



STATE REPRESENTATIVE  
**JOHN CHERRY**

Hello Friends,

I am honored to have been elected to serve in my community as your state representative. I was officially sworn in on Wednesday, Jan. 9 to serve the 49th House District for the 2019-2020 legislative session. I am grateful to you for giving me this opportunity to be your voice in the Capitol, and thankful to have been joined by my family and friends as I was sworn in as a member of the 100<sup>th</sup> Legislature.

It is clear that the residents of our community want to see our aging infrastructure updated; stronger, more vibrant communities and safe drinking water for us all. Most importantly, people are tired of the dysfunction they see in Washington, and don't want to see it in Lansing. There is a lot of work to be done and I am ready to get started.



I'm here to help:

Phone:  
(517) 373-7515

Email:  
[JohnCherry@house.mi.gov](mailto:JohnCherry@house.mi.gov)



If you have any questions, comments or concerns, I hope you will reach out to me. You can email me at any time at [JohnCherry@house.mi.gov](mailto:JohnCherry@house.mi.gov) or call my office at (517) 373-7515.

My staff and I can help with any number of problems you might have, whether it's your unemployment giving you trouble, an overwhelming electric bill, or questions about local policies. You can also visit my website at [Cherry.housedems.com](http://Cherry.housedems.com) to view press releases, past e-newsletters, and find other helpful information.

Best,

John

## **Legislative Update**

### **Whitmer's Executive Directives**

With a new governor comes a change in direction for Michigan. In her first weeks in office, Gov. Whitmer has issued a series of executive directives to improve and better support our state agencies. Collectively, they are designed to increase the transparency, accountability and ethical conduct of state government. They were drawn from the experiences of the previous eight years, where state government fell short in its

service to our citizens, and instead puts into place policies to help us avoid those failures in the future. I commend the governor for taking these actions so quickly in her administration.

Gov. Whitmer's first executive directive makes it a requirement for state employees to report any threats to the public health to their agency's department director. The department head must then report the threat to the chief compliance officer. If department heads do not feel the issue is being resolved, they are to report the issue directly to the governor. This directive assures that threats to public safety can be handled promptly and thoroughly.

Executive Directive 02 of 2019 requires all state employees to report any financial inconsistencies to their supervisor. Any supervisor who finds a financial error with an impact of \$100 or more must report the issue to the auditor general and the chief compliance officer. If any criminal activity is suspected the governor, auditor general, and the chief compliance officer must be notified immediately. If there is no suspected criminal activity, then auditor general and the chief compliance officer will conduct a prompt and thorough investigation.

Executive Directive 03 of 2019 establishes ethics standards for state employees. State employees are required to conduct their duties without waste, abide by the state constitution, and avoid any conflicts of interest. Any state employee that encounters an ethical violation should report the issue to their department director or agency head.

Executive Directive 04 of 2019 prohibits the use of state funds, personnel, or office space for political activities. Gov. Whitmer noted that, "it is in the public interest to protect state government and state employees from any appearance of improper political influence connected with the solicitation or receipt of political contributions in state government facilities." This directive aims to minimize conflicts of interest among state officials especially as it pertains to political campaigns and special interests.

Executive Directive 05 of 2019 forbids executive branch state employees from using private email accounts for state business. State emails are also not allowed to be used for personal use. Any state employee encountering a violation must report the issue to the chief compliance officer.

Executive Directive 06 of 2019 requires state agencies to consider the effects changes in their policies and procedure will have on their budget. Any requests for changes to policy or procedure that will affect the budget must go through the budget director before they go to the Legislature.

To make sure that the executive branch speaks with one voice, Executive Directive 07 of 2019 requires all state agencies making a policy proposal to first go through state budget director and the director of legislative services. Both the budget director and the director of legislative services will then report their findings to the governor. Once this review process has been completed the policy proposal may then be submitted to the Legislature.

Executive Directive 08 of 2019 seeks to expand business opportunities in underserved communities. The Department of Technology, Management and Budget will ensure that 3 percent of expenditures on state contracts go to businesses that operate in opportunity zones within disadvantaged areas. This directive aims to encourage economic growth and opportunity in communities that struggle with poverty, population loss, and job growth.

In Executive Directive 09 of 2019 Gov. Whitmer stated that, “the diversity of Michigan’s people is one of our state’s greatest strengths. When the state of Michigan acts inclusively, the state benefits from the enhanced contribution, commitment, participation, and satisfaction of its employees.” In that spirit, equal employment opportunity protections in the executive branch have been expanded to include sexual orientation. State agencies are now forbidden from discriminating based on sexual orientation in everything from state contracts and grants to employment and public services.

Executive Directive 10 of 2019 aims to help close the pay gap between men and women. Women currently earn 78 cents on the dollar when compared to their male counterparts. Since women earn less to begin with, revealing their previous salary to future employers often continues the cycle of unequal pay for equal work. In order to stop this cycle from continuing, this directive prohibits any state agency from requiring job applicants to disclose their previous salary.

