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, November 2017 employment data.</i>			
	MICHIGAN	U.S.	MI RANK
Employed Share of Population Aged 25-64, 2015	68.8%	71.2%	42nd highest
<i>Source: Public Sector Consultants, Inc. analysis of Census Data for the Center for Michigan.</i>			
	MI RATE	MI RANK	
Employment Growth, 2015-2016	2.1%	14th	
<i>Source: Business Leaders for Michigan 2017 Economic Competitiveness Report, p. 9.</i>			

Jobs Bright Spots

Michigan has the highest percentage of workers engaged in engineering work – good paying jobs that will be in demand as manufacturing continues to move to advanced materials and increasing automation. It has large research universities churning highly educated graduates. And Michigan is still the home to one of the largest industries – autos – in the country.

The western side of the state has done very well in terms of recent job growth. The jobless rate in Kent, Ottawa and Kalamazoo counties fell to near-historical low levels in 2017 and employers have said their biggest problem is finding workers.²

Statewide, economists project³ robust near-term job growth in professional and business services (37,000 more jobs) and construction (11,000 more jobs) thru 2019.

In addition, the education and health services sector has added 60,000 jobs since 2008. But, in some cases (such as lower-level health-care service jobs⁴ for an aging population) growing job sectors feature considerably lower wages than Michigan's past manufacturing glory.

Stubborn Jobs Hurdles

The highest-paying jobs of the future almost universally require advanced training beyond high school. High-tech, growing industries of the 21st century also require deep talent pools filled by college grads. Herein lies one of the state's problems. In Michigan, 28.3 percent of adults have a college degree. That's well below the national average (31.3 percent). Michigan ranks 36th nationally in terms of educational attainment. Adults with a college degree can make \$1 million more over a lifetime of earnings, compared to someone with a high school diploma and they experience far lower levels of unemployment.⁵ College grads' jobless rate in 2015 was 2.7 percent, compared to 8.6 percent for those with just a high school diploma.

Another challenge is the state's aging workforce.⁶ One in 5 workers is over 55 and far closer to retirement than a graduation ceremony. That impediment also creates opportunity: in a well-paying field like tool-and-die work, the loss of so many older specialists is creating demand.⁷ Nearly three-quarters of all tool-and-die workers are over 45.

As some regions and industries have experienced labor shortages in recent years, the problem is compounded by significant numbers of applicants who failed drug tests.⁸

Finally, rural areas of Michigan face their own set of challenges: shrinking and aging populations, loss of young talent, empty storefronts, and a loss of business enterprises.⁹

Chasing Opportunities

Given the state's rattled labor force, it's obvious why Michigan sought to secure the second Amazon headquarters¹⁰ and the prospect of 50,000 new jobs. State leaders in 2017 passed sweeping new incentives aimed at attracting¹¹ high-tech, jobs-producing firms like Amazon and Foxconn (which builds Apple's iPhone, but ultimately opted for Wisconsin for new U.S. operations).

Michigan has also approved new opportunities¹² for skilled trades training and new rules¹³ requiring high school counselors to get more skills to help students make college and career decisions.

In a proposal to help land Amazon,¹⁴ Gov. Rick Snyder proposed spending tens of millions of dollars on information technology (IT) scholarships and improved IT programs high schools and colleges. It's a tacit acknowledgment that what companies like Amazon need is not currently found in Michigan's labor force. Snyder has been talking about a "Marshall Plan for Talent,"¹⁵ a reference to the huge amount of money spent on rebuilding Europe after World War II.

Without more advanced training, Michigan could fall behind¹⁶ other nations in growing the high-tech manufacturing of the future.

KEEP DIGGING: MORE INFORMATION ON MICHIGAN JOBS & LABOR FORCE

- University of Michigan: State economy poised to withstand NAFTA withdrawal¹⁷
- Michigan League for Public Policy: Michigan's aging workforce¹⁸
- Center for Automotive Research: New Materials/New Skills for the Trades¹⁹
- Bridge Magazine: Booming Again: West Michigan's Economy is on a Roll²⁰
- Bridge Magazine: Michigan's Stumbling Middle Class²¹
- Bridge Magazine: Death of Entrepreneurship²²
- Bridge Magazine: Northern Michigan's 'Disability Belt' now rivals the Deep South and Appalachia²³

The Facts on Michigan Incomes

By Mike Wilkinson | Bridge Magazine

The incomes of Michigan workers took a big hit during the Great Recession. Incomes have recovered somewhat in recent years, but Michigan has not returned to its high-wage reputation during past decades of manufacturing might.

The state's workers once made substantially more than the average American household (6 percent more in 2000); they're now making almost 10 percent less – or about \$425 a month less. The cause: loss of nearly 300,000 manufacturing jobs, many well-paying. And the jobs that have been created have largely been in the service sector and pay just over two-thirds, on average, as what a factory job pays.

Still, Michigan incomes have started to grow again during the multi-year recovery after the Great Recession. Total statewide personal income (\$424 billion) and per capita income (\$42,812) in 2015 were both about 13 percent higher than in 2010.

Key Michigan Income Indicators

	MICHIGAN	U.S.	MICHIGAN RANK
Median household income, 2016	\$52,492	\$57,616	34th highest
Median household income - one-year change, 2015-2016	2.8%	3.3%	N/A
Median income of white residents (16 and older), 2016	\$31,490	\$34,940	41st highest
Median income of black residents (16 and older), 2016	\$22,373	\$26,487	35th highest
Median income of male full-time, year-round workers, 2016	\$50,869	\$50,586	21st highest
Median income of female full-time, year-round workers, 2016	\$39,825	\$40,626	22nd highest
Per-capita income, 2016	\$29,128	\$31,128	28th highest
Per-capita income - one-year change, 2015-2016	4.5%	3.8%	N/A
Average hourly wage (employees in private industries), 2016	\$24.09	\$25.98	24th highest
Poverty rate, 2016	16.3%	15.1%	16th highest
Child poverty rate, 2015	23.5%	21.7%	16th highest
Working poor population (asset limited, income constrained, but employed), 2017	40%	N/A	N/A
Share of households receiving food stamps, 2016	15.9%	13.0%	10th highest

Source: U.S. Census American Community Survey data for 2015 and 2016.

Michigan Personal Income Trends: Pre and Post Great Recession

	2006	2010	2015	2015 vs 2006	2015 vs 2010
Total Statewide Personal Income	\$395.7 billion	\$375.1 billion	\$424.8 billion	7.4%	13.2%
Per Capita Income	\$39,426	\$37,990	\$42,812	8.6%	12.7%

Source: State of Michigan 2016 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report, pages 286-287; All dollars inflation-adjusted and presented in 2015 dollars using Consumer Price Index calculators.

Michigan's Re-Shaped Jobs Market

From 2000 to 2016, Michigan lost nearly 300,000 manufacturing jobs while adding lower-paying service jobs. The radical reshaping of the state economy helped drop median household income. In Michigan, it's now \$5,125 below the national median of \$57,617 in 2016, or \$427 a month less.

Michigan Lags in College Grads

In the United States, 31.3 percent of adults have a bachelor's degree or higher, a level of education that typically brings hundreds of thousands of dollars of additional lifelong income. Michigan's rate, 28.3 percent, has it ranked in the bottom third of the country.

Path forward

Other states with more diverse economies have been able to embrace the information age and take advantage of the higher-paying jobs in technology and financial and professional services.

Take Massachusetts and Minnesota. Both have far more educated workforces compared to Michigan and the nation. Nearly 43 percent of Massachusetts adults have a college degree, as do nearly 35 percent of adult Minnesotans. In Michigan, the number is 28.3 percent, well below the national figure of 31.3.

(For perspective: If Michigan's had the same college grad rate as Minnesota, the state would have 439,000 more college grads; if it had Massachusetts' rate, it'd have nearly a million more grads.)

Here's how that plays out: While Michigan's median household income was \$5,000 below the national average of \$57,627 in 2016, Minnesota's was nearly \$8,000 higher. Massachusetts' is nearly \$18,000 higher. Michigan is now ranked 34th¹ in income, down from 24th a decade earlier.

That's because Massachusetts and Minnesota have far fewer factory workers and more in service-oriented jobs like finance, an industry where average weekly wages in Massachusetts (\$2,500) and Minnesota (\$1,673) are far higher than that same sector commands in Michigan (\$1,298 a week).

Job losses, stagnant wages triggered a poverty increase

The impact extended beyond those working, many of whom were working for less money, to pushing many more into poverty. The poverty rate in Michigan soared from 13.2 percent in 2005 to more than 17 percent in 2011 (Massachusetts and Minnesota never climbed above 12 percent). The Michigan poverty rate remained above 16 percent in 2016.

Beyond the poor and unemployed, the working poor grew markedly. According to the Michigan Association of United Ways, the percentage of working families who struggled to meet the basic costs of living² grew substantially. More than 950,000 Michigan households have wage earners, but are considered working poor with few assets and constrained incomes.

Pain, progress not evenly distributed

Across the state, the minority population was harder hit by the Great Recession. The poverty rate among African-Americans, already high, climbed to more than 36 percent in 2012. That has seen a ripple effect in a number of larger cities, including Detroit, Flint, Muskegon and Saginaw, which have larger African-American populations.

In Detroit and Flint, more than half of children under 18 live in poverty and more than a third of all residents. Median household income in Flint was \$24,863 and it was \$25,764 for Detroit in 2016, according to the U.S. Census' American Community Survey. Yet in other parts of the state, incomes are far higher, like in Ann Arbor (\$55,990), Grand Rapids (\$40,355) and in Metro Detroit suburbs like Plymouth (\$75,949), Warren (\$43,523) and Bloomfield Hills (\$172,768).

Again, education is a factor: In Bloomfield Hills and Ann Arbor, more than 70 percent of adults have a college degree; in Plymouth, it's 54.4 percent and in Grand Rapids it's 31.6 percent. But in Detroit just 11.5 percent of adults have a college degree and in Flint it's 9.7 percent.

KEEP DIGGING: MORE INFORMATION ON MICHIGAN INCOMES:

- Bridge Magazine: Michigan's Stumbling Middle Class³
- U.S. Federal Reserve: Report on the Economic Well-Being of U.S. Households in 2016⁴
- University of Michigan researchers: The economic and demographic outlook for Michigan through 2045⁵
- U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics: The growth of income inequality in the United States⁶

The Facts on Michigan Business Incentives



By Lindsay VanHulle | Bridge Magazine

In late 2016, billionaire Detroit businessman Dan Gilbert visited the Michigan Capitol to sell lawmakers on new tax incentives he touted as crucial to unlocking billions of dollars of real estate development in Detroit.

The resulting incentive package, valued at up to \$1 billion,¹ took effect last year. It had the backing of economic developers across the state and, eventually, Gov. Rick Snyder, who ended most incentive programs shortly after he took office in 2011.

