



Would Brinks Put Up \$3B In Cuts For Roads? She's Not Ruling It Out

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In July 1993, then-state Sen. Debbie STABENOW, tired of hearing the Republicans demagogue on cutting property taxes, offered an amendment to eliminate property taxes as the primary funding source for public schools.

Her point was that it was time for Republicans to either put up or shut up on the issue. Then-Gov. John ENGLER told Republicans to take the bait . . . they'd figure out how to fund schools later. That's where Proposal A came from.

Now, in 2025, could Senate Majority Leader [Winnie BRINKS \(D-Grand Rapids\)](#) do something similar? House Speaker [Matt HALL \(R-Richland Township\)](#) hasn't passed a state budget to support his \$3 billion road funding plan without revenue increases. Would Brinks propose one for him and either pass it in the Senate to force Hall's hand or defeat it to show what \$3 billion in budget cuts look like?

MIRS asked the Leader that question today.

"We are entertaining every possible means to get a responsible budget passed," Brinks said.

During an afternoon press conference with Sens. [Kevin HERTEL \(D-St. Clair Shores\)](#), [Sam SINGH \(D-East Lansing\)](#) and [Jeremy MOSS \(D-Southfield\)](#), Brinks answered questions on whether the Senate will get behind a road funding proposal this year. The Republican-led House and Gov. [Gretchen WHITMER](#) have prioritized creating around \$3 billion in new yearly funding for road and bridge projects, and the Democratic-controlled Senate has received heat for not yet taking up the issue in their chamber (See "[Engineering Companies Want Residents To Call Senate Dems To Move Road Funding](#)," 8/11/2025).

On Tuesday, [Whitmer's transportation department](#) said that it now faces possibly more than 100 trunkline bridges closing to traffic by 2035.

Whitmer and Hall share the vision of directing any state taxes paid at the gas pump to road improvements. However, motor fuel in Michigan is subjected to the state's 6 percent sales tax rate, contributing to public schools and local government revenue-sharing payments.

Because the proposal means gas purchases will no longer be linked to schools and municipalities, a new road funding plan would involve back-filling those obligations either through large government cuts or creating new revenue sources. Hall's plan aims to avoid creating new taxes for roads.

"We haven't seen how he actually funds that plan, because he hasn't shown us a budget," Singh said. "We've said that we're willing to negotiate that, but we have to do it within the context of the budget . . . by not having people in the room, having that conversation, not having a full budget, you can't talk about all these budgets."

Brinks said she refuses to make the choice between funding schools and funding roads, and that Michiganders should "be able to expect us to fund all the fundamental things that the state government is responsible for."

Meanwhile, Moss said it's been three to four months of House Republicans telling the media that their budget will be dropping the following week.

"Even Taylor SWIFT, when she says the album is dropping at 12:12, the album drops at 12:12. House Republicans don't believe in the same philosophy," Moss said. "Meanwhile, with all this time not taking up a budget, surely they could pass some of the 120 Senate bills that sit before them. Some of them passed with Republican votes. Some of them passed with Republican sponsors."

He mentioned [SB 96](#) , [SB 97](#) and [SB 98](#) , permitting daycare facilities to install automatic door locks "in case of the horrific instance of a mass shooting," which passed with no opposition. He described [SB 215](#) , sponsored by Sen. [Sylvia SANTANA \(D-Detroit\)](#) and co-sponsored by Sen. [Jonathan LINDSEY \(R-Coldwater\)](#).

[SB 215](#) aims to offer financial and identity protection for military veterans who use agents to assist them with accessing benefits. The legislation passed with no opposition, and Moss asked "who benefits from leaving our veterans' data and privacy information exploited?"

"Imagine if they spent this much time negotiating a deal as they do trying to assign blame to me," Hall said later to reporters.

Hall told reporters on the floor today that his putting [SB 70](#) on the board demonstrated that the standstill between the Senate and House is over. Sen. [Joseph BELLINO JR. \(R-Monroe\)](#)'s memorial highway bill passed 100-0 today after Hall said last week that the reason Senate bills aren't being taken up in the House is because they aren't ready to go yet.

Hall said he identified this bill as the most "ready to go."

Furthermore, Moss spoke about [SB 1](#) and [SB 2](#) , the latest iteration of bills requiring the Governor's office and legislators to respond to Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests.

"Here's a list of the House Republicans who have voted on these bills in the past: [Timothy BESON \(R-Bay City\)](#), [Ann BOLLIN \(R-Brighton\)](#), [Ken BORTON \(R-Gaylord\)](#), [Steve CARRA \(R-Three Rivers\)](#) – Steve Cara actually voted for a bill, that should be given a Nobel Prize for getting Steve Cara to vote on a bill," Moss said. "[Greg MARKKANEN \(R-Hancock\)](#), [David MARTIN \(R-Davison\)](#) . . . I don't even know who Dave Martin is, but Dave, call me. We can work together on bipartisan bills."

After naming [John ROTH \(R-Interlochen\)](#), [Bradley SLAGH \(R-Zeeland\)](#), [Mark TISDEL \(R-Rochester\)](#), [Greg VANWOERKOM \(R-Norton Shores\)](#), [Pauline WENDZEL \(R-Watervliet\)](#) and [Douglas WOZNIAK \(R-Shelby Township\)](#), Moss asked "where the hell are these people?"