Gov. Whitmer's first set of executive directives aim to make Michigan's executive branch a more transparent, ethical, and equitable place to work. These directives also set up processes that funnel important information directly through the governor's office. Issues of public health and ethical violations are now much less likely to go by unnoticed by the executive branch's leadership.

### **Flint Water Update: Kym Worthy to Take Over Flint Water Case**

On Friday, Jan. 4, Attorney General Dana Nessel announced that she would be referring the ongoing Flint water case to Wayne County Prosecutor Kym Worthy. Prosecutor Worthy is an experienced attorney who has shown time and again that she is willing to fight to protect the public. I am confident that the referral of the Flint water investigation by Attorney General Nessel is in the best interest of the Flint residents who were harmed in the water crisis, and I appreciate the urgency with which Attorney General Nessel has addressed this issue. I look forward to the results of this review, and the prompt pursuit of justice.

### **Helpful Resources for the Folks in the Forty-Ninth**

#### **Flint Property Portal: Get Your Data**

Want to learn more about your house and those around you? Visit the Flint Property Portal [here](#). The Flint Property Portal is made-up of city of Flint and Genesee County Land Bank Authority data. For this site, the city of Flint and the Land Bank

have strategically collected and combined more than 60 data points for each of the 56,000 properties that comprise Flint, more than 4 million pieces of property information in total. The Land Bank and the city of Flint maintain this data and use it on a daily basis to make decisions.

You can look up information for properties in Flint, Michigan such as ownership, value, and condition. You can also make maps for your neighborhood, ward, or custom area. This site is delivered to you by the Genesee County Land Bank Authority and the city of Flint as part of their commitment to increasing the public's access to information and ensuring governmental transparency and accountability.

## Prepare for Winter Storms

If you want to be prepared for possible winter storms, but are not sure how, take a look at this info published by the Michigan State Police which aims to help you prepare [by clicking here.](#)

**How to Prepare for a Winter Storm**

Winter storms can cause power outages that last for days. They can make roads and walkways extremely dangerous and also negatively affect critical community services including public transportation, childcare, and health programs. Injuries and deaths may occur from exposure, dangerous road conditions, carbon monoxide poisoning, and other winter storm conditions. Be better prepared this winter, and learn more at [ready.gov/prepare](http://ready.gov/prepare).

Now/Prepare	During/Survive	After/Be Safe
<p><b>Sign up</b> for local alerts and warnings.</p> <p><b>Create and test</b> emergency communication plan(s).</p> <p><b>Stock emergency supplies</b>, and install battery-powered or battery backed-up carbon monoxide detectors and smoke detectors.</p> <p><b>Winterize your home.</b> Visit <a href="#">this page</a> to help you prepare.</p> <p><b>Review</b> your property insurance, and safeguard critical documents.</p> <p><b>Get trained</b> on specific needs your family may have. Also, consider joining your local Community Emergency Response Team (CERT).</p> <p><b>Identify</b> a place nearby where you can safely warm up should you lose heat in your home.</p>	<p><b>Stay indoors</b> and off the roads. If you must drive, keep emergency supplies in your car.</p> <p><b>Close off rooms</b> to consolidate and retain heat.</p> <p><b>Dress in layers</b>, and use blankets to stay warm.</p> <p><b>Bring pets into a warm place</b> and out of the storm or severe cold.</p> <p><b>Never use a generator</b>, camp stove, charcoal grill, or gasoline or propane heater indoors, as these items can start accidental fires, cause electric shock, and/or cause deadly carbon monoxide poisoning.</p> <p><b>Never heat</b> a home with a cooktop or oven.</p> <p><b>Limit your time outdoors</b>, and stay dry.</p>	<p><b>Only drive if necessary.</b> Remove snow and ice from your tailpipe before starting your car, and check regularly if idling. Clean all snow and ice from your car before driving.</p> <p><b>Dress in warm clothing</b>, stay dry, prevent prolonged exposure to cold and wind, and avoid overexertion clearing/shoveling snow. Overexertion can lead to a medical emergency.</p> <p><b>Monitor local news</b> and alerts for emergency information and instructions.</p>

For more resources about winter storm risk, visit [ready.gov/prepare](http://ready.gov/prepare) | 2

## Find Some Fun at Your Local Winter Fishing Hole

Fishing doesn't stop when the snow starts to fly! Almost every fish that's available to anglers in the summer can be caught through the ice – some are even caught more frequently in the winter. Interested in ice fishing, but not sure how to do it? Attend an ice fishing class offered this winter at the Carl T. Johnson Hunt and Fish Center at Mitchell State Park in Cadillac. Keep your 2019 calendars marked for the Winter Free Fishing Weekend, when all fishing license fees will be waived for two days. A Recreation Passport won't be required for entry into state parks and recreation areas during the weekend with special events will be held around the state.

Remember to stay safe by following these tips, and have fun. Here are some important rules to follow when ice fishing:

- Steer clear of dark spots or places where the snow looks discolored.
- Never fish alone.
- Tell someone where you are going and when you expect to return.
- Always test the ice.
- Take the appropriate emergency items, such as a lifejacket and ice picks.
- Take a cell phone with you in case you need to call for help.
- Dress in your warmest winter clothes; fill a thermos with hot coffee, chocolate or tea; and bring an empty bucket or old lawn chair to sit on.