Snyder last year also signed into law a new incentive² that would allow companies to capture some or all of the income taxes for their new hires if employers create at least 250 jobs and pay average regional wages. Snyder wanted the incentive as he tried to lure Taiwanese electronics manufacturer Foxconn Technology Group³ and the possibility of thousands of jobs to Michigan.

Incentives generally are not the deciding factor for a company looking to move or expand. Location, availability of property, talent, quality of life, infrastructure and utilities all play into the decision. But incentives are at the center of an economic development arms race, one in which states that don't play can find themselves losing out on high-profile projects.

Little data exists publicly to back up claims that Michigan can't compete without business incentives. In some cases, that's because the state might never know if it was eliminated, nor learn why it lost a particular project to another state.

Transparency also lacks because states often sign confidentiality agreements when pitching projects. And the types of deals vary from state to state, so Michigan can't easily be compared across state lines.

Timothy Bartik, a senior economist at the W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research in Kalamazoo, last year published data from 33 states⁴ suggesting Michigan had higher incentive costs than some neighboring states. Bartik's research also makes the case that incentives are often politically motivated and adopted without enough information to determine whether they'll be effective.

Some opponents of incentives in Michigan reject the idea of state government choosing to reward specific industries at the expense of others. Incentives advocates contend that if Michigan doesn't offer robust incentives, it will not compete for major jobs-producing economic growth projects.

Michigan's MEGA problem

Incentive history here is also controversial, after a tax credit program originally designed to create jobs morphed into a job-saving tool during the Great Recession – and left the state with a \$9 billion price tag.⁵

Known as MEGA, the tax credit program started in the 1990s to reward companies for creating jobs. But the program expanded to allow credits for companies that retained jobs. Detroit's automakers were among the largest recipients.

Michigan's obligation to companies under the MEGA program swelled to more than \$9 billion by 2015, putting pressure on the state budget because state fiscal experts underestimated the scale of companies redeeming the credits.

Governor Snyder axed the MEGA program after taking office in 2011. But companies awarded credits can continue to claim them until they expire. It's estimated Michigan will be liable for hundreds of millions of dollars in MEGA payouts⁶ to companies through 2032.

The arms race today

Michigan lost a major Foxconn project to Wisconsin, which offered \$3 billion in incentives for a planned investment of \$10 billion and up to 13,000 jobs making liquid-crystal-display screens near Racine. Wisconsin approved the Foxconn incentives despite legislative analysis suggesting it could take 25 years for Wisconsin to break even⁷ on the deal.

Michigan offered Foxconn incentives worth nearly \$6.5 billion for three separate projects in Marshall, Romulus, and Detroit valued at a total of nearly \$11 billion in economic development, including 14,000 jobs.

Last fall, e-commerce giant Amazon.com made international news when it announced a public search to find a host city for its second North American headquarters. The company plans to bring as many as 50,000 employees to the winning city. Detroit's binational bid with Windsor, Ontario, promised an undisclosed amount of incentives from Detroit, Wayne County and the state, along with other investments in talent and transit. The Michigan bid did not make the cut.

The future of business incentives in Michigan is unpredictable and unclear. A new governor and legislature may reshape the state's approach in 2019 and beyond – as a matter of policy and also in response to new job growth opportunities not yet foreseen.

KEEP DIGGING: MORE INFORMATION ON BUSINESS INCENTIVES

- Bridge Magazine: "Good Jobs Law May Depend on Definition of 'Good'"⁸
- Bridge Magazine: "Do Business Lures Really Work?"⁹
- Bridge Magazine: "Business Chief: Five Ways to Boost Michigan's Economic Growth"¹⁰
- Bridge Magazine: "Five Questions about Foxconn"¹¹
- MEGA Tax Credit Report¹²
- Economist Tim Bartik Business Incentives Study, 2017¹³

The Facts on Public Health in Michigan



By Ted Roelofs | Bridge Magazine

If Michigan's nearly 10 million residents received a collective physical exam, the result would be a mixed bag – and likely a frown from the doctor.

Michigan ranked 35th best among states¹ in 2017 for a range of health metrics that include obesity, diabetes, cancer, and other health factors. The United Health Foundation,² which compiles the annual rankings, considered Michigan the 28th healthiest state as recently as 2010.

In many cases, adverse health outcomes are tied to the broader social disease of poverty. Troubling health signs show up in everything from higher infant mortality to exposure to air pollution to the poisoning of Flint's drinking water.

Key Michigan Public Health Indicators

INDICATOR	MICHIGAN	RANK
Life Expectancy	78.2 years	35th highest
Obesity Rate	31.2%	16th highest
Infant mortality rate	6.8 per 1,000 births	38th best
Share of population on Medicaid	19%	17th highest
Bringe drinking among adults	18.5%	10th highest
% of people who smoke	20.7%	11th highest
Physical inactivity rate	25.50%	25th best
Asthma rate	10.9%	7th highest
% of adults who didn't consult with a doctor in past 12 months	27.2%	4th best

Source: Public Sector Consultants, Inc. research for the Center for Michigan, citing a wide range of public health statistics and studies, including the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, United Health Foundation, Kaiser Family Foundation, and Centers for Disease Control.

Infant Mortality

Michigan's overall infant mortality rate of 6.8 per 1,000 births ranks 38th – meaning 37 states have a lower rate. The mortality rate for African-American infants in Michigan is nearly triple that of white infants. African Americans are twice as likely to die by age 1 than white infants.

Community outreach can make a difference. In 2017, the city of Detroit and Wayne State University launched a program to bring more resources³ to pregnant mothers in an effort to cut back on premature births and infant mortality.

Environmental Pollutants

Exposure to pollutants and toxins like lead often tracks along racial lines as well.

According to the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, African-American children and adults have three times⁴ the hospitalization rate for asthma than white children and adults. While triggers for asthma are complex, it is linked both to environmental pollutants such as car exhaust and industrial particulates and agents in the home. Many Detroit neighborhoods rank at the top in Michigan for exposure to airborne pollutants.

In 2014, seven of the top 10 zip codes for unsafe lead levels⁵ in children under 6 years old in Michigan were in Detroit, in areas of high poverty that are largely black. The lead levels in are linked to older houses or apartments with traces of lead paint in and around the home.

Kids Count: Troubling Health Indicators for Children

Annual Kids Count reports have consistently shown Michigan children lagging peers in other states on key health and quality of life measures. Key statistics from the 2017 Michigan Kids Count report:⁶

- 22 percent of Michigan children (and 47 percent of African-American children) live in poverty.
- 44 percent of Michigan families are one emergency away from financial crisis.
- 37000 children in 2015 were confirmed victims of abuse or neglect – a 21 percent increase over 2009.
- A quarter of Michigan toddlers are not fully immunized.
- Michigan students lag peers in other states on a wide range of education measures.

Stubborn Drug Abuse Problems

Mirroring a crisis in much of the nation, Michigan is facing an epidemic of opioid abuse and overdose from opioids and heroin.

The rate of death from opioids other than heroin jumped by 54 percent between 2015 and 2016 and has more than tripled⁷ since 2012. In 2016, 11 million opioid prescriptions⁸ were filled – leaving Michigan among about a dozen states with more prescriptions than people.

Flint Water Crisis: A “Complete Failure of Government”

Michigan is still grappling with fallout from Flint’s water crisis, in which thousands of children were exposed to toxic levels of lead in drinking water. That stemmed from decisions made under state-ordered emergency management to switch the city’s water source to the Flint River without adequate controls to prevent lead from leaching from pipes into the water.

Experts say the water switch may also be tied to an outbreak of Legionnaire’s disease in which 12 residents died. More than a dozen current and former city and state employees have been charged in connection to the crisis.

The Michigan Civil Rights Commission called events in Flint a “complete failure of government”⁹ and said it was tied to systemic racism in a city with 40 percent of people below the poverty level.

KEEP DIGGING: MORE INFORMATION ON MICHIGAN’S HEALTH

- United Health Foundation: “America’s Health Rankings, 2017.”¹⁰
- Michigan League for Public Policy: “2017 Kids Count in Michigan Data Book”¹¹
- Michigan League for Public Policy: “Annual Report on Maternal and Child Health”¹²
- Bridge Magazine: “Threat of Environmental Injustice Extends Beyond Flint”¹³
- Michigan Civil Rights Commission: “The Flint Water Crisis: Systemic Racism Through the Lens of Flint”¹⁴

The Facts on Health Care



By Ted Roelofs | Bridge Magazine

In 2010, an estimated 1.2 million Michigan residents had no health insurance. By 2016, that fell to approximately 527,000. That's primarily because the Affordable Care Act provided health care to nearly one million Michigan residents, either through expansion of Medicaid for low-income recipients or the federal individual marketplace for those who don't qualify for Medicare, Medicaid or insurance through an employer.

But, as of this writing in early 2018, the future of health care is unclear. Congress in December repealed a pillar of Obamacare – the tax penalty on individuals who fail to get insurance. Experts say that will lead to higher premiums, destabilize the individual marketplace while the Congressional Budget Office estimated it would leave 13 million fewer Americans with health insurance.

Weak Rankings, But Centers of Excellence

While a national health care survey by U.S. News and World Report ranked Michigan 34th for overall health care (with 1st being best in the nation). It's somewhat ironic that Michigan is also noted for its centers of world-class health care. The University of Michigan Health System was ranked sixth in the nation in 2017 by U.S. News, a rating that accounted for quality of care, clinical resources, attention to families and other

The Uninsured in Michigan

2009	10%
2011	12%
2014	7%
2015	5%

Source: Center for Healthcare Research & Transformation

Michigan's Troubling Health Care Rankings

Access to health care	19th
Health care affordability	30th
Child dental visits	43rd
Child wellness visits	38th
Health care quality	38th
Hospital readmissions	48th
Nursing home citations	44th

Source: U.S. News and World Report.

measures. Nine specialty areas ranked in the top 10 in the nation.

Prenatal Issues

Prenatal care has a direct bearing on infant wellbeing. According to Kids Count Michigan data for 2017, 31 percent of mothers did not receive adequate prenatal care before giving birth. Twenty percent of mothers reported smoking during pregnancy, with higher rates in rural areas.

Dental care also plays an understated role in overall health, as periodontal disease has been linked to heart disease. A 2015 study, however, found that although Michigan has an adequate overall ratio of dentists to population, 77 of 83 counties have at least one dental shortage area. The problem is especially acute in rural areas and inner cities.

Rural Care Gap

Access to health care – even for those with insurance - remains a particular problem in rural Michigan.

A 2015 study by the Citizens Research Council of Michigan found four rural counties in Michigan – Cass, Keweenaw, Lake and Oscoda – consistently fell below recommended ratios of primary care physicians to population. Seven other rural counties fell below suggested ratios in every field it examined except family practice.

The Center for Health Workforce Studies of the Association of American Medical Colleges projects a shortage in Michigan of 4,400 doctors - including both primary care doctors and specialists - by 2020.

