

STATE REPRESENTATIVE
AARON MILLER

Making Life Better

2017 PROGRESS REPORT

Dear Neighbor,

As the year draws near to closing, there's a lot to talk about regarding your state government up in Lansing. Like in everyday life, there is some good news and some bad news and some of you will disagree with some things I do and stances I take and some of you will also agree. Politics can sometimes be frustrating, but I want to demonstrate to you in this newsletter that I am committed to serving you above and through it all. Offered within is a little snippet of what we have done recently.

Three years ago, I committed to being a "regular guy" in Lansing, fighting for what I believe and for what all the constituents of the 59th District collectively believe is right. That is not something I take lightly. I'm proud that my commitment has not changed throughout my service over these past three years. I'm proud of the fact that I commute home every evening when we have been in session to either attend local meetings or be with my family. I think that's what public service is all about: being with the people you serve and staying grounded. As far as public meetings go, I also committed to attending each municipality's monthly meeting at least twice per year. I'm happy to report that I will meet that goal this year as I did in 2015 and 2016. That enables me to stay close to issues happening at home where it matters.

In closing, I hope that you will consider contacting my office should you need anything or need to voice any concern or question concerning state government. My staff and I are willing to help with what we can.

Sincerely,



AARON MILLER
State Representative

(877) 262-5959 • AaronMiller@house.mi.gov

www.RepAaronMiller.com

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P.O. Box 30014
Lansing, MI 48909-7514



OFFICE HOURS WITH YOUR STATE REP.

AARON MILLER

Visit with Aaron and discuss your concerns.



Dates, times and locations vary. Please check my website, social media or call my office for a current schedule.

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High school students given more opportunities to learn skilled trades

Education should not be a one-size-fits-all approach. With continuous advances in technology and workforce needs, I'm working hard to ensure our students obtain the necessary skills to be successful in a career and in life.

Not all high school students will go on to college, so the Legislature improved access to skilled trades training through career and technical education so these students are prepared for high-paying, in-demand jobs.

There are not enough trained workers available for these jobs right now. I will continue to support and expand opportunities for high school students and post-high school graduates to obtain the training necessary to fill and keep these important positions.



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.

House CARES Task Force working to help people with mental health challenges

The bipartisan House CARES Task Force was created this year to help Michigan residents with mental health challenges live happier, healthier and more independent lives.

The task force held meetings throughout the summer and early fall to receive input from individuals and professionals around the state. The task force also toured facilities to gain a better understanding of programs already available.

Holding meetings and visiting facilities all across Michigan allowed the team to gather feedback on a wide variety of topics related to mental health care, opioid abuse, rehabilitation programs, and vocational training.

We wanted to make sure the people of Michigan were part of the process, so they were encouraged to share their ideas. Information gathered at CARES meetings will help legislators develop solutions to improve services for people experiencing mental illness.



Miller demands more honest and open government

I helped pass common-sense legislation out of the House to increase transparency and accountability in state government. Our bills require the governor to be subject to the Freedom of Information Act. The legislation also creates a similar transparency requirement for all state legislators.

Michigan is one of only two states that still exempts its governor, lieutenant governor and the Legislature from so-called sunshine laws. It's time we remove these exemptions and help improve government accountability.

The plan:

- ✓ Makes state government more accountable to you;
- ✓ Opens the records of the governor and Legislature;
- ✓ Protects your private information.

Reform plan would have cut auto insurance rates, given drivers a choice

Just a few weeks ago, I fought to support HB 5013, which would have reformed Michigan's auto insurance system in order to reduce rates for drivers.

Michigan now has the highest auto insurance rates in the nation, a category in which it is not good to be number one. The bill would have lowered costs by offering additional choices to drivers on which level of personal injury protection they could buy, reining in medical costs by instituting a fee schedule for auto accidents, and fighting fraud in the industry.

Unfortunately this bill did not pass much to my dismay, but it doesn't mean that the fight for reform ends now. I will keep trying simply because residents of our two border counties often move out of state if the cost becomes too great and, because of the high cost, it's usually the poor who are most affected by our state's system. Because of this and because I hear about this issue by far the most, it's safe to say that this issue is my number one priority in Lansing. Rest assured I won't stop fighting for changes.

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.



House approves bill to prevent taxes on food or drink

I voted in favor of legislation to prevent taxes from being imposed on certain drinks or foods. While I understand the intent of such measures, efforts to enact such fees in the past have been disastrous in places like Chicago. They can have a range of unintended consequences. This bill was supported in the House almost unanimously.