

Monday, September 15, 2025

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FY26 Minus 15: Budget tensions escalate

It appears [Gov. Gretchen Whitmer](#) has decided the time to push back against House [Speaker Matt Hall](#), R-Richland Township, has arrived.

Several sources said a weekend call between Whitmer and Hall included Hall saying majority Senate Democrats needed to pass a road funding plan for negotiations to continue. Days earlier, Senate Democrats said they were essentially in alignment with what Whitmer suggested as ways to raise funding for roads though they did not put out a plan of their own, let alone pass one.

On Monday, sources with knowledge of the situation said Whitmer viewed Hall as moving the goalposts on negotiations. Throughout most of the year, the governor has courted Hall in hopes of securing his support for a long-term road funding solution, and Hall has delighted in noting the governor's praise for House Republicans passing a road funding plan, unlike the Senate Democrats.

There are 15 days remaining in the fiscal year, and the threat of a partial government shutdown in the absence of a budget signed before 12:01 a.m. Oct. 1 grows with each passing day.

Whitmer has scheduled a speech for Tuesday to discuss the importance of passing a budget – her first public event in Lansing in months.

Monday, she conducted calls with stakeholder groups on the budget.

Then, just after 4 p.m., one of her department leaders, EGLE [Director Phil Roos](#), issued a withering statement about what the House Republican budget would mean for the Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy and environmental safety.

The State Budget Office was critical of the House Republican budget when it passed, but the Roos statement was the first time the Whitmer administration has truly unloaded on how House Republicans have handled the budget.

"The budget passed by House Republicans is simply irresponsible and puts Michigan's environment and public health at serious risk," he said. "By laying off more than 150 filled positions, this proposal guts the very workforce responsible for protecting our air, land and water. It slashes funding in ways that would dramatically slow the permitting process, effectively stopping economic development and job growth. It would also halt critical work to safeguard drinking water, clean up contaminated sites, and protect the Great Lakes and other natural resources. If enacted, this budget would severely undermine EGLE's ability to protect our state from pollution and make our communities more vulnerable to environmental emergencies and long-term health threats."

The statement outlined the potential harms from the budget, like loss of federal funds for water infrastructure, severe delays in permit reviews, ending all Great Lakes and inland water protection efforts and termination of drinking water inspections, air quality permitting and contaminated site cleanups.

[Rep. Cam Cavitt](#) (R-Cheboygan), chair of the [House Appropriations Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy Subcommittee](#), fired back that EGLE has unnecessary spending.

"That department has been historically bad at managing the money they have and they use what they have to harass people instead of solving problems – it is well past time someone went through and cleaned it up," he said in a statement. "Their mismanagement and misguided targeting of people should also color any comments they make complaining about not having enough resources. This department was given \$30 million to build EV charging stations for private companies, and they failed to build a single one. Now they want another \$30 million for that same program. It makes no sense. EGLE performs an important function, and that's exactly why we need to help them perform better and give this state better value for the taxpayers' investment."

Hall posted a statement just after 11 a.m. that slammed Senate Democrats on roads.

"The Senate Democrats' roads plan? Still non-existent," he said.

"Our roads plan? Fully funded with unused slush money and gas pump taxes. NO TAX HIKES."

– By Zach Gorchow; Elena Durnbaugh contributed

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