Decline of Primary Care Physicians

The percentage of medical students choosing to specialize in primary care - the backbone of rural health care - has declined significantly. According to the American Academy of Family Physicians, about half of U.S. doctors in 1960 were primary care physicians. It is about 25 percent today.

Michigan also gets substandard marks for its rate of immunizations. A 2016 study ranked the state fourth worst in the country in its percentage of 15-month to 35-month-old children given a particular series of shots. Only Idaho, West Virginia and Wyoming ranked lower.

National Issue

Of course, Michigan's health care issues cannot be divorced from the nation's health care system and policies. It's frequently noted that the United States spends more per capita on health care than any other nation, yet trails many developed nations in basic measures such as life expectancy, infant mortality and access to care. Almost without exception, higher-performing nations have universal health care coverage and a single-payer system.

KEEP DIGGING: MORE INFORMATION ON MICHIGAN'S HEALTH CARE

- Citizens Research Council: "CRC Report Examines Primary Care Physician Shortages across Michigan"
- U.S. News and World Report: "Best States for Health Care"
- Kids Count in Michigan: "A Michigan Where All Kids Thrive"
- Center for Healthcare Research & Transformation "The Uninsured in Michigan"

The Facts on the Michigan Safety Net



By Ted Roelofs | Bridge Magazine

For more than a quarter century, policy makers have tinkered with Michigan's social safety net. Whether reforms have improved the state's welfare system remains a matter of ongoing debate.

Safety net and welfare reform issues are frequently in the spotlight – and likely to remain there in 2018 – for two reasons. Michigan has a large low-income population. And the social safety net costs taxpayers billions of dollars per year.

Sixteen percent of Michigan households and 22 percent of Michigan children currently live in poverty. Another 25 percent¹ of Michigan households live above the poverty line, and have jobs, but live paycheck to paycheck with no savings, according to the Michigan Association of United Ways.

While health care and other social safety net programs total more than \$25 billion dollars in the state budget. That's 45 percent of the overall state budget, including pass-through federal revenues.

Reform Debates Through the Years

In 1991, Gov. John Engler signed a law ending general assistance, cutting off welfare payments of about \$144 a month to 80,000 able-bodied adults without children. Critics said it would harm vulnerable recipients, while officials said the state could no longer could afford the program.

Then, in 1996, Congress approved sweeping reform that converted federal welfare aid to states to block grants – giving them wide discretion on how to spend the funds. Backers said this would allow states to more nimbly help recipients off welfare and into work.

Welfare for Middle Class College Students

On average, half of all U.S. welfare money controlled by states goes to programs aimed at getting recipients back to work. They include cash assistance, child-care and work-related initiatives. In Michigan, it's less than 25 percent - one of the lowest rates in the country.

Under federal welfare reform, state welfare spending must meet one of four goals: Helping needy families, getting recipients into jobs, reducing out-of-wedlock pregnancies and encouraging two-parent families.

Fewer Families on Cash Assistance

Average monthly caseloads on state cash assistance by fiscal year.

2007	85,389
2008	72,568
2009	70,540
2010	79,233
2011	79,660
2012	58,641
2013	49,165
2014	38,387

Since 2007, Michigan has spent more than a billion dollars from the welfare program on college scholarships,² with some funds going to middle- and upper-income students attending private Michigan colleges. That includes students from families earning more than \$100,000 a year.

Advocates for the poor argue those funds could be better used to help the truly needy. State officials maintain that students who attend college are less likely to have children out of wedlock.

New Limits on Cash Assistance

On paper, welfare spending in Michigan has remained level. But the number of Michigan families getting cash assistance fell by half³ from 2007 to 2013, even as tens of thousands of families still struggled with poverty and unemployment coming out of the Great Recession.

Concerned that some on welfare were abusing the system, state lawmakers in 2011 approved a measure to limit recipients to four years of cash assistance. Those who were on welfare for more than four years dating back to 2007 were kicked off⁴ the program.

Twelve months later, the state was spending \$18 million less⁵ a month on cash assistance, likely the result of both welfare reform and an improving economy. While reform advocates said stiffer time limits would force recipients to find work, it is unclear how many found jobs since the state does not track recipients after they leave the system.

Drug Tests Come Up Negative

In 2013, legislators responded to allegations recipients were abusing cash benefits when they banned use of Bridge Cards at ATMs in casinos and strip clubs. Low-income residents can use cards to buy food and other items at the store. The measure was approved following revelations welfare recipients used benefits to get nearly \$90,000⁶ from a Detroit casino.

The following year Gov. Rick Snyder signed a law to create a one-year pilot program to screen some welfare recipients and test those suspected of drug use. In a 2016 report to legislators, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services said the pilot program did not catch any⁷ recipients using illegal drugs.

Massive Computer Error

Michigan's unemployment insurance fund is another piece of the safety net, giving workers a financial cushion when they lose jobs.

But a state calculation that it could streamline claims processing by turning fraud determinations over to a computer backfired, resulting in thousands of false findings of fraud.

In August, the state agreed to refund nearly \$21 million to residents after reviewing cases in which the Unemployment Insurance Agency falsely accused tens of thousands of people of benefit fraud. The state found that more than 44,000 cases⁸ out of 62,784 with fraud findings did not involve fraud.

The UIA said it is committed to improve its system through enhanced training, policy changes and changes to the computer system.

KEEP DIGGING: MORE INFORMATION ON MICHIGAN'S SAFETY NET

- United Ways of Michigan: The ALICE Project⁹
- Michigan League for Public Policy: "Failure to Invest in High Quality Child Care Hurts Children and State Economy"¹⁰
- Citizens Research Council and Public Sector Consultants: "Policy Options to Support Children from Birth to Age Three"¹¹
- Bridge Magazine: "Fewer homeless veterans. More homeless children in state."¹²
- Bridge Magazine: "Broken – the Human Toll of Michigan's Unemployment Fraud Scandal."¹³

The Facts on Great Lakes and Water Issues

By Jim Malewitz | Bridge Magazine

Michiganders are proud of their thousands of miles of Great Lakes shoreline and rivers — resources that offer relaxation and pump billions of dollars into the state's economy.

But Michigan's lakes and rivers face a wave of challenges. At the same time, the state continues to grapple with new threats to drinking water in communities besides Flint.

Water, water everywhere

No state is more water-covered than Michigan. It's home to more than 76,000 miles of rivers and streams and has jurisdiction over about 40 percent of its bordering Great Lakes. Most of the state sits atop high-quality groundwater.

The Department of Environmental Quality broadly considers¹ the open waters of the Great Lakes and inland waters in either "excellent" or "good" condition despite significant trouble spots around urban and heavily farmed parts of Southern Michigan.

Flint Fallout

Still, water challenges loom statewide.

Expect to hear 2018 political candidates continue to discuss the Flint water crisis² — the lead contamination scandal that followed a state-appointed emergency manager's order to switch the city's drinking water source — and statewide efforts to curb lead contamination. Michigan utilities have an estimated 460,000 miles of lead service lines, trailing only two other states, according to an American Water Works Association survey.³ Candidates may debate Gov. Rick Snyder's proposal to give Michigan the nation's strictest regulations aimed at keeping lead and copper out of the water supplies, an idea that could prove expensive.

Line 5 Drama

Candidates will almost certainly talk about Line 5, the 64-year-old oil pipeline beneath the Straits of Mackinac that environmental groups say threatens the Great Lakes. The 645-mile pipeline transports 23 million gallons of oil and natural gas liquids each day from Superior, Wisc. to Sarnia, Ontario. Enbridge, the pipeline's operator, has called the risk of a leak miniscule, and a recent state-commissioned report appears to support that argument. But Enbridge has been scolded for withholding information⁴ from Michigan officials about Line 5's condition, and the

Michigan Waters By the Numbers

- 41.5 percent of state area covered by water
- 40 percent of Great Lakes jurisdiction
- 3,288 miles of coastline
- 76,439 miles of rivers and streams
- 900,000 acres of inland lakes and reservoirs
- 6,465,109 acres of wetlands
- 4.3 million acres of wetlands lost since early 1800s (estimated)
- \$2.5 billion in economic activity from recreational fishing (estimated)
- 58.75 million tons of cargo shipped and received in-state (2015)
- 7,200 contaminated sites tracked by regulators
- 11,000 public water supplies
- 460,000 miles of lead service lines (estimated)

Sources: American Water Works Association survey, Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, United States Geological Survey, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Top 10 sewage polluting communities in Michigan

Michigan's aging network of sewer systems means billions of gallons of untreated or partially treated sewage flows into rivers and lakes every year. In 2013 alone, more than 11 billion gallons of untreated sewage escaped as a result of more than 700 combined sewer overflows. Here are the sewer systems that had the highest volume of untreated combined sewer overflow in 2013:

Name	Untreated overflow (in millions of gallons)
Lansing	758
Detroit*	616
Dearborn	570
Southgate/Wyandotte	411
Saginaw	60
Wayne County/Inkster	51
Port Huron	18
Wayne County/Inkster/Dearborn Hts	16
Wayne County/Redford/Livonia	15
Wakefield	7

*Detroit also recorded 8,876 million gallons of "partially treated" sewer overflow in 2013

Source: Michigan Department of Environmental Quality

company was responsible for the 2010 Kalamazoo River oil spill, one of the worst inland oil spills in U.S. history.

Wider water woes

Michigan's waters face other threats, too. Consider:

Michigan's aging network of sewer systems means billions of gallons⁵ of untreated or partially treated sewage flows into rivers and lakes every year.

Nearly 50,000 of river miles in Michigan face hazards from Polychlorinated Biphenyls, known as PCBs, industrial chemicals known to cause a variety of health effects. Nearly 9,000 river miles⁶ are polluted by pathogens, which can cause stomach ailments and rashes or, in extreme cases, organ failure or death.

The state has flagged more than two dozen sites where toxic chemicals collectively known as PFAS. That includes shoemaker Wolverine Worldwide's contamination of drinking water⁷ in Kent County, where folks worry about cancer risks.

A changeup in fighting invaders?

Don't forget about invasive species.

In 1959, the St. Lawrence Seaway opened up the Midwest to commerce from ocean-going ships. The much-ballyhooed project also carved a pathway for dozens of invasive species that have devastated underwater food chains. Each year, Zebra mussels and other invaders chew up (or suck up) well over \$100 million from the regional economy, studies have shown.⁸ Recent debate has swirled around Michigan's strict rules for saltwater ships. They are required to use specific technologies to kill invasive species inside their ballast and barred from dumping ballast water in the Great Lakes. Some in the shipping industry have pressed the legislature to relax the standards,⁹ worrying environmentalists. Industry calls the rules onerous and say they discourage ships from coming to Michigan ports.

