

Senate District 37

Governor Whitmer's plan for COVID-19 relief would directly help Michiganders. Congress passed a bipartisan funding bill that sent much-needed dollars to Michigan to help us return to normal. The Governor's plan includes:

- Funding for Michigan schools to help return to in-person learning.
- Rent and mortgage assistance to keep Michiganders in their homes.
- Restored unemployment as Michigan returns to work.
- Food assistance for Michigan families who are struggling to buy groceries.

More than \$3.3 billion of that federal funding is being held up in the Legislature.

Here's what that means for Senate District 37:

Schools

More than \$15 million in unallocated funds for public schools affecting 31,903 kids in grades K-12. That amounts to \$472.28 per student in District 37 schools.

\$15,067,175 that would help schools in District 37 pay for COVID-19 testing, academic support, social and emotional support for students, and ongoing costs related to the pandemic is currently sitting in the Michigan State Treasury, including:

- \$2,411,329 for Traverse City Area Public Schools
- \$1,166,233 for Sault Ste. Marie Area Schools
- \$951,562 for Cheboygan Area Schools
- \$555,700 for Benzie County Central Schools

Renters and Homeowners

Even before the pandemic began, **37% of renters in District 37 and another 21% of homeowners struggled to afford their monthly housing payments.**

The legislature is withholding **\$339 million** that was meant to keep Michigan families safely in their homes.

Unemployed Workers

Governor Whitmer's plan includes a restoration of unemployment benefits back to 26 weeks. Every county in District 37 has an unemployment rate higher than the state average. Approximate active unemployment claims as of March 2021:

- Antrim County – 1,900 (9.7%)
- Charlevoix County – 1,800 (8.2%)
- Cheboygan County – 2,900 (15.6%)
- Chippewa County – 2,600 (9.1%)
- Emmet County – 2,600 (9.6%)
- Grand Traverse County – 6,600 (7.3%)
- Luce County – 400 (8.6%)
- Mackinac County – 1,300 (19.5%)

Unemployed workers in District 37 could receive **\$2,172 more in benefits** if the Legislature restored the program back to 26 weeks.

Families Needing Food

Even before the pandemic began, many families in District 37 needed help to buy enough food.

- In Antrim County, 54% of K-12 students receive free or reduced price school lunches. 60% of children ages 4 and under receive WIC assistance.
- In Charlevoix County, 51% of K-12 students receive free or reduced price school lunches. 64% of children ages 4 and under receive WIC assistance.
- In Cheboygan County, 61% of K-12 students receive free or reduced price school lunches. 60% of children ages 4 and under receive WIC assistance.
- In Chippewa County, 59% of K-12 students receive free or reduced price school lunches. 62% of children ages 4 and under receive WIC assistance.
- In Emmet County, 41% of K-12 students receive free or reduced price school lunches. 51% of children ages 4 and under receive WIC assistance.
- In Grand Traverse County, 36% of K-12 students receive free or reduced price school lunches. 39% of children ages 4 and under receive WIC assistance.
- In Luce County, 60% of K-12 students receive free or reduced price school lunches. 81% of children ages 4 and under receive WIC assistance.
- In Mackinac County, 57% of K-12 students receive free or reduced price school lunches. 64% of children ages 4 and under receive WIC assistance.

Michigan food banks and community food pantries have reported massive increases in the number of people needing help due to the pandemic. Many of those needing food assistance in District 37 have never used a food bank or food pantry before.

The Legislature is still sitting on **\$2.1 billion** in federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) funding that would help these families and others in Michigan who continue to struggle to afford food because of the pandemic.