



Gov. Hall Meet On Roads As House D's Drop More Bills

12/5/24

Gov. [Gretchen WHITMER](#) and House Minority Leader [Matt HALL \(R-Richland Township\)](#) had their first one-on-one Wednesday to discuss a long-term road funding solution that could conceivably pass in the lame duck session.

Hall, the presumed next House Speaker when Republicans take control next month, has proposed shifting around \$2.7 billion in funding – taken primarily from economic development – for roads.

House Speaker [Joe TATE \(D-Detroit\)](#) said the road funding talks have been “productive” up to this point. Getting the Governor involved, though, brings the conversation to another level. Whitmer, remember, made “fixing the damn roads” her 2018 campaign slogan. Whitmer Press Secretary Stacey **LaROUCHE** confirmed today the meeting happened and that the two discussed their shared policy goals on lame duck and the 2025 legislative agenda.

“The Governor will work alongside the legislative leaders to make progress on economic development and fixing the damn roads,” LaRouche said. “We will work with anyone who’s serious about getting things done.”

Meanwhile, incoming-House Minority Leader [Ranjeev PURI \(D-Canton\)](#) told *MIRS* this week that he doesn’t see a serious long-term road funding proposal passing the Legislature and being signed into law without a revenue increase piece.

Hall told reporters before Thanksgiving that there are “zero” Republican votes for a revenue increase for roads, but his plan would raise another \$2.7 billion annually for road repairs, which is based on the State Transportation Commission saying it needed \$10.8 billion more for the highways over the next five years (See “[Transportation Commission Greenlights Final 5-Year Plan With Few Changes](#),” 11/7/24).

Puri’s number was the \$3.9 billion advocated by the Michigan Infrastructure and Transportation Association (MITA) (See “[MITA Pushes For Sustainable Road Funding By Year’s End As County Roads Crumble](#),” 10/1/24).

The meeting also comes as Hall is working behind the scenes to pass legislation to maintain the state’s tipped wage for wait staff and adjust the paid sick leave reforms set to happen in February (See “[Business Groups List 5 Changes They Want To Sick Leave Act](#),” 9/26/24).

The dynamics raise the question as to whether a deal could be had on a revenue increase on roads – be it on registration fees or a small gas tax increase -- in exchange for the Rep.

Shannon/Rep. Filler bills to maintain the tipped wage and change the sick leave reform (See [HB 6056](#) and [HB 6057](#)).

[Dems Jump Into Road Funding Conversation With New Bills](#)

Reps. [Alabas A. FARHAT \(D-Dearborn\)](#) and [Jasper R. MARTUS \(D-Flushing\)](#) introduced three road funding bills today to put more options on the table for the Speaker and his leadership.

[HB 6256](#) , [HB 6257](#) , [HB 5258](#) create options including raising revenue by creating tolls roads, increasing registration fees and increasing the motor fuels tax. Farhat and Martus want options out there, so the bills are not a package and are not tie-barred.

Farhat also introduced [HB 6213](#) in November that would deposit corporate income tax (CIT) revenue into the transportation fund.

“We’re not afraid to champion bold solutions right now,” Farhat said.

It was pointed out to Farhat that this legislation didn’t need to wait until Dec. 5 to be introduced. He said they would have liked to start sooner, but if the enthusiasm from Republicans is genuine and authentic, then there’s no doubt in his mind that a deal can be reached before the end of the year.

Since the Senate has scheduled session days until the 23rd, that means the House could have a few more voting days they could use if a deal is reached, Rep. [Abraham AIYASH \(D-Hamtramck\)](#) suggested. When asked if that means the House is changing its schedule, Aiyash said to expect anything in lame duck and that his term finishes Dec. 31 at 11:59 p.m.

Aiyash also said his Republican colleagues talk about being fiscally responsible and pointed out that he thinks the fiscally responsible thing to do would be to recognize that Michigan has one of the lowest CITs of the Midwestern states.

“There are ways to generate revenue across the board where Michigan families are not gonna pay the bill for that increase in revenue to fund essential services,” Aiyash said.

Part of Hall’s road funding plan would re-designate revenue from CIT and the Strategic Outreach and Reserve (SOAR) Fund, the latter of which is set to expire in time for the next budget-making process.

Aiyash said he does not believe that hundreds of millions of dollars in corporate incentives to retain or bring in jobs works and that this House Democratic majority will prioritize funding local, state and county roads over corporate incentives.