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## Whitmer again looking to rob teacher retirement to fund unsustainable programs

RELEASE | *February 7, 2024*

Contact: [Luke Meerman](#)

Rep. Meerman today shared his disappointment with the governor's recent proposal to divert \$670 million from the Michigan Public School Employee's Retirement System (MPERS), which is currently \$30 million in debt.

"The governor's plan to divert \$670 million in MPERS payments is irresponsible and just more of the political theatrics we have already seen from her," Meerman said. "We owe it to taxpayers to clean our debt and commit to proper use of their dollars so

future Michiganders are not on the hook for even more money. This proposal is careless and demonstrates the governor's continued commitment to her political future over the future of Michigan."

In May, Meerman introduced [HB 4692](#) that would have paid down the MPSERS debt by \$1 billion using a portion of the state's historic budget surplus that totaled nearly \$9 billion. The Office of Retirement Services estimated that MPSERS payment would have saved taxpayers \$1.5 billion overall. Meerman was a strong advocate for paying down the debt so that more money could go directly toward educating students.

"Never has our state had such a surplus of funds as we have in the budget presented to us today," Meerman said during a House floor speech in June. "This budget vote is a chance for us as a state to make investments in the futures of our children and grandchildren, and a wise chance for us to setup our schools for years of success."

Unfortunately, his proposal never gained any attention from the House Appropriations Committee, and an amendment to allocate the same funding was not accepted in the School Aid and Michigan Department of Education Appropriations Subcommittee.

"Gov. Whitmer is choosing to set our state further back so she can fund her pet projects and score some positive headlines in the press," Meerman said.

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## RELATED POSTS

### Meerman applauds congressional protections against foreign influence, Michigan democrats fail to follow suit



**Luke Meerman** POSTS | 6.27.24

Rep. Meerman today applauded the U.S. House of Representatives for adopting security measures within the FY2025 National Defense Authorization Act, which authorizes policies, programs and spending for the Department of Defense.

## Rep. Meerman votes to defend the teacher pension fund while Democrats gamble with Michigan's future



**Luke Meerman** POSTS | 6.25.24

State Rep. Luke Meerman voted against legislation passed by House Democrats today to divert resources that were intended to pay down teacher retirement debt, a move that could jeopardize Michigan's state finances.

House Bill 5803 would reduce contributions to the health care system for retired school employees, instead of allowing health care savings to go toward paying down pension debt. The overall retirement system still owes more than \$30 billion in unfunded liabilities.

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## Rep. Meerman votes no on Democrats' plan to weaken election procedures



**Luke Meerman** POSTS | 6.26.24

House Bills 5571-76 make extensive changes to the petition process used for certain elections in Michigan, including nomination petitions, ballot proposals, constitutional, and initiative petitions.

"Give the democrats a gavel and they will pull out every stop to cater to their union friends and stakeholders," Meerman said. "From union symbols and links to websites on petitions, it's a bold way of informing the people who writes their laws and the Legislature should not further relinquish its lawmaking authority."

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## Rep. Meerman to host office hours in Fruitport and Coopersville



**Luke Meerman** POSTS & EVENT | 6.20.24

Fruitport: 9 -10 a.m. on Friday, July 12 at the Fruitport Village Diner

Coopersville: 9-10 a.m. on Monday, July 22 at the Delly Belly Bakery

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