Fish farm fight

Simmering in recent years¹⁰ is a debate about whether Michigan should allow large-scale cage fish farming in parts of the Great Lakes. Ontario has done so in Lake Erie, but U.S. state have not followed suit. Supporters suggest Michigan could be a world leader in freshwater aquaculture and home to all the science, engineering and manufacturing that would accompany the industry. But environmentalists and anglers¹¹ have pushed back. Among their concerns: too many fish pooping in one place. Fish waste contains prosperous – too much of which can starve water of oxygen and trigger potentially harmful¹² algae blooms. Critics also have concerns about diseases and genetics should farmed fish escape their pens and breed in the wild.

Cash strapped

Meanwhile, Michigan officials are worried about losing federal funding¹³ for Great Lakes and other environmental projects. Also, the state is running out of money¹⁴ to clean up legacy pollution. In 1998, voters authorized¹⁵ the state to issue \$675 million in bonds for cleanups and other environmental projects. That money's nearly tapped, leaving work at 7,200 contaminated sites in limbo. If candidates propose new, ambitious environmental projects, ask them where they'll get the funding.

KEEP DIGGING: MORE ON GREAT LAKES AND WATER ISSUES

- Bridge Magazine: "Environmental cuts could hobble Pure Michigan"¹⁶
- Bridge Magazine: "Seven reasons Michigan residents should ask questions about their own drinking water"¹⁷
- International Joint Commission: Assessment on Great Lakes Water Quality.¹⁸
- Michigan Department of Environmental Quality: "Water quality and pollution control in Michigan"¹⁹
- Anderson Economic Group: "The costs of aquatic invasive species to Great Lakes states"²⁰

The Facts on Michigan Lands and Energy



By Jim Malewitz | Bridge Magazine

Michigan's peninsulas collectively stretch more than 36.2 million acres, offering vast tracts of public forest, wildlife, agriculture, oil and gas and other resources that bolster quality of life, lure tourists, power homes and fuel the state's economy.

Debates about Michigan land resources – and how best to use them – are as old as Michigan itself.

20.3 million acres of forest

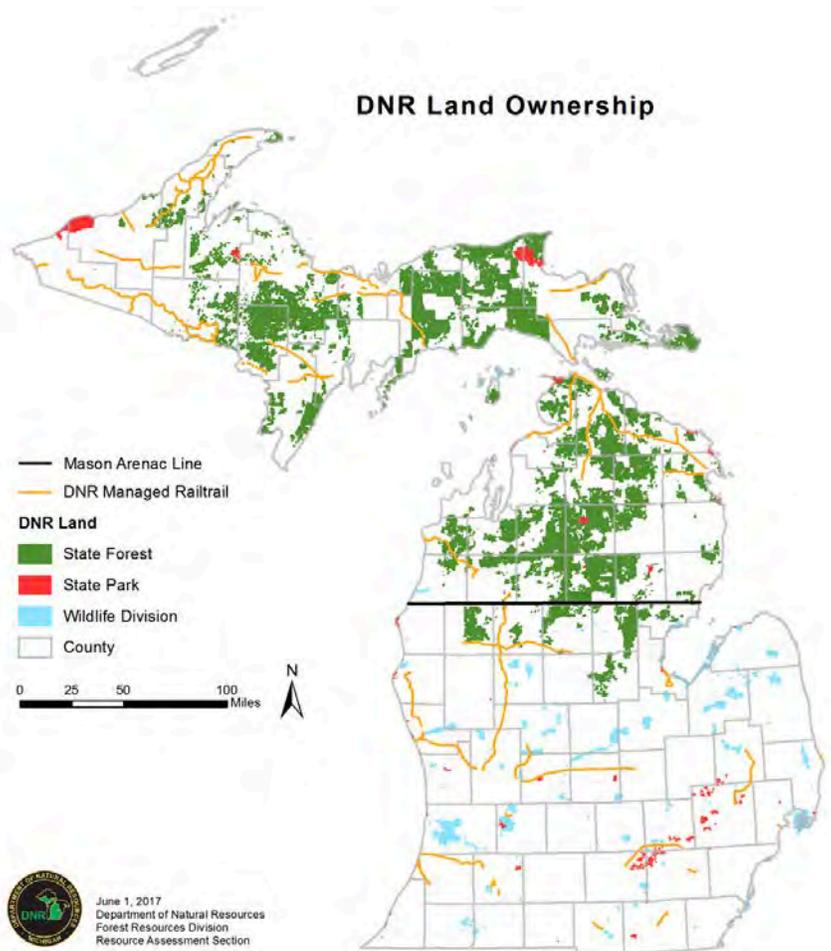
Forests cover more than half of Michigan lands, and the state has its highest forest acreage since the 1930s, according to the U.S. Forest Service.¹ Nearly 4 percent of the state's forest land is reserved for timber production. In 2016, 22 invasive plant species were identified in Michigan forests. Such invaders can disrupt forest ecology and harm the economy.

The state owns about 12 percent of land across Michigan

That's more than most states, including our Midwestern peers. Of the roughly 4.5 million acres managed by the Department of Natural Resources, the vast majority – 3.87 million – are forests. Most of the remaining lands are either state wildlife areas or for parks and recreation. A 2012 law capped state land ownership² at 4.626 million acres and prevented the DNR from exceeding that cap until the agency develops a land acquisition strategy that the Legislature approves.

Oil funds public lands

Michigan's Natural Resources Trust Fund, established in 1976, has proved instrumental



in purchasing and developing of some of the state's prized recreation sites. Funded by royalties collected from oil and mineral production on state-owned lands, it has pumped out more than \$1 billion for such efforts. A board supervised by the Department of Natural Resources oversees the trust fund, but lawmakers in recent years have jockeyed for control³ of the purse strings.

Threats to hunting and conservation

Michigan typically touts one of the nation's biggest deer harvests, eclipsed only by Texas in 2016-2017. Hunters and wildlife officials have grown alarmed about the spread of Chronic Wasting Disease – a contagious, neurological disease affecting deer and elk – within the state's population. Were the disease to discourage hunting in the coming years, it could also threaten conservation. That's because Department of Natural Resources wildlife programs increasingly rely on the millions of dollars generated from hunting and fishing license fees. Lawmakers have chipped in fewer general fund dollars over the years.

On grid, coal's role is shrinking

Coal-fired power plants once dominated Michigan's electricity portfolio, but their role is shrinking. Aging coal plants are retiring and plants powered by abundant, cheap natural gas are increasingly taking their place. In August of 2017, coal-fired plants provided 39 percent of the state's electricity generation, down from about 50 percent in 2014. While coal plant retirements can spur challenges to electricity reliability,⁴ they also create opportunities for cleaner-burning energy sources – like natural gas, wind and solar power – to take their place.

Some Michiganders power themselves

Through 2016, nearly 2,600 Michiganders were participating in net metering, reducing their utility bills by generating all or some of their own electricity. This has grown steadily over the years, but it accounts for just a fraction of a percentage of the state's total retail electricity sales, according to the state Public Service Commission.

Electricity isn't cheap here

Residential electricity rates tend to be higher here than in many states. In October of 2017, residents in only 10 states paid more per kilowatt-hour on average than Michiganders did, according to U.S. Energy Information Administration data.⁵

KEEP DIGGING: MORE ON MICHIGAN LANDS AND ENERGY

- Bridge Magazine: Is Lansing trying to steer funds reserved for recreation land?⁶
- Bridge Magazine: State forces alternative energy power to come from within Michigan⁷
- DNR: Michigan's Public Land Strategy⁸
- U.S. Energy Information Administration: State profile and energy estimates, Michigan⁹
- Michigan Public Service Commission: Net metering and solar program report for calendar year 2016¹⁰

The Facts on Pure Michigan & Michigan Tourism



By Lindsay VanHulle | Bridge Magazine

The Pure Michigan¹ slogan is everywhere — on license plates, freeway signs, billboards, clothing and social media. It's a brand as synonymous with Michigan as Vernors and Kellogg's. Its ads, featuring sweeping panoramic views of lakes and trees and the voice of Detroit-raised actor Tim Allen, have even inspired parody videos.

But Pure Michigan as we know it today almost didn't exist.

The advertising agency hired to develop the campaign initially pitched the slogan "Find Your True North." Travel Michigan, the state's tourism division, rejected the idea because they thought it might send the message to visitors that the state favored its northern destinations. After brainstorming words like "water" and "purity," the agency, McCann Detroit, came up with "Pure Michigan."

As it enters its second decade, the campaign has become a flashpoint for critics who say its success is evaluated based on flawed assumptions about its return on investment. Bridge Magazine found it impossible to independently assess Pure Michigan's ROI, since neither the state nor the company hired to produce the data would provide direct access to the methodology.

Where Michigan Tourism Stands Today

Michigan's tourism economy as measured by Gross State Product – including arts, recreation, hotel accommodations and restaurants and bars – was approximately \$14.2 billion in 2016, according to U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics data. That's up \$1.8 billion (or 15 percent) from the low point of the Great Recession in 2010.

The tourism industry reported to Bridge Magazine² a brisk 2017, including increases in hotel occupancy and average daily rates, meetings and conventions, leisure travel, state park campground use, and Mackinac Bridge crossings.

The Pure Michigan Controversy

Pure Michigan has an annual budget of \$35 million, only part of which goes to the TV and radio ads. The Michigan Economic Development Corp. has adopted the slogan for use in its business attraction marketing.

The state hired Toronto-based Longwoods International to evaluate

Michigan Tourism Characteristics

Tourism "person trips" in Michigan, 2016	50.7 million
One-year increase in person trips, 2015-2016	2.1%
Average lodging expense for overnight trips	\$165
Average food & beverage expense for overnight trips	\$114
% of trips with national/state parks as a motivation	21%
Percent of trips with casinos as a motivation	20%
Percent of trips with beaches/waterfront as a motivation	22%

Source: Longwoods International Michigan 2016 Visitor Research.

the Pure Michigan campaign, including its return on investment. Longwoods' research found that the ads were responsible for generating millions of trips and more than \$1 billion in visitor spending in 2016. The company's analysis said state spending of \$12.9 million on Pure Michigan advertising in 2016 led to \$107.3 million in new state tax revenue, or \$8.33 for every dollar spent.

But neither Longwoods nor Travel Michigan would release full access to how the company calculates ROI; the company said its methodology is proprietary.

Travel Michigan said the company asked visitors if they saw a Pure Michigan ad and whether it prompted their trip. The company controlled for "internal and external factors," but those factors were not disclosed. That makes it difficult, if not impossible, to independently verify the results.

The Midland-based Mackinac Center for Public Policy, a free-market think tank, has criticized the state and Longwoods for the ROI findings. The Mackinac Center claims the figures are too high to be believable, and the MEDC — which houses Travel Michigan — has a conflict of interest in seeking the data because it manages the program being studied and would have an incentive to want positive results.

Travel Michigan in 2017 parted ways with Longwoods and signed a new deal with Indianapolis-based Strategic Marketing and Research Insights. The state said the change was more about gaining new marketing insights on the campaign and less about the ROI criticism.

