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# MDOT and LEO: Without road funding, Michigan will lose jobs

There are dire consequences if the Legislature does not pass a road funding plan, the Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity and the Department of Transportation warned the Legislature in a [letter](#) sent Thursday.

The departments, working with economists and business and industry stakeholders, found that the state will face a loss of up to 21,000 jobs annually supported by road construction funding because of the state's road funding cliff and federal funding rollbacks and policies.

A comprehensive road funding package could support between 7,000-21,000 additional good-paying jobs, depending on the funding level, the departments wrote in a letter sent to the Legislature. The jobs often do not require a college degree and offer the average Michigan road construction worker a nearly \$70,000 annual salary, with retirement and healthcare benefits.

In a report, the departments analyzed several different scenarios, including a baseline, \$1 billion in additional funding, \$2 billion in additional funding and \$3 billion in additional funding.

If no money is allocated for roads, the state could lose 8,000 jobs. The current baseline average annual employment of road funding is 16,957 jobs. This is 8,697 fewer average jobs than have been supported during the last five years due to the Rebuilding Michigan Plan expiring.

A \$1 billion funding increase would add about 7,000 jobs to the baseline, a \$2 billion increase would add 14,367 to the baseline and a \$3 billion increase would add 21,464 jobs to the baseline.

The letter also says that a state-level road funding package could blunt or offset losses stemming from recent or proposed federal economic policies, including tariffs. Road funding also affects economic stability, apprenticeship programs and response times of emergency services.

"Every delayed project means fewer paychecks, fewer jobs and fewer opportunities for hardworking Michiganders to provide for their families," the letter, signed by LEO [Director Susan Corbin](#) and MDOT [Director Brad Wieferich](#), said. "And when a job is lost, it doesn't just affect one person — it ripples through a household. It means bills go unpaid, futures are put on hold and families face difficult choices no one should have to make."

There has been no real progress on a road funding deal, though Gov. Gretchen Whitmer has made it clear that she believes a plan should be passed along with the budget (See [Gongwer Michigan Report, August 11, 2025](#)).

The House passed a road funding plan earlier this year, and the Senate has not detailed a plan for funding roads (See [Gongwer Michigan Report, March 19, 2025](#)).

Earlier this week, Senate [Majority Leader Winnie Brinks](#), D-Grand Rapids, said the Senate was willing to have conversations about roads, but they would not be prioritized over schools (See [Gongwer Michigan Report, August 20, 2025](#)).

"I refuse to make the choice between funding schools and funding roads," Brinks said during a press conference. "We are not going to gut school funding to fund roads, but we're more than happy to have a conversation about how all the pieces of the budget work together."

House [Speaker Matt Hall](#), R-Richland Township, has long advocated for roads to be a priority for this budget cycle.

"We have a plan to put \$3.1 billion into roads so you do not have to pick between education and roads. You can do education and roads," Hall said during a press conference Thursday. "You just have to cut out all the core projects for the lobbyists and all the corporate Democrats, something that the Democrats are afraid or do not want to do."

House Appropriations Chair [Rep. Ann Bollin](#), R-Brighton, said the letter confirms what House Republicans have said all along.

"Failing to act will cost Michigan construction jobs and leave people driving on crumbling roads. We passed a responsible road funding plan in the House because we know both workers and families are counting on us to get this right," Bollin said in a statement to Gongwer News Service on Friday. "Unfortunately, Senate Democrats continue to stall while they argue with the governor over whether a plan is even needed. Every day they delay risks jobs and leaves us all dealing with crumbling roads, potholes, and broken axles."

– By Elena Durnbaugh

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