

# GOVERNOR GRETCHEN WHITMER

## DELIVERING ON RACIAL EQUITY



Governor Whitmer is focused on delivering for the Black community. She made the biggest investments in Michigan's public schools ever, passed major criminal justice reforms, saved thousands of lives leading through the COVID-19 pandemic, and put people back to work with more skills in good-paying jobs. The Governor made progress on the kitchen-table fundamental issues—jobs, roads, water, education, childcare, and more—with the most diverse cabinet in state history and Michigan's first Black Lieutenant Governor, Garlin Gilchrist, by her side.

### EDUCATION AND CHILDCARE

- Made the largest investment in K-12 schools in state history—without raising taxes.
- Increased funding per student, per year in Benton Harbor by \$1,499, Detroit by \$1,574, Flint by \$2,074, Kalamazoo by \$1,229, and Lansing by \$1,449.
- Gave every school district the same per-pupil funding. The dollars will go to newer textbooks, better gym equipment, and smaller class sizes—things to improve every student's in-school experience.
- Prioritized equity in education by dedicating more dollars to at-risk, English language learners, and special education students in all of her budgets ('20, '21, and '22).
- Tripled the number of literacy coaches in schools to help every child read by third grade.
- Expanded access to free preschool for 22,000 more four-year olds through the high-quality, homegrown Great Start Readiness Program including serving almost 7,000 more children in Wayne County.
- Proposed a record \$1.4 billion investment in federal childcare funding to keep local childcare providers open and expand access to low or no-cost childcare for working families earning less than \$53,000 for a family of four.
- Settled lawsuit reaffirming every kid's constitutional right to literacy.



*"The school funding bill signed today by Gov. Whitmer represents a transformational investment in public education for our students and our educators. Aside from being the largest funding increase in decades, the per pupil foundation grant at \$8,700 and equalizing the amount for students across the state is a huge step. It makes good on the promise 27 years ago – the beginning of my career by the way, of Proposal A – a promise finally delivered on by this governor and this legislature."*

- Paula Herbart, president of the Michigan Education Association

### DIVERSITY IN STATE GOVERNMENT

- Appointed more than 338 Black Michiganders to boards, commissions, and full-time positions. 60% of Whitmer appointees are women or people of color.
- Appointed 12 Black Michiganders to the bench out of 41 judicial appointments.
- Created the Black Leadership Advisory Council to tackle racial inequity in Michigan.

### HEALTH AND COVID-19

- Established the Racial Disparities Task Force and made "lasting structural change" in addressing racial disparities associated with COVID-19, according to a study by Duke University.
- Reduced new COVID-19 cases reported from 176 per million Black Michiganders at onset of pandemic to 59 per million by the Fall of 2020.
- Brought down the number of probable COVID-19 deaths reported for Black citizens from 21.7 per day to 1.
- Declared racism a public health crisis and required all medical professionals to undergo unconscious bias training to improve healthcare equity and target disparities.
- Launched the Healthy Moms, Healthy Babies initiative to reduce disproportionate racial infant mortality and ensure moms have the support they need for healthy pregnancies.
- Laid out plans to reduce health disparities by using community navigators to improve access to health coverage, cover the cost of Sickle Cell Disease treatment for all Michiganders, and set up the Race, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Office in the Dept. of Health and Human Services.



*"Michigan is really doing what is absolutely essential. It's amazing to me that other states are not following. I expect this week we are going to see a lot of other states step up and essentially put in very similar policies because we're so behind the eight ball that we have got to get going."*

- Dr. Ashish Jha, Dean of the Brown University School of Public Health

## CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM

- Signed "Clean Slate" bills to make hundreds of thousands of Michiganders eligible to have their records expunged, expanding their opportunities for jobs and housing.
- Over 80,000 more Detroiters are now eligible to have past mistakes removed from their record and get a chance at a new start.
- Signed Clean Slate for Kids to seal juvenile court records from public view and create a process to automatically expunge records for those who do not commit future offenses.
- Invested \$4 million to assist returning citizens with expungement.
- Launched two task forces to reduce the disparity of Black Michiganders in jail and disparities in length of stay.
- Created the Task Force on Jail and Pretrial Incarceration to review the state's jail and court data to expand alternatives to jail, safely reduce jail admissions and length of stay, and improve the effectiveness of the front end of Michigan's justice system.
- Created the Task Force on Juvenile Justice Reform to analyze Michigan's juvenile justice system and recommend proven practices and strategies for reform.



*"This anti-poverty, pro-job opportunity Clean Slate legislation will reinvigorate the economic potential of hundreds of thousands of Michiganders whose records have hindered their availability to get a job or secure housing, and it will help us grow our workforce."*

- Lieutenant Governor Garlin Gilchrist II

## PUBLIC SAFETY AND POLICING

- Called on the legislature to ban chokeholds, further limit the use of no-knock warrants, require independent investigations of all police shootings, require "duty to intervene" policies, classify false, racially motivated 911 calls as a hate crime, and mandate retention of disciplinary records resulting from improper use of force.
- Developed a new transparency and accountability web page providing the public with access to information on use of force and traffic stop data, department policies, and training requirements. Michigan leads the country in transparency on this information.
- Implemented recurring implicit bias training and training on responding to situations involving people with mental illnesses for all law enforcement officers in Michigan.

## ROADS, BRIDGES, AND HOUSING

- Started the first 21 state highway construction projects under the \$3.5 billion Rebuilding Michigan plan without a tax increase at the pump. The projects support 22,800 jobs.
- Spent \$73 million dollars of federal highway project funds with minority and women owned businesses, \$10 million with Black-owned businesses.
- Selected a Black woman-owned firm to oversee bonding.
- Proposed \$300 million to repair or replace 120 local bridges.
- Proposed a \$100 million investment to expand access to affordable, attainable housing, help close equity gaps, and support the development of vibrant communities in urban areas.
- Passed historic, bipartisan legislation to put money back in people's pockets by bringing down the cost of car insurance.



## WATER

- Launched MI Clean Water, a \$500 million drinking and wastewater infrastructure plan supporting 7,500 good-paying jobs to make water more affordable, protect families from lead and toxic contaminants, and fix overflowing sewers to prevent flooding.
- Proposed Filter First, a \$55 million investment in K-12 schools to protect kids from lead in schools and ensure access to safe drinking water.
- Launched the largest investment in water assistance, starting with a Detroit program.
- Protected the strongest Lead and Copper Rule for drinking water in the country.

## JOBS AND TRAINING

- Established programs to provide hundreds of thousands of Michiganders tuition-free higher education or skills training that leads to a high-skill, good-paying job.
- Established Michigan Reconnect, a program that pays tuition of Michiganders 25 and up to pursue an associate degree or earn a skills certificate in high-demand careers.
- Created Futures for Frontliners, providing a tuition-free path to postsecondary education or skills training for Michiganders who served on the frontlines of the pandemic.