In addition, concerns about the brand's viability were raised after the lead-poisoning water crisis in Flint, given Michigan's image as home to pristine freshwaters.

What's the future of Pure Michigan?

Travel Michigan leaders say the Pure Michigan campaign will have to adapt as the tourism industry adjusts to the ways technology is disrupting where vacationers stay and how they plan their trips, specifically among millennials and users of the sharing economy. And the state is using more digital and social media marketing in the campaign. But there are no immediate plans to end or change the award-winning advertisements.

KEEP DIGGING: MORE INFORMATION ON TOURISM & PURE MICHIGAN

- Bridge Magazine: "State: Pure Michigan Brings in More than \$1 Billion. Skeptics: Prove It"³
- Bridge Magazine: "As Economy Improves, So Does Michigan Tourism"⁴
- Archive of Pure Michigan Ads⁵
- Longwoods International: 2016 ROI Analysis of Pure Michigan Campaign⁶
- Mackinac Center: "Pure Michigan A Poor Investment"⁷

The Facts on Infrastructure



By Lindsay VanHulle | Bridge Magazine

A sobering statistic about Michigan's decaying infrastructure: The state needs to come up with at least \$4 billion more each year for decades for upkeep of roads, bridges, water and sewer systems, and communications infrastructure.

That's the conclusion of the 21st Century Infrastructure Commission,¹ a nonpartisan expert panel appointed by Gov. Rick Snyder in the wake of the Flint Water Crisis.

We see the problem every time we drive into a pothole or read headlines about sinkholes, broken water mains and flooded freeways. Yet state leaders haven't yet done much about the 21st Century Infrastructure Commission report released in fall 2016.

For starters, coming up with an extra \$4 billion a year is a heavy lift, no matter who or which political party controls Lansing.

Quality infrastructure isn't a partisan issue. It is fundamental to a healthy economy, affecting everything from on-time deliveries to corporate attraction. Businesses want roads and bridges and drinking water systems to be in good shape, access to high-speed internet² and reliable electricity.

Our lack of attention is costing us: A 2016 report by the American Society of Civil Engineers³ estimated that delaying needed repairs could cost U.S. GDP nearly \$4 trillion by 2025, and American households \$3,400 annually in disposable income. By 2025, U.S. businesses could lose 2.5 million jobs as a result of poor infrastructure conditions, according to ASCE.

What's at stake in Michigan...

Michigan's Key Unmet Infrastructure Needs

	UNMET NEED	TIME PERIOD
Broadband communications access	\$500 million	Over next 10 years
Highways, roads, and bridges	\$2.2 billion	Annually
Water and sewer maintenance	\$16 billion	Over next 20 years
Water and sewer emergency response	\$500 million	Over next 20 years
School drinking water testing & remediation planning	\$4.5 million	One-time
Rural drinking water/wastewater infrastructure	\$200 million	Over next 20 years
Dam maintenance and removal	\$225 million	Over next 20 years

Roads and bridges

Roughly 11 percent of Michigan's roads were in "below acceptable" condition as of 2013, according to data from the U.S. Department of Transportation's Bureau of Transportation Statistics. And 27.6 percent of the state's bridges were considered structurally deficient or functionally obsolete that year.

Roads and bridges primarily are funded by Michigan's gasoline tax and fees charged to drivers for registering their vehicles with the state. Until 2015, when Snyder signed a \$1.2 billion transportation package into law, the gas tax had been a flat 19 cents per gallon. The legislation increased the regular and diesel fuel taxes to 26.3 cents per gallon and ties them to inflation starting in 2022, raised vehicle registration fees by 20 percent and is scheduled to divert \$600 million from the general fund to roads by 2021. Critics contend the package does not fully solve the problem and will create more budget pressure down the road. Steadily improving vehicle fuel efficiency also will likely cut into the ability of gasoline taxes to cover road funding needs in the future.

Water and sewer

Eliminating lead service drinking water lines is challenging, not least because some communities simply don't know where they are.

Snyder's infrastructure commission proposed creating a statewide database that records the location and condition of various types of infrastructure systems; pilot programs are underway near Detroit and Grand Rapids.

Flint may be the case study for failed water infrastructure, but it's not the only example. In October, a water main break in Oakland County made water unsafe to drink for more than 300,000 people. Repairs are nearly complete a year after a collapsed sewer line triggered a massive sinkhole in Macomb County. And heavy rains contributed to flooding along metro Detroit freeways multiple times in recent years, leading to commuter delays and basement sewage backups.

Broadband

About 12 percent of Michigan's population — roughly 1.2 million people — lack access to high-speed fixed broadband internet service, which is provided via cable or wireless signal (rather than satellite or cellular connection).

Of them, more than 900,000 live in rural parts of Michigan. In some rural counties, at least 90 percent of residents can't connect to fixed broadband internet — compared to about 3 percent in urban areas.

A lack of high-speed internet access can cause problems for rural businesses, including efforts to attract new companies; students, who can't access the web at home for school assignments; and homeowners, because slow internet speeds can depress real estate prices.

Who should pay?

This is the question at the heart of the debate.

Some believe state government needs to take more of a leading role when it comes to investing in infrastructure. Yet many voters and elected leaders are highly resistant to raising taxes to pay for infrastructure.

Others think user fees are the best solution — essentially, letting the people who use the system pay for it. That could include such things as calculating vehicle miles traveled as a way to pay for road repairs, increasing municipal drinking water fees or levying special millages in specific communities.

KEEP DIGGING: MORE INFORMATION ON INFRASTRUCTURE

- Bridge Magazine: "Poison on Tap: The First Book on the Flint Water Crisis."⁴
- Bridge Magazine: "Michigan's Record on Infrastructure: Ignore Everything."⁵
- Bridge Magazine: "\$4 Billion Question: How to Pay for Infrastructure Fixes?"⁶
- Bridge Magazine: "Promised Water Investment Comes only in Drips"⁷
- Bridge Magazine: "Water Crisis Hits Suburbs – 'We've Been Sounding the Alarm for Years.'"⁸
- American Society of Civil Engineers 2017 Michigan Scorecard.⁹
- American Society of Civil Engineers 2016 "Failure to Act" Report.¹⁰
- Michigan 21st Century Infrastructure Commission Report.¹¹

The Facts on Michigan Cities



By Chastity Pratt-Dawsey | Bridge Magazine

Cities such as Grand Rapids, Kalamazoo, Traverse City and Ann Arbor have healthy and diverse economies. Other cities - Flint, Saginaw, Jackson, Muskegon, Battle Creek and many smaller municipalities - face deep and long-term financial crisis and depressed local economies. And Detroit, the state's flagship city, is a complex chowder of economic revival downtown and deeply troubled neighborhoods on the periphery.

Decline in State Revenue Sharing to Cities

Graphic Chatter: Michigan cities are funded in part by tax revenues shared by the state with local governments. Called "revenue sharing," these payments are partially required by the state constitution and partially "statutory." The governor and Michigan Legislature have discretion to reduce or increase "statutory" revenue sharing, state revenue . Recent funding results...

State Revenue-Sharing with Local Governments (in \$ millions inflation-adjusted to 2017 dollars)

YEAR	REQUIRED REVENUE SHARING	DISCRETIONARY SHARING	TOTAL SHARING
2000-01	\$891.5	\$1,265.8	\$2,157.3
2006-07	\$799.0	\$485.8	\$1,284.8
2011-12	\$758.0	\$348.2	\$1,106.2
2016-17	\$793.2	\$466.1	\$1,259.3
Change: 16-17 vs. 00-01	-11%	-63%	-42%
Change: 16-17 vs. 11-12	-15%	-72%	-49%

The challenge

The number of communities the state considers distressed is long - 138 cities, 36 townships and 15 villages,¹ that run the gamut from Adrian to Ypsilanti. They're communities with lagging property values, are losing population and have higher-than-average poverty and unemployment rates. That makes them eligible for special state grants, but also underscores the challenges facing many cities.

In Michigan, it's often a case of have and have-nots among cities. Cities that are doing better, like Ann Arbor, Troy and East Grand Rapids, are those whose property values – the basis of property taxes – have rebounded after the 2008 housing crash.² In contrast, Flint lost more than three-quarters of its taxable value from 2008 to 2016. However, the latest Census figures released at end of 2017 showed a one-year median home value increase of 7 percent, outpacing the nationwide average.

And inflation-adjusted revenue sharing payments from the state to cities dropped precipitously from Michigan's economic heyday at the beginning of the 21st century.

Cities have responded by privatizing services and trimming payrolls. Statewide, only 4.2 percent of all workers are employed by state or local governments, the sixth-lowest rate in the country.

But pensions promised to retirees continue to eat at savings. Statewide, Michigan's total unfunded pension liabilities for local governments is roughly \$7.5 billion, in addition to \$10 billion in unfunded healthcare liabilities. On average, local pension plans are only 19 percent funded.

The solutions

Legislative remedies, such as a proposal in 2017 to create a Municipal Stability Board to monitor underfunded pension plans, have yet to get off the ground.

Term-limited Gov. Rick Snyder attempted another remedy when he took office in 2011, signing legislation to beef up the state's emergency manager law. That gave extraordinary power to state-appointed officials to correct the finances of struggling cities from Benton Harbor and Pontiac to Ecorse and Detroit. Critics, though, say the laws suspended democracy and led to the Flint Water Crisis³ (in which the city's water was poisoned after an emergency manager switched municipal drinking water systems.)

Last year, the Center for Michigan found⁴ that at least 65 percent of residents had "low" or "very low" trust in the state emergency manager system. Legislators, though, have yet to act on the most popular solution – balancing power between managers and locally elected officials.

Civic groups also have unsuccessfully proposed revamping Proposal A,⁵ the 1994 constitutional amendment that caps the growth of property taxes – and had the unintended consequence of limiting communities' tax bases after the real estate crash.

Bright spots

Despite the challenges, cities including Grand Rapids, Marquette, Houghton and college towns like Ann Arbor and East Lansing are enjoying a resurgence. In many cases, it's because cities have been able to lure younger workers while diversifying employment – such as the downtown and Midtown neighborhoods of Detroit, which is attracting new residents and millions of dollars in investment since the city's historic 2013 bankruptcy.

Studies show that communities with the best chance of prospering are those with educated workers. By 2025, some 65 percent of jobs will require some education beyond a high school diploma. Statewide, only 40 percent of residents meet that level, so the state is working on a host of programs to attract and train educated workers.

KEEP DIGGING: MORE INFORMATION ON CITIES IN MICHIGAN

- Bridge Magazine: Michigan property values remain dramatically below 2008 levels⁶
- Bridge Magazine: Flint water crisis: Full coverage⁷
- Michigan Municipal League: Proposals to fix municipal finances⁸
- Citizens Research Council: Challenges ahead in balancing the state budget⁹

The Facts on Rural Michigan



By Ted Roelofs | Bridge Magazine

Take a drive along Michigan's rural roads and you will encounter treasures we know as Pure Michigan. Towering sand dunes. Crystal lakes tucked into hardwood forests. The wide-open spaces of two great peninsulas.

