Dear Neighbor,

The policy decisions we make at the state Capitol have consequences. Every vote I take will have either a positive or negative impact on the lives of Michigan residents. My priority is to fight for legislation that will positively affect the hard-working people of Gratiot and Montcalm counties and make decisions to improve life for everyone.

For example, we are making life better by spending a record amount for roads and bridges, which will improve our daily commutes and strengthen the state's economy. In addition, the funding we allocated this year for K-12 public schools is the most in our state's history, and it makes life better by giving all students a greater chance at success.

I have made it a priority to be accessible back home to the residents I represent. I have held numerous office hours throughout the district. I am working around the clock, taking phone calls and following up with residents who have ideas or concerns about how to make state government work for them. I have attended and held several community events, most recently a town hall with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources about chronic wasting disease to make sure residents are informed and involved in what's going on here at home.

The people in our community are on the front of my mind before taking every vote. It makes no difference whether it's a Republican or Democrat idea. If it doesn't make life better for the people I proudly represent, it doesn't get my vote. Period. I will continue to stick to my guns and stand up to special interests and lobbyists to do what is best for us. You have my word.

Sincerely,

JIM LOWER
State Representative

(517) 373-0834 • JamesLower@house.mi.gov
www.RepLower.com
State budget more focused on what matters: Schools, roads, public safety and ending debt

I helped approve a balanced state budget months ahead of the constitutional deadline that controls spending while prioritizing your hard-earned tax dollars on things that matter most.

This year, we dedicated more state funding to K-12 education than ever before, totaling $14.6 billion. We put special emphasis on skilled trades training through career and technical education.

This budget also spends more on our roads, bridges and underground water systems than ever before. I know how vital good roads and safe bridges are to families and job creators in Michigan.

Public safety is also a priority of mine, and we continue to invest in your safety. This budget adds 150 more Michigan State Police troopers, increasing safety on our highways and in our communities.

I have fought to conserve your hard-earned tax dollars, and this budget spends fewer state taxpayer dollars than last year's budget. Just like families across the state, we are tightening our belt, reducing the size of government and forcing it to live within its means. This budget also pays down millions of dollars in debt, helping relieve our liability and open the door for a more secure financial future for our children and grandchildren.

Lower encouraging job growth, expanding economic opportunities

I have been hard at work fighting for families who are living paycheck to paycheck. Michigan’s unemployment is at its lowest in 17 years, but there is still more work to be done. Good paying jobs are needed in Michigan to attract the best and brightest workers.

Recently, we’ve received news that an out-of-state company is planning to build a dairy processing facility in Greenville. I will continue to support policies that encourage job growth and lead to more prosperity for hard-working people across our community.

Controversial driver responsibility fees eliminated under legislation

I supported legislation to eliminate Michigan’s misguided and ineffective driver responsibility fees.

Driver responsibility fees were initiated by politicians in 2003 as a scheme to plug a hole they created in the state budget. Since then, hundreds of thousands of Michigan residents have been burdened with the fees, which have either taken them out of the job market or forced them to drive illegally to support their families.

This is a bad law that should never have been passed in the first place. It did nothing to improve driving skills and it’s about time we end this failed policy. The elimination of driver responsibility fees and restoration of driving privileges will help people get back to work so they can earn a living and provide for their families.

The legislation completely forgives the outstanding fines owed by more than 300,000 Michigan drivers, ending the ineffective program by Oct. 1, 2018.