



# HOUSE of REPRESENTATIVES

## STATE OF MICHIGAN

### Appropriations Requests for Legislatively Directed Spending Items

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1. The sponsoring representative's first name:  
Gina
2. The sponsoring representative's last name:  
Johnsen
3. The cosponsoring representatives' names. All cosponsors must be listed. If none, please type 'n/a.' A signed letter from the sponsor approving the co-sponsorship and a signed letter from the member wishing to co-sponsor are required. Attach letters at question #9 below.  
n/a
4. Name of the entity that the spending item is intended for:  
Ionia County Road Department
5. Physical address of the entity that the spending item is intended for:  
101 W. Main Street, Ionia, MI 48846
6. If there is not a specific recipient, the intended location of the project or activity:  
n/a
7. Name of the representative and the district number where the legislatively directed spending item is located:  
Gina Johnsen, 78th House District
8. Purpose of the legislatively directed spending item. Please include how it provides a public benefit and why it is an appropriate use of taxpayer funding. Please also demonstrate that the item does not violate Article IV, S 30 of the Michigan Constitution. This proposed legislatively directed spending item aims to fund critical repairs to 54 of Ionia County's 67 public bridges. These bridges are vital to the county's transportation infrastructure, supporting access for emergency services, school buses, agricultural equipment, and commercial traffic. As these bridges deteriorate, weight restrictions must often be imposed, forcing essential vehicles—such as fire engines, ambulances, and school buses—to take longer detour routes. These detours come at a significant cost, including increased fuel consumption, delayed emergency response times, and

heightened risk to public safety. If not addressed promptly, bridges can deteriorate to the point of complete closure, creating even more severe consequences for the traveling public and local economy.

Repairing bridges before they reach such critical conditions prevents costly disruptions, preserves public safety, and minimizes long-term financial liabilities. This work is analogous to maintaining a roof: failure to repair a small problem early can eventually result in widespread damage. Ensuring the integrity of public roads and bridges is a fundamental responsibility of government and directly supports the health, safety, and economic vitality of the region.

This proposed legislatively directed spending item would be an appropriate use of taxpayer dollars, as it is entirely dedicated to the preservation of public infrastructure under the jurisdiction of the Ionia County Road Department, a municipal government. The funding will be used to serve a legitimate public purpose—improving transportation safety and reliability—without any benefit to private individuals or entities. Therefore, the appropriation fully complies with Article IV, Section 30 of the Michigan Constitution, which prohibits the use of public funds for private purposes. All project expenditures will be directed toward publicly owned assets for the benefit of the general public.

**9. Attach documents here if needed:**

Attachments added to the end of this file.

**10. The amount of state funding requested for the legislatively directed spending item.**

2100000

**11. Has the legislatively directed spending item previously received any of the following types of funding? Check all that apply.**

["Local","State"]

**12. Please select one of the following groups that describes the entity requesting the legislatively directed spending item:**

Local unit government

**13. For a non-profit organization, has the organization been operating within Michigan for the preceding 36 months?**

Not applicable

**14. For a non-profit organization, has the entity had a physical office within Michigan for the preceding 12 months?**

Not applicable

**15. For a non-profit organization, does the organization have a board of directors?**

Not applicable

16. For a non-profit organization, list all the active members on the organization's board of directors and any other officers. If this question is not applicable, please type 'n/a.'

n/a

17. "I certify that neither the sponsoring representative nor the sponsoring representative's staff or immediate family has a direct or indirect pecuniary interest in the legislatively directed spending item."

Yes, this is correct

18. Anticipated start and end dates for the legislatively directed spending item:

Designs and requests for proposals would begin as soon as funds were received with repairs to be completed within 12 months or sooner, weather permitting.

19. "I hereby certify that all information provided in this request is true and accurate."

Yes



## **Ionia County Road Department**

170 East Riverside Drive

Ionia MI 48846

Phone (616) 527-1700 Fax (616) 527-8848

April 17, 2025

The Honorable Gina Johnsen  
N-1097 House Office Building  
P.O. Box 30014  
Lansing, Michigan 48909

RE: Legislatively Directed Funding Item – Ionia County, Michigan

Dear Representative Johnsen,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide details regarding the need for additional funding to repair 54 of our 67 County bridges.

The media has recently reported numerous discussions about the need for funding to maintain Michigan's Roads and Bridges. I remain hopeful that the discussions will result in additional funding.

However, I am writing today to share Ionia County's urgent need for assistance to repair 54 of our 67 bridges. Monies from the Michigan Transportation Fund and a County Special assessment for Primary Roads and Bridges are exhausted in trying to keep our roads from deteriorating. There simply is not any money left to repair our bridges. We estimate a minimum of \$2.1 million of additional funding is needed for repairs. This estimate is based on essential repairs identified during October 2023 and 2024 inspections.

It is essential that we extend the life of our bridges through timely repairs. Closing bridges due to disrepair must be avoided. Obtaining funding to replace a bridge can take years. For example, we began requesting funds to replace a bridge in 2016, closed the bridge in 2019 and have now been awarded 2025 funds for replacement. We have requested funds for repair through the same Bridge Funding Program, but to date have not been awarded any funds.

Your assistance in obtaining additional funding is greatly appreciated. If I may provide additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Linda Pigue  
Managing Director