But rural Michigan holds other, often hidden, stories... Poverty, uneven medical care and lack of high-speed Internet access.¹ Young adults continue to leave rural communities for jobs elsewhere.

Cracks in the Social Fabric

As jobs migrated to larger cities over decades, parts of rural Michigan have struggled to keep up. And as much of the state recovered from the Great Recession, many rural northern Michigan counties have unemployment and disability rates on par with Appalachia.²

In some of these counties, 2017 rates of unemployment and disability hovered around 15 percent or 20 percent. Some workers in their 50s, unable to handle the physical stresses of service sector or factory jobs, simply gave up and turned to federal disability.

Health Care Access Challenges

It's also harder for rural Michigan to attract and retain the doctors its residents need.

According to the most recent data available, the bottom 10³ counties in Michigan for ratio of population to primary care doctors were all rural.

Michigan State University's College of Human Medicine has been working to solve this issue for more than 40 years by training more than 230 medical school graduates in rural primary health care.

Slow Internet Further Isolates Rural Michigan

Lack of access to high-speed broadband is another fact of rural life.

According to the Federal Communications Commission,⁴ 37 percent of those in rural Michigan have no access to its fixed broadband⁵ download standard of 25

The Broadband Gap

U.S.

39% in rural areas lack access, 4% in urban areas;

Michigan

37% in rural areas lack access 3% in urban areas.

megabytes per second. That compares to just 3 percent in urban areas. In some counties, 100 percent of rural residents can't get broadband.

Experts say that can be a drag on business development, depress real estate values and put rural students at a disadvantage next to better-connected urban students. Federal funds to entice broadband carriers to step up rural access have helped. Some rural communities, meanwhile, are taking matters into their own hands. In Lyndon Township outside Ann Arbor, residents in 2017 voted two-to-one to back a millage to fund township-wide installation of fiber optic cable. Other townships are considering the same.

Wanted: More Young People

Rural counties also struggle to attract and retain young talent needed to grow an economic future. A three-county area at the tip of the Lower Peninsula is typical.

From 2000 to 2013, Charlevoix, Emmet and Cheboygan counties lost 22 percent⁶ of their residents aged 25 to 44. Most left because they could not find work in the region.

A 10-county regional planning body called Networks Northwest⁷ has a partial answer: A \$3,000 scholarship program for 25 high school students, largely funded by a \$65,000 grant from the Michigan Economic Development Corporation. The program includes a customized senior year of high school, combining career and technical education with community college courses. As seniors, these students will typically begin an unpaid internship with a local firm, then transition to community college. They expect to have jobs with local firms when they graduate.

Job providers, of course, are key to talent retention as well.

Fifty miles east of Traverse City, residents around Grayling look to a brighter future thanks to a \$400 million wood plant expected to provide 200 full-time jobs⁸ later this year. As an incentive, MEDC awarded plant developer Arauco North America an \$11.8 million property tax incentive.

The Grayling plant will be the county's second largest employer when it opens. The project came together in part because of the state's Rising Tide program⁹, which targeted 10 economically struggling communities to identify ways to meet economic challenges.

Local entrepreneurs can fill in other gaps. The owner of a metal fabrication firm in Cheboygan County had trouble finding qualified welders. So he started the Industrial Arts Institute¹⁰ to teach welding and fabrication skills. Graduates now have jobs at his plant and elsewhere in northern Michigan.

KEEP DIGGING: MORE INFORMATION ON RURAL MICHIGAN

- Bridge Magazine: "Living Poor, In a County of Wealth"¹¹
- Bridge Magazine: "Michigan and the Death of Entrepreneurship"¹²
- Bridge Magazine: "Poverty in Paradise"¹³
- Citizens Research Council: "Primary Care Physician Shortages Across Michigan"¹⁴
- Federal Communications Commission: 2016 Broadband Progress Report¹⁵

The Facts About Public Safety



By Joel Kurth | Bridge Magazine

One of the most basic functions of government is to protect citizens and ensure public safety. But a series of budget reductions has eroded funding for public safety in Michigan, making that basic tenet of government more difficult.

Violent crime in Michigan has mirrored national trends and declined dramatically in recent years. But as with most other industries, public safety officers are being asked to do more with less, as cities receive have fewer dollars to pay for police and fire protection. That's led some to fear that the state is stretched thin and could have trouble responding to an uptick in violent crime.

Statewide Crime Trends

	2007	2010	2012	2014	2016	16 vs 07
Statewide murders	629	556	681	532	586	-7%
Murders per 100,000 state residents	6.29	5.63	6.89	5.37	5.90	-6%
Statewide violent crimes (rapes/robberies/assaults)	52,811	46,670	42,931	38,956	40,851	-23%
Violent crimes per 100,000 state residents	528	472	434	393	411	-22%
Statewide property crimes (burglaries/larcenies/car thefts/arsons)	296,808	252,453	236,690	193,413	180,890	-39%
Property crimes per 100,000 state residents	2,968	2,556	2,394	1,951	1,822	-39%

Source: Michigan State Police Annual Crime in Michigan publications.

The facts on crime rates

Between 2007 and 2016, the number of violent crimes statewide fell 23 percent. Since the 1980s, the violent crime rate has fallen by nearly half statewide. There are exceptions. Even though rates have declined, cities such as Detroit, Flint and Saginaw consistently rank as among the most dangerous in the nation.

The number of house fires has declined by nearly half in both Michigan and the United States since the 1980s. Statewide, Michigan's death rate from fires – 10.4 deaths per 100,000 residents – was a hair lower than the national average of 10.5 per 100,000, according to federal stats.

The facts on public safety spending

Michigan spends \$1,513 per resident paying for public safety, according to data from the Urban Institute.¹ That's less than Midwestern states such as Ohio, Minnesota and Illinois, and 18 percent less than the national average of \$1,843 per resident.

That's largely the result of state cuts and declining property values that have reduced budgets of municipalities, which fund police and fire service.

That means there are fewer police officers and firefighters. Statewide, there were about 23,000 law enforcement employees in 2014. That's 1 for every 426 residents over the age of 18 - well below the national average of 1 for every 298 residents.

The police who remain are stretched thin. They handled an average of 28 property violent crimes apiece in 2014, which topped the nation in the most recent year federal statistics are available.

How local communities are responding

Necessity is the mother of invention – and cities have gotten creative to address the decreased funding. In the past 15 years, dozens of cities have closed fire stations and rethought how they deliver services. Communities from Kent to Macomb counties have merged departments, regionalized emergency dispatch services, cross-trained officers and switched to “blended fire departments” staffed by both on-call and full-time firefighters.

And it's not just local governments. In 2012, the Michigan State Police underwent a dramatic reorganization, reducing the number of posts statewide to 29 from 62 to save nearly \$18 million.

Looking ahead

Even though the economy is improving, no one expects funding to local municipalities to return to previous levels anytime soon. So creativity remains the name of the game for law enforcement agencies.

In Detroit, for instance, police have partnered with gas stations on Project Green Light,² a program in which businesses pay for lighting and cameras that are monitored 24-7 by police. The program has been shown to dramatically decrease crime. The downside of such programs? You guessed it. They cost money.

KEEP DIGGING: MORE INFORMATION ON MICHIGAN PUBLIC SAFETY

- Bridge Magazine: “Arson Finally on Decline in Detroit. Now for the Bad News.”³
- Michigan State Police: “Annual Publications of Crime in Michigan”⁴
- Citizens Research Council of Michigan: “Public Sector Employment Trends in Michigan and U.S.”⁵
- Michigan House Fiscal Agency: “Budget Briefing: State Police.”⁶

The Facts on Michigan Taxes

By John Bebow | Bridge Magazine

As the old saying goes, nothing is certain but death and taxes. In Michigan, determining how to spend the state budget – and who pays which taxes to fund such things as schools, roads, and public safety – is job one every year for the governor and 148 state legislators.

Michigan voters often hear much about taxes during state political campaigns. Some candidates are quick to promise tax cuts. Others are equally quick in pledging more investment in public priorities. But details on whose taxes get cut or who would pay for more government investment can be very hard to come by in campaign season.

State Tax Trends Over the Past Decade

TYPES OF STATE TAXES	2008 TAXES COLLECTED	2016 TAXES COLLECTED	CHANGE	% CHANGE
Sales & Use Taxes	9,194,780,000	9,355,752,000	160,972,000	2%
Income Taxes	9,203,010,000	10,044,428,000	841,418,000	9%
Business Taxes	2,800,100,000	763,498,000	-2,036,602,000	-73%
Property (Education) Taxes	2,346,200,000	1,897,292,000	-448,908,000	-19%
Real Estate Transfer Taxes	191,600,000	289,314,000	97,714,000	51%
Tobacco Taxes	1,211,230,000	946,651,000	-264,579,000	-22%
Alcohol Taxes	182,880,000	208,689,000	25,809,000	14%
Casino Taxes	146,300,000	112,868,000	-33,432,000	-23%
Insurance Company Taxes	0	329,806,000	329,806,000	n/a
Health Insurance Claims Assessment	251,800,000	228,475,000	-23,325,000	-9%
Transportation (Vehicle & Fuel) Taxes	2,084,290,000	2,032,947,000	-51,343,000	-2%
Quality Assurance Assessment	1,154,960,000	1,138,810,000	-16,150,000	-1%
Penalties & Interest	181,560,000	124,391,000	-57,169,000	-31%
Other	461,790,000	325,461,000	-136,329,000	-30%
TOTAL TAXES COLLECTED	29,410,500,000	27,798,382,000	-1,612,118,000	-5%

Source: Michigan comprehensive annual financial reports and state fiscal agency reports.

Michigan's Tax Burden Over Time

TAX BURDEN MEASURE	1977	1987	1997	2007	2014	77 VS 14*
National Avg. Per Capita Tax Burden	\$3,029	\$3,400	\$3,960	\$4,764	\$4,675	54%
Michigan Avg. Per Capita Tax Burden	\$3,290	\$3,610	\$3,960	\$4,147	\$3,774	15%
Michigan Tax Burden Rank	13	15	19	31	35	-22
Michigan Compared to National Avg.	\$261	\$210	\$0	-\$617	-\$901	
National Avg. Revenue as % of Total Income	10.82%	10.35%	10.41%	10.70%	10.07%	-7%
Michigan Avg. Revenue as % of Total Income	10.96%	11.11%	10.70%	10.64%	9.22%	-16%
Michigan % of Income Rank	16	10	19	20	35	-19
Michigan Taxes as % of Income Compared to National Avg.	1% higher	7% higher	3% higher	1% lower	8% lower	

*Per capita tax revenues presented in 2014 inflation-adjusted dollars using Consumer Price index

Source: Center for Michigan and Public Sector Consultants analysis of census data.

Nonpartisan, data-driven facts and resources to help Michigan voters make sense of tax talk on the 2018 campaign trail...

