

POLITICAL NEWS

Reactions to Gov. Rick Snyder's State of State address

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**By The Associated Press**

Reactions to Gov. Rick Snyder's State of the State address to the Michigan Legislature:

President and CEO provided the following comments this evening regarding Governor Rick Snyder's State of the State speech:

"A clear indicator of the moral strength of a society is the manner by which it cares for its most needy citizens. ... Merging the Departments of Community Health and Human Services presents an opportunity for policymakers to enhance the assistance citizens need to distance themselves from poverty. By focusing on the root causes of poverty, which must include providing families with an opportunity for a quality education, the state can improve the quality of life for Michigan's most needy and vulnerable citizens." — Paul A. Long, president, Michigan Catholic Conference

"Equality Michigan appreciates Gov. Snyder's renewed call for a civil and respectful conversation on a fully-inclusive update to Michigan's Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act. If such talks are successful, modernizing Michigan's anti-discrimination law would have a far-reaching positive impact on the governor's entire agenda for a more prosperous Michigan. Gov. Snyder has an opportunity to show strong leadership on the advancement of this issue, and we look forward to working with the Governor to secure the protections for LGBTQ people under the law that Michiganders demand." — Emily Dievendorf, executive director, Equality Michigan

"Gov. Snyder kept talking about the river of opportunity, but his policies have left many Michigan families up (a) ... creek without a paddle. The governor once again glossed over the right-wing policies of his administration that have hurt Michigan families. Gov. Snyder has actively fought against LGBT equality, attacked a woman's right to choose and refused to hold corporations like Aramark accountable for abusing our tax dollars. What we heard tonight was more happy-talk from

a governor who has been nothing but a puppet for right-wing corporate donors." — Lonnie Scott, Executive Director of Progress Michigan

"We're encouraged that Gov. Snyder focused on improving third grade reading proficiency through providing resources and support in early learning programs that our members have championed for years. We look forward to a budget proposal that provides the necessary resources for student success at all levels of education." — David Hecker, president, American Federation of Teachers of Michigan

"Strong public schools are the key to helping Michigan students compete in a global economy. ... Michigan teachers and school support professionals look forward to working with Gov. Rick Snyder and the Michigan Legislature, and contributing to the critical dialogue about reforming our schools. MEA members support accountability at all levels, including intervention, remediation and transparency, so all schools - traditional public schools and charter schools - play by the same rules." — Steve Cook, president, Michigan Education Association

"The governor discussed some important plans that prioritize the needs of Michigan residents, including bettering early childhood education programs. Now, the governor and legislators must take action to make plans a reality, without continuing to cut from other important areas of the budget like revenue sharing to communities, transportation, education, and human services that they have repeatedly slashed over the past few decades." — Nathan Triplett, Priorities Michigan project director

"Despite touching on energy policy in his speech, Gov. Snyder and the Michigan Legislature have yet to offer a substantive proposal or take meaningful leadership when it comes to clean energy. Transitioning to renewable energy means cleaner air, cleaner water, and less asthma attacks for people living in communities near coal plants. The health of our children and the legacy of the Great Lakes are at risk. We can't afford to wait." — Mike Berkowitz, legislative director of the Sierra Club Michigan Chapter

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