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# House Dems Introduce Tolling, Fuel Tax, Registration Fee Options For Road Revenue

New legislation has entered the conversation around road funding.

House Democrats introduced three new bills on Thursday aimed at increasing revenue for Michigan's crumbling roads.

The bills, [HB 6256](#) , [HB 6257](#) and [HB 6258](#) , each offer different methods for generating additional dollars. [HB 6256](#) , sponsored by [Rep. Jasper Martus](#) (D-Flushing), would create a tolling authority that would choose which roads to toll and set toll rates. [HB 6257](#) , also sponsored by Martus, would increase the vehicle registration by \$100. The final bill, [HB 6258](#) , sponsored by [Rep. Alabas Farhat](#) (D-Dearborn), would increase the fuel tax by 19 cents.

"The whole intent of what we're doing now is making sure that the Legislature is in a position to negotiate with everything on the table and empowering our speaker, our leadership team, to get the best deal possible for the residents of Michigan," Farhat said.

These bills come on the heels of legislation introduced late last month by both Democrats and Republicans that would earmark revenue generated by the Corporate Income Tax to the Michigan Transportation Fund. The Republican plan would also direct all revenues generated at fuel pumps to roads. Although House Republicans stressed that the School Aid Fund, which currently receives revenue from the fuel tax, would be held harmless, no specific plan was offered for backfilling the fund. Democrats introduced a bill, [HB 6217](#) , which would increase the corporate income tax from 6 percent to 8.5 percent, earmarking the increase for the School Aid Fund.

"The big goal for us is to solve a problem that has plagued the Legislature, that has plagued our state, for years," Farhat said. "We know

how important this is, and we're taking it head on. We're not afraid to champion bold solutions right now."

The bill sponsors said road funding is a topic with bipartisan energy behind it, but this is the first real push from the House to introduce legislation specifically addressing the issue.

Martus said that the House has done legislation addressing the roads through the budget.

"This is just the latest iteration," he said. "We've been working on it in the budget ... for two budget cycles now."

With the bills introduced, there is limited time to move them through the legislative process before the end of the term. Under the Constitution's five-day rule, the House cannot pass them until Tuesday at the earliest, and then the Senate must wait another five days from the day the House first passes them before it can pass them.

The final day listed on the Senate's current calendar is December 23, which means that for any House bill to have a chance to be passed by the Senate, it must be voted out of the chamber by December 18, based on the House's current calendar. The Senate would then need to take the legislation up on its final day of session scheduled for the year and pass it.

"Everything is on the table to make sure that we are going to fix the damn roads before the end of the year," said House [Majority Floor Leader Abraham Aiyash](#) (D-Hamtramck). "There is certainly time to get this done. ... Sometimes, the government moves like honey, it's very slow, and sometimes, it moves like a microwave, where things happen quickly."

Both Republicans and Democrats have put forward bills that would effectively end funding for the state's Strategic Outreach Attraction and Reserve Fund.

Aiyash said that House Democrats were willing to send legislation to [Governor Gretchen Whitmer](#) that prioritized road funding over corporate incentives.

"If there's anything that we learned in this election cycle, it's the party that commits to the actual work of investing in the working class ... that is the party that is going to get an opportunity," he said. "I'll be honest, as

Democrats, we have lost our way a little bit in finding out what are the best mechanisms to work on investing in working people's concerns."

Farhat added that the best way to attract corporations was to invest in Michigan residents.

"When you have a workforce that can get to work on time, transit. We have a workforce that has reliable roads, it gets easier," he said. "And I think that's a more serious conversation to have."

– By Elena Durnbaugh

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