Don't Expect Miracles

Candidates for governor and the legislature may talk a good tax game. In practice, Michigan's elected leaders have shown marginal power to change how much they take, or put back into, your wallet. Consider income taxes. For many taxpayers, federal income taxes – set by Washington, not Lansing – take a much bigger bite than state income taxes. Federal income tax rates range from 10-40 percent of income, with higher earners paying more. The state income tax rate is 4.25 percent. In early 2017, the Michigan Legislature debated, but did not pass, a \$1.1 billion income tax cut.¹ That plan failed, in part, because it threatened funding for schools, roads and other public priorities – and only would've saved the average Michigan household about \$15 per month.

Compared to Other States, Michigan's Tax Burden is Low and Getting Lower²

A generation ago, when factories hummed and workers here made great wages, Michigan has the 13th highest burden in the nation. In 1977, Michigan's state and local taxes were 9 percent higher than the national average. By 2014, Michigan's tax burden was 19 percent below the national average.

How Competitive are Michigan Taxes?

Like most states, Michigan depends on three major types of taxes – income, property, and sales – to fund most of government. In its 2017 rankings of state tax climates,³ the Tax Foundation ranked Michigan 8th on corporate taxes, 14th on income taxes, 9th on sales taxes, and 25th on property taxes (with 1st being the most competitive in the country).

Everybody Loves a Tax Break – Michigan Offers Billions in Breaks

In fact, Michigan gives more tax breaks than it collects for schools and general government. Michigan offered \$27.5 billion in tax breaks in 2017⁴ – such as exemptions to state business taxes and sales tax waivers on items like food, prescription drugs, and many services (you don't pay sales taxes for your barber or hairdresser, for example.)

If Michigan's Tax Burden Decreased Over Time, Why Might Taxes Seem High to YOU?⁵

Over the past several years, Michigan businesses received a collective tax cut of \$5.2 billion – as the state's elected leaders sought to improve Michigan's business competitiveness. In turn, individual taxpayers endured a \$4.7 billion tax increase through repeal of previous tax loopholes, reduction in tax credits for low-income families, and new taxes on pensions. That tax shift from business to individuals essentially amounted to a per-person tax increase of \$150 per year. In addition, Michigan gasoline taxes increased 17 percent to pay for a partial road funding package approved in 2015. And, a decade ago, Michigan hiked the state income tax rate from 3.9 percent to 4.35 percent during a severe state budget crisis. (The rate dropped slightly to 4.25 percent in 2013.) Finally, Michigan workers have, generally, made less money than our nationwide peers in the 21st Century. From 2000 to 2010, Michigan workers' wages rose only 15 percent, compared to 44 percent nationally. In the past few years, Michigan employment and wages have recovered somewhat, but the not-so-distant economic trouble may still leave workers feeling less ability to pay and less tolerance for taxes.

KEEP DIGGING: MORE INFORMATION ON MICHIGAN TAXES

- Bridge Magazine: "11 Things Every Michigan Taxpayer Should Know"⁶
- Citizens Research Council of Michigan: "Outline of the Michigan Tax System."⁷
- Tax Foundation: "2017 State Business Tax Climate Index"⁸
- Michigan Senate Fiscal Agency: State Budget Analysis Briefings & Resources⁹

The Facts on State Government Spending

By John Bebow | Bridge Magazine

State government is a huge operation with responsibilities (and expenses) in every corner of Michigan. Whether you realize it or not, you interact with this government constantly every day... Every time you drive drop off your kids at school... Pay college tuition... Take a drink of tap water or flush a toilet... Commit or are the victim of a crime.. Use food stamps or publicly funded Medicaid insurance... Fill up your gas tank and drive to work... Go to a state park... Go hunting or fishing... Report a workplace safety or civil rights problem... Or, quite literally, every time you take a breath (the state monitors and regulates air quality).

Safely and efficiently doing all these things and much more is the responsibility of state government and its 48,000 workers. Paying for it all in a balanced state budget every year is one of the first and most important constitutional responsibilities of Michigan's governor and 148 state legislators.

The Total Price Tag

State government in Michigan is a \$56 billion annual enterprise. The federal government pays more than \$20 billion of that – most of it to help fund welfare programs and health care for the poor. Michigan taxpayers are on the hook for the rest – about \$32 billion paid for by a wide range of taxes and fees.

Biggest Budget Expenses

The lion's share of state spending from state taxes occurs in just two budget categories. K-12 education accounts for \$4 out of every \$10 in state spending. The state's share of welfare and health insurance programs for the poor accounts for \$2 out of every \$10 in state spending.

Recent Budget Trends

After significant cuts during the Great Recession, state government spending has grown in recent years during the economy recovery. After adjusting for inflation, state spending from state resources in fiscal year 2017-2018 is 10 percent higher than in 2011-2012. Notable changes between those two budgets include reduced prison spending and increases in roads/transportation and K-12 and higher education.

Factual Perspective on 2018 Political Campaign Talk About Government Spending

"Cutting wasteful government spending" is a perennial favorite among campaigning politicians. Surely there are efficiencies to be found in any \$56-billion-dollar enterprise like state government. Yet it is also worth noting that the size of Michigan's state and local government workforce is 2nd smallest in the country. (See the "100 Michigan Facts" appendix to this Facts and Issues Guide for details and sources.)¹

K-12 and public university spending also are frequent campaign fodder. Michigan's current state budget spends more on both K-12 and universities than in other recent years. But Michigan's investment lags far behind many other states. Inflation-adjusted per-pupil spending dropped by 7 percent between 2005 and 2014 – the third worst K-12 investment trend in the nation. Likewise, the majority of states invest more than Michigan in higher education – tuition here has risen dramatically as a result. (See the "100 Michigan Facts" appendix to this Facts and Issues Guide for details and sources.)²

Michigan will spend more on transportation and roads this year, thanks largely to a partial road-funding measure passed by the governor and legislature in 2015. Yet a \$4 billion unfunded annual infrastructure gap³ remains in Michigan.

Proponents of a part-time legislature proposal voters may see on this year's ballot promise taxpayer savings as one of the benefits. No matter your view on what kind of legislature Michigan should have, this reform would mean little to taxpayers' wallets. The entire annual budget for the Michigan Legislature is \$154 million. Cut that in half and the savings amount to \$1 for every \$500 in state spending from state resources.

Last point, and it's a troubling one, though you likely won't hear much about it on the 2018 campaign trail... The state budget is ill-prepared for the next economic downturn and pocked with future liabilities and special diversions approved by policymakers, according to a 2017 Citizens Research Council of Michigan report.⁴

Big political fights driven by these budget pressures are likely in the years ahead.

2018 State Budget Snapshot

BUDGET AREA	TOTAL STATE \$	% OF TOTAL	NOTABLE % CHANGES
Agriculture & Rural Development	102,662,800	0.3%	64%
Michigan Strategic Fund/Talent & Economic Dev.	411,156,100	1.3%	
Transportation	2,952,470,500	9.2%	34%
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TOTAL	3,466,289,400	10.8%	
Community Colleges	399,326,500	1.2%	29%
MI Dept. of Education	89,245,000	0.3%	
State Universities	1,517,698,000	4.7%	10%
K-12 Education	12,851,920,400	40.0%	7%
EDUCATION TOTAL	14,858,189,900	46.2%	
Attorney General	61,765,500	0.2%	
Civil Rights	13,158,500	0.0%	
Executive Office	6,848,500	0.0%	
History, Arts & Libraries	0	0.0%	
Information Technology	0	0.0%	
Legislative Auditor General	18,577,000	0.1%	
Legislature	154,874,800	0.5%	
Licensing/Regulatory Affairs/Insurance & Fin. Svcs.	385,473,300	1.2%	
Management & Budget	691,154,500	2.2%	
Dept. of State/Secretary of State	227,848,400	0.7%	
Treasury - Operations	458,250,090	1.4%	
Treasury - Debt/Revenue Sharing	1,385,795,000	4.3%	
GENERAL GOVERNMENT TOTAL	3,403,745,590	10.6%	
Family Independence Agency/Human Services	6,799,924,700	21.2%	
HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES TOTAL	6,799,924,700	21.2%	3%
Environmental Quality	335,069,300	1.0%	
Natural Resources	331,193,400	1.0%	
RESOURCE PROTECTION TOTAL	666,262,700	2.1%	
Corrections (Prison/Parole System)	1,987,783,000	6.2%	-5%
Judiciary	285,103,400	0.9%	
Military & Veterans Affairs	84,900,100	0.3%	
State Police	578,866,500	1.8%	37%
PUBLIC SAFETY & DEFENSE TOTAL	2,936,653,000	9.1%	
TOTAL APPROPRIATIONS	32,131,065,290	100%	10%

KEEP DIGGING: MORE INFORMATION ON STATE GOVERNMENT SPENDING

- State Budget Office: “2018 and Projected 2019 Executive Budget”⁵
- Michigan 2016 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report⁶
- Michigan House Fiscal Agency: Budget Background Briefings⁷
- Michigan Senate Fiscal Agency: State Budget Briefings⁸
- Citizens Research Council of Michigan: “Challenges Ahead in Balancing the State Budget”⁹

The Facts on Possible 2018 Ballot Issues



By Lindsay VanHulle | Bridge Magazine

Michigan voters may decide as many as eight ballot measures in November 2018, from legalizing recreational marijuana to changing the way Michigan politicians are elected.

Chances are, not all of the proposals will make the ballot. State law sets high barriers for citizen-driven legislation and amendments to the state constitution, including a requirement to collect hundreds of thousands of signatures from registered Michigan voters within a 180-day window.

A quick primer on how ballot proposals work and why you're likely to see advocates with clipboards at farmers markets and county fairs this year asking you to sign petitions...

How ballot proposals work

Michigan law allows citizens and organizations to propose legislation and constitutional amendments for a statewide vote in the November general election.

There are three types of ballot petitions – amendments to the state constitution; legislation that creates a new law or amends existing law; and referendums, which allow voters to decide if a law passed by the Legislature should go into effect.

Legalizing marijuana

The Coalition to Regulate Marijuana Like Alcohol¹ wants to allow Michigan residents 21 and older to legally possess, use, grow and sell marijuana for recreational uses. Currently Michigan allows marijuana for medicinal purposes only.

The effort is spearheaded by the Marijuana Policy Project,² a Washington, D.C.-based advocacy group. At least two different advocacy groups – Committee to Keep Pot Out of Neighborhoods³ and Schools and Healthy and Productive Michigan⁴ oppose it.

Separately, a ballot committee called Abrogate Prohibition Michigan⁵ wants to end any state ban on marijuana use. Unlike the larger pot initiative, Abrogate does not include age restrictions, which its backers say is meant to stop people – including minors – from being arrested for possession.

Prevailing wage repeal

A proposal by a ballot committee called Protecting Michigan Taxpayers would repeal the state's prevailing wage law. The law requires "prevailing wages," – typically, union-scale wages and benefits – be paid on state-funded construction projects.

