



## **Governor Snyder Releases Budget Recommendations**

*By Sarah Torrico, Policy Intern*

On February 8, Governor Snyder released his budget recommendations for 2017-2018. The budget plans on \$56.3 billion for state spending with a focus on creating more opportunities for residents to work. “[We] are accelerating the comeback” says Snyder who is proposing to attract more business to the state while also preparing locals for new jobs. \$40.9 million will be added to skilled training programs, such as the Going Pro Program, a 32% increase from the previous year, one of the largest increases among state programs. This is to be complemented by the 125.5 million investment in programs aimed at attracting more business. Job creation from within the state is likely to be a byproduct of other bumps in many development programs ranging from increased road infrastructure, increased wages for mental health workers.

In addition to job training, higher education will also receive more funding. In 2011, the state cut funding to universities by about 2.5%, this new budget is set to increase the funds back to its pre-2011 levels with universities receiving 1.5 billion with the requirement that they not increase their tuition past 3.8% annually. At-risk students in K-12 will also see an increase in funding for school districts for each student attending who are either on reduced lunch, or who are in foster care.

There is also a \$4.5 million going to safe drinking water in schools in response to the ongoing Flint water crisis. A larger \$48 million plan to address the crisis will cover nurses and early childhood support with a \$25 million of that going into a “reserve fund” which could go

towards replacing the lead pipes. However, to replace all of the lead pipes in the area would cost upwards of \$55 million.

Retirement investments will be decreased by 0.5%, while many assistance programs receive more money such as homeless emergency shelter programs as well as the “Heat and Eat” food assistance program. While Snyder has made a point to say that this budget prioritizes job creation, it appears that with assistance programs will continue to be a reliable safety net.

The budget also includes funding for many state services including the continuation of the Healthy Michigan Plan; an expansion of access to high-quality child care; and expanded food assistance benefits for families with low incomes, seniors and persons with disabilities.

“A Path Toward Our Future”, the official name of the budget proposal which is currently in the hands of the Legislature who will discuss and vote on the proposal soon. To take a look at the budget proposal in its entirety please read [here](#), or for a more brief presentation, read [here](#).