



Fruitland Township  
White River Light Station Museum

# Fruitland Township E-News

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January 14, 2021

## FROM GOVERNOR WHITMER'S OFFICE

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 29, 2020

Media Contact: [Press@Michigan.gov](mailto:Press@Michigan.gov)

## **Governor Whitmer Signs \$106 Million Bipartisan Relief Bill, Bills Extending Unemployment Benefits to 26 Weeks** *Governor Calls on the Republican Legislature to Make Unemployment Extension Permanent*

**LANSING, Mich.** -- Today, Governor Gretchen Whitmer signed the bipartisan relief bill that the Michigan legislature passed after she urged them to provide support for Michigan families, frontline workers, and small businesses. The relief bill includes \$55 million to help small businesses impacted by COVID-19. Grants of up to \$20,000 will be made available to small businesses across the state that need support this winter. The relief bill also includes \$3.5 million for grants of up to \$40,000 each for live music and entertainment venues, and includes \$45 million in direct payments to workers who have been laid off or furloughed as a result of the virus.

"I proposed this stimulus plan to the legislature in November because I know how much our families, frontline workers, and small businesses need relief. This bipartisan bill will provide families and businesses the support they need to stay afloat as we continue working to distribute the safe and effective vaccine and eliminate COVID-19 once and for all," said **Governor Whitmer**. "There is still more work to do to eliminate this virus and grow our economy. All Michiganders have a personal responsibility to do their part and mask up, practice safe social distancing, and avoid indoor gatherings where the virus can easily spread from person to person. We will beat this virus together."

"After zooming a few weeks ago with Governor Whitmer, we are thrilled that she heard our cry for help," said **Chef Jenna Arcidiacono**, owner of Amore Trattoria in Comstock Park. "Many restaurants will not survive without financial support. This gives us hope after the devastating year we have endured."

"Live entertainment venues are vital to communities across Michigan, they are community gathering spaces and vibrant hubs for culture and arts," said **Xavier Verna**, Executive Director of the Ramsdell Regional Center for the Arts. "These funds will provide critical

support to help them get through until we can all gather safely and enjoy entertainment together again.”

“We are grateful that Governor Whitmer has signed a bill that provides some much needed support for entertainment venues and stages like ours,” said **Scott Hammontree**, President of the Michigan Independent Venue and Promoter Association. “Our number one priority is keeping our staff, patrons, and their families safe, and we encourage everyone in communities across Michigan to do your part to end this virus once and for all.”

The governor also signed bipartisan Senate Bill 604 extending unemployment benefits for Michiganders who have lost work as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic from 20 to 26 weeks until the end of March 2021. Senate Bill 604 was sponsored by Senator Curtis Hertel.

“No Michigander should have to worry about how to put food on the table or pay their bills, especially during a global pandemic,” said **Governor Whitmer**. “These bipartisan bills are an important step in providing immediate relief for working families, but there is more work to do. I urge the legislature to take further action to make this permanent. 40 states, including all of our neighbors, automatically provide at least 26 weeks of unemployment relief. Michiganders deserve better than a short-term extension that expires in March. It’s time to work together on a bipartisan, long-term solution for working families.”

From the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, Governor Whitmer and her administration have worked around the clock to ensure benefits for Michiganders who have lost work because of the virus. Since March 15, Governor Whitmer’s administration has paid nearly \$27 billion in benefits to nearly 2.3 million workers.

When she signed the bipartisan relief bill, Governor Whitmer line item vetoed any items not subject to negotiated agreement. That includes a \$220 million giveaway of taxpayer money to the employer-owned Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund - a pool of funds designed to help businesses fund benefits for laid off workers. General fund dollars must be used to fund essential services like vaccines and PPE, not to give tax breaks to big businesses. The Unemployment Insurance Agency has also provided more than \$900 million in tax breaks to businesses impacted by COVID-19. Today, the governor urged the legislature to return to work in January and pass a permanent extension of unemployment benefits and an increase in weekly benefits that provide unemployed Michiganders the support they need to put food on the table for themselves and their families.

On Sunday, the President signed a COVID relief bill that provides some support for Michigan’s unemployed workers. This bill extends benefits to self-employed and gig workers and provides all unemployment recipients with an additional \$300 per week. This extension will bring relief to nearly 700,000 Michigan workers who are currently receiving benefits under the federal UI programs. The continuation of these benefits coupled with the additional \$300 per week for all claimants will provide our workers with the emergency financial assistance to buy essential items like groceries and prescription drugs.

**GOVERNOR WHITMER SIGNS A SERIES OF BILLS INTO LAW**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

December 29, 2020

Contact: [Press@Michigan.gov](mailto:Press@Michigan.gov)

**Governor Whitmer signed a series of Bills into Law. For the entire list, please visit the website <https://www.michigan.gov/whitmer/0,9309,7-387-90487-548570--,00.html>.**