



## House Dems Play Role In Long-Term Road Funding Passing

9/25/25

As the old saying goes, irony can be so ironic.

The House Democratic caucus and its leader, House Minority Leader [Ranjeev PURI \(D-Canton\)](#), belittled for most of the term by the House Speaker as not being needed, ended up playing a significant role this evening in getting the votes needed to pass a revenue increase for a state roads deal.

With 10 Republicans voting no on the new wholesale marijuana tax, the Democrats provided 30 yes votes, more than enough to get the measure passed. While it may not be clear until after a full Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 budget is passed what the House Dems got in exchange for their cooperation, Puri, Rep. [Samantha STECKLOFF \(D-Farmington Hills\)](#) and Rep. [Alabas FARHAT \(D-Dearborn\)](#) said they were pleased with the role they played.

Puri did note that the House Democrats' guiding star was a budget that funds schools, health care institutions and public safety.

“Being in the minority, you're probably never fully satisfied with the amount of input you're going or have, but I can say that our caucus has come together and demonstrated that we can flex our muscles and find our leverage points when needed,” Puri said. “We've done an excellent job of that this term, and I think we've demonstrated that a budget wasn't going to get done without the House Democrats support.”

Leading the charge in negotiations behind the scenes was Farhat, who House Speaker [Matt HALL \(R-Richland Township\)](#) demoted from his role as House Appropriations Committee minority vice chair this past summer. Asked why he stayed engaged in getting a deal done even after Hall stripped him of that leadership title, Farhat said, “I made a commitment to my caucus to see this through, and I made a commitment to the people I serve that I am going to fight very hard to make sure the budget reflects the values, not only of Democrats, but of people in the state Michigan.”

Steckloff was spotlighted today as the lead sponsor of the marijuana wholesale tax and a lead architect in compiling numerous revenue increase ideas for the House Republicans to consider. Senate Democrats made it clear from the beginning they would not sign off on any road funding plan that didn't include tax hikes to protect those services that are important to their constituents.

“We've been trying to find a sustainable, comprehensive road funding deal for a very long time,” Steckloff said. “. . . We ran for office to make very tough decisions for the people of Michigan and with the Democrats and Republicans coming together today, you saw how beautiful that magic can be.”