### **Protect Yourself from Tax Scams**

As the state of Michigan begins a new year and the state income tax filing season approaches, the Michigan Department of Treasury is asking taxpayers to be alert and watch out for tax scams.

Cybercriminals typically increase their activity in the first part of the year through phone scams and email phishing schemes. These scammers try to obtain personal information using different tricks and tactics so they can file income tax returns

and claim refunds on behalf of unsuspecting taxpayers. Some scammers may also allege a taxpayer owes taxes and aggressively demand payment for a quick payout.

The Michigan Department of Treasury will never;

- Initiate a phone call or email to ask for personal information.
- Call or email to demand immediate payment using a specific payment method, such as a prepaid debit card, gift card or wire transfer. Generally, Treasury will first send a bill through the U.S. mail to any taxpayer who owes taxes.
- Threaten to immediately bring in local police or other law-enforcement groups to have the taxpayer arrested for not paying.
- Demand that taxes be paid without giving the taxpayer the opportunity to question or appeal the amount owed.
- Ask for credit or debit card numbers over the phone.

Contacted by a scammer? Immediately hang up the phone or delete the email. If you have received a call or email from a scammer, you should report the case to the IRS [through the web](#) or by calling (800) 366-4484. To learn more about tax-related identity theft, go to [www.michigan.gov/identitytheft](http://www.michigan.gov/identitytheft).

### **Need Answers?**

United Way for Genesee County can offer help 24 hours a day by calling 2-1-1 or by visiting their website at <http://www.unitedwaygenesee.org>. They have information and resources on a variety of topics such as utility and rent payment assistance, job search and placement, food, health and child care, housing and temporary shelters, prescription expense assistance, school-related programs, free tax preparation, and more. This is a great resource available to the residents of Genesee County.

## **Community Events**

***Classic Albums Live - The Eagles Hotel California***

Back by popular demand, Classic Albums Live returns for a third year in a row! This year they will be performing The Eagles "Hotel California" album, note for note, cut for cut. Featuring the massive hits "New Kid in Town," "Life in the Fast Lane" "Heartache Tonight" and the title song "Hotel California" this was one of the best-selling albums of the 1970s, and the most popular Eagles album. For more information and a schedule of upcoming performances at The Capitol Theatre visit [thewhiting.com](http://thewhiting.com).

Date: Jan. 18, from 7:30-9:30 p.m.

Where: The Capitol Theatre, 140 E. 2nd St. in Flint.

### ***World Premiere: Ring of Silence***

Enjoy this World Premiere of the feature film RING OF SILENCE, filmed in Genesee County and directed by Nicole Bowers Wallace. When a young girl falls in love with a sweet and charming stranger, she soon finds out that her fairy tale doesn't lead to wonderland, but to a far more seedy underbelly of society. Each ticket sold provides a free community ticket for a local teenager to attend a film screening and learn about the dangers of Sex Trafficking in America. The evening is a fundraiser for the charity Voices For Children. For more information and a schedule of upcoming performances at The Capitol Theatre visit [thewhiting.com](http://thewhiting.com).

Date: Jan. 16, from 7-9 p.m.

Where: The Capitol Theatre, 140 E. 2nd St. in Flint.

### ***Join the Flint Children's Museum for a Snow Princess & Snowman Party***

Dress up as your favorite princess, prince or other fun character and join the Flint Children's Museum for a good time. Party includes meeting and playing with the museum's Snow Princess and Snowman, digging for jewels in the snow, creating your own crown, chipping away at an ice rescue, playing with sparkling snow dough and snacking on winter cookies with drinks.

Date: Jan. 25-Jan. 26, from 9 to 11 a.m. both days.

Where: Flint Children's Museum, 1602 W. University Ave. in Flint.

Seating is limited. For reservations and more information visit [flintchildrensmuseum.org](http://flintchildrensmuseum.org).

***University of Michigan-Flint Theatre and Dance presents My Children! My Africa!***

The search for a means to an end to apartheid inspires Mr. "M", a black South African school teacher, to invite a white South African student named Isabel to join his student Thami in an inter-school debate competition. He hopes this will demonstrate that even in Apartheid-era South Africa, people of different races can work together toward a common goal. Pressure on Thami erupts into a tumultuous conflict between the black township students and the "old-fashioned" black teacher. This astonishingly provocative drama explores the struggle between choosing actions of constructive dialogue or destructive violence in order to accomplish immediate justice and social change

Date: Jan. 27, from 2-4 p.m.

Where: University Theatre, Room 238, 303 E. Kearsley St. in Flint.



I hope that this information has been helpful to you. As always, please feel free to reach out to me at [JohnCherry@house.mi.gov](mailto:JohnCherry@house.mi.gov) or at (517) 373-7515.

Sincerely,

State Representative John Cherry  
House District 48

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