Prevailing wage opponents say the law artificially inflates the projects' cost. Supporters of keeping the prevailing wage law, generally union-backed contractors, think repealing it would lower wages and weaken training programs.

Lansing-based Associated Builders and Contractors of Michigan,⁶ a trade group representing mostly non-union contractors, is leading the repeal effort.

Groups who want to keep the prevailing-wage law have organized around a committee called Protect Michigan Jobs.⁷

Redistricting

Voters Not Politicians⁸ is a ballot committee seeking to redraw the lines that make up Michigan legislators' districts, a process known as redistricting. Currently, whichever political party controls the state Legislature decides the boundaries of state and congressional districts every 10 years based on U.S. Census data. Critics, including the Committee to Protect Voters Rights,⁹ say the process gives unfair advantage to the majority party.

The proposal would take away redistricting power from lawmakers and give it to an independent commission made up of 13 registered voters in the state, from each major political party and independent voters.

Workers' pay

Two separate ballot issues would allow Michigan workers to accrue paid sick leave for themselves or to care for family members, and raise the state's minimum wage.

The first proposal, by a committee called MI Time to Care,¹⁰ would allow an employee to earn at least one hour of paid sick leave for every 30 hours worked, up to 72 hours.

A second, Michigan One Fair Wage,¹¹ wants to gradually increase the state's minimum wage to \$10 in 2019 and \$12 by 2022. It was \$8.90 but rose to \$9.25 on Jan. 1. The higher wages also would apply to tipped workers, who earn less than minimum wage before tips.

The Michigan Chamber of Commerce¹² opposes the paid sick leave proposal, and the Michigan Restaurant Association¹³ opposes the One Fair Wage campaign.

Part-time Legislature

Lt. Gov. Brian Calley proposed a state constitutional amendment through a ballot committee called Clean MI Committee¹⁴ that would turn Michigan's full-time Legislature into a part-time body that wraps regular session each April. Calley ceded leadership of the ballot initiative to Tom McMillin, a former Republican state representative and member of the Michigan State Board of Education, since Calley is running for governor.

The Michigan Chamber of Commerce¹⁵ opposes the proposal.

Great Lakes Pipelines

This proposal, from a committee called Keep Our Lakes Great,¹⁶ would stop the transmission of crude oil through the Line 5 pipeline beneath the Straits of Mackinac, owned by Canadian energy company Enbridge, Inc.¹⁷ The proposed ballot language also would require that Great Lakes pipelines carry billions of dollars in bonds or insurance. In addition, the Committee to Ban Fracking in Michigan¹⁸ continues to circulate petitions it started in years past.

KEEP DIGGING: MORE INFORMATION ON BALLOT ISSUES

- Bridge Magazine: "Which Michigan Ballot Issues Are Going Strong or Going Down?"¹⁹
- Bridge Magazine: 8 Michigan Ballot Issues in 80 Seconds.²⁰
- Michigan Secretary of State: Current Status of Proposals²¹
- Michigan Secretary of State: Guidelines for Proposals²²

The Facts on Government Reform Issues



By Ted Roelofs | Bridge Magazine

It's a question fundamental to democracy in Michigan: How open and accountable is our state government? On a variety of fronts, the answers are troubling.

Michigan ranked dead last among the states in 2015 in a ranking by the Center for Public Integrity of government accountability and transparency. Its overall grade: F. That has a lot to do with a campaign disclosure system that allows “dark” – or undisclosed – funds to seep into half or more of all campaign spending.

According to the Michigan Campaign Finance Network,¹ half of the \$3.4 million spent on 2016 Michigan Supreme Court races came from sources that were not disclosed in campaign finance reports. In 2014, 45 percent of \$10.4 million spent on Supreme Court races came from undisclosed sources.

From 2000 through 2015, MCFN found that \$127 million in funds not reported to the state was spent on television advertising for campaigns for state office. In 2017, the Michigan Legislature and Gov. Rick Snyder opened the spigot wider by passing a new law² allowing candidates to raise unlimited funds through super PACS as long as they don't directly coordinate with the PAC.

Executive, Legislature Still Shielded

The “F” grade also stems from legal walls that continue to shield communications of the governor and legislators.

As the Flint water crisis unfolded in 2014 and 2015, there was growing pressure to extend the state's Freedom of Information Act to the executive office and state legislators. With more than a dozen current or former city and state officials facing charges tied to the poisoning of that city's water, critics demanded the right to know what the governor knew and when.

Michigan is one of two states with those FOIA exemptions. The state House in 2016 approved a package of bills to end them. The package did not pass in the state Senate.

Where Michigan Ranks

The bottom five states for open and accountable government

- Michigan 50
- Wyoming 49
- Delaware 48
- South Dakota 47
- Nevada 46

Source: Center for Public Integrity 2015 “State Integrity Investigation”

Where Michigan Fails

State ranks on specific measures

- Executive accountability 50
- Legislative accountability 50
- Judicial accountability 50
- Ethics enforcement 47
- Public access to information 42

Source: Center for Public Integrity 2015 “State Integrity Investigation”

Hidden Earnings

Michigan lawmakers earn a base salary of \$71,685. But they are free to earn money outside that – with no requirement they report any of that income. It is one of three states that doesn't require lawmakers to disclose their financial dealings. Bills to require them to do so also have stalled.

A Second Look at Term Limits?

In 1992, voters approved a constitutional amendment setting term limits for legislators and the governor. It limits lawmakers to a combined 14 years in both chambers and makes Michigan one of six states with a lifetime ban on additional service. The idea was to provide be a sensible check on corrupt politicians wielding undue power and influence for decades.

Over time, however, critics say that it has spawned a revolving door of inexperienced legislators unable to deal with complex policy issues and enhanced the power of entrenched lobbyists. A 2017 book, "Implementing Term Limits"³ by two Wayne State University professors found term limits failed to deliver many of the "good government" results its advocates promised.

Is a Part-Time Legislature the Answer?

With Michigan's legislators racking up fourth-highest annual pay in the nation – and many state problems left unsolved – they are an easy target for critics bent on changing the system. Michigan is one of 10 states with some type of full-time legislature.

Reformers to continue press a proposal to amend the state constitution to create a part-time legislature limited to a single consecutive 90-day session. The salaries of legislators would roughly be cut in half. Advocates say it would save millions of dollars and open up legislative offices to citizens from all walks of life.

Critics say it would limit contact between legislators and constituents and cede more power to the governor. They argue it also would discourage potential candidates who are unable to take extended leaves from work for a 90-day session. They also point out that legislative pay amounts to about \$11 million – a tiny sliver of the state's total \$48 billion budget.

Entrenched Public Cynicism

The new governor and legislature elected in November 2018 will face strong headwinds of public doubt and dissatisfaction. "Fractured Trust,"⁴ a 2017 Center for Michigan report based on polls and community meetings with 5,000 diverse statewide residents, found low public trust in the state's ability to deliver good government. The report found widespread public support for reform of the state emergency manager law governing state oversight of financially troubled local communities. The report also found very low public trust in the transparency of Michigan's campaign finance system. As of early 2018, state leaders had not acted on those concerns.

KEEP DIGGING: MORE INFORMATION ON GOVERNMENT REFORM

- Center for Michigan: "Fractured Trust: Lost Faith in State Government and How to Restore It."⁵
- Center for Public Integrity: "Michigan Gets F Grade in 2015 State Integrity Investigation"⁶
- Michigan Campaign Finance Network: "Dark Money and Justice: Michigan is Like No Other State"⁷
- MCFN and Bridge Magazine: "In Lansing, Where Potentially Self-Serving Votes Run 'Rampant'"⁸

Notes: 100 Michigan Facts

All statistics cited throughout this guide were professionally researched by the nonpartisan staffs at Public Sector Consultants, the Center for Michigan and Bridge Magazine. Charts within individual chapters in this guide include source notes. Sources and methodology for the data cited in the “100 Michigan Facts” appendix below. State rankings generally include the District of Columbia but not Puerto Rico unless otherwise noted below.

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4. Data extracted from U.S. Census Bureau American Fact Finder Table B03002 Hispanic or Latino Origin By Race 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.
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9. Data extracted from the U.S. Census Bureau American Fact Finder Table S0701 Geographic Mobility by Selected Characteristics in the United States American Community Survey 2016 1-Year Estimates.
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19. Data extracted from the U.S. Census Bureau American Fact Finder Table GCT1253 Divorce Rate Per 1,000 Women 15 Years and Over American Community Survey 2011–2015 5-Year Estimates.
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21. Data extracted from the U.S. Census Bureau American Fact Finder Table B20017A Median Earnings in the Past 12 Months (in 2016 Inflation-Adjusted Dollars) by Sex by Work Experience in Past 12 Months for the Population 16 Years and Over with Earnings in the Past 12 Months (white alone) American Community Survey 2016 1-Year Estimates.
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About The Center for Michigan & Bridge Magazine

The Center for Michigan is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit and nonpartisan think-and-do-tank founded in 2006. Our work is defined by three verbs: Engage, Inform, and Achieve.

Engage: The Center for Michigan is Michigan's leading practitioner of nonpartisan statewide public engagement. We make citizenship interesting, convenient, and meaningful through interactive, small-group Community Conversations, large policy conferences, phone polling and online engagement tools. More than 40,000 diverse, statewide residents have participated in the Center's public engagement programs since 2007. This bottom-up public engagement can, and does, lead to positive change for Michigan's future. Learn how to participate in our statewide 2018 Michigan Truth Tour at www.thecenterformichigan.net.

Inform: Bridge Magazine, our free, online public service news publication, focuses on the in-depth "how" and "why" of Michigan current events. Since launch in 2011, Bridge has earned more than 100 state and national journalism awards and is a two-time-defending Michigan Press Association "Newspaper of the Year" Throughout 2018, Bridge provides watchdog coverage of statewide political campaigns, actions at the state capitol, and big-picture coverage of major issues ranging from the state economy to public education. Bridge is an unincorporated public service project of The Center for Michigan. Read and subscribe to Bridge at www.bridgemi.com.

Achieve: We take the findings of our public engagement campaigns and Bridge journalism to get things done for Michigan. Examples of positive change to which the Center has contributed include: 1) The nation's largest expansion of public preschool; 2) Some \$250 million in taxpayer savings from prison system reforms; 3) Stopping the erosion of the traditional 180-day school year; 4) Education reforms like more rigorous teacher certification and evaluation; and, 5) Reform of state business taxes.

The Center for Michigan is vigilantly nonpartisan. We never contribute to or advocate for any candidate of any political party. Bridge Magazine is likewise nonpartisan and independent. Bridge's numerous philanthropic funders exercise absolutely no editorial control over the publication.

The Center for Michigan and Bridge maintain offices in Lansing, Ann Arbor, and Detroit and have a statewide staff of 15 professional journalists and public engagement specialists.

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