

# Economic Recovery Package To Reinvest in America

By U.S. Congressman  
**Bart Stupak**  
*Michigan's First*  
Congressional District

Congress will soon send an economic recovery package to President Obama that reinvests in our economy, infrastructure, and America's middle class.

More than 2.6 million Americans lost their jobs last year; 524,000 jobs were lost in December alone and 140,000 additional job losses were reported last week. The job market looks bleak. Each of us knows someone who is struggling to find work, to provide for their family, and to pay their bills. In Northern Michigan, we work hard, play by the rules, and make every attempt to meet our obligations. Still, our Northern Michigan timber, mining, tourism, and manufacturing industries have been hit hard by the economic crisis, leaving few options outside of federal action to jump-start our economy and put people back to work.

For many months now, I have heard from people across Northern Michigan who are frustrated and want action. They want their gov-

ernment to address their concerns and recognize their struggles in this deepening economic crisis. We must pull together to rebuild our economic engine and our nation's future.

To provide the spark our economy needs, the U.S. House of Representatives recently passed, and I supported, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (HR 1). At this writing, February 4, this legislation is currently undergoing changes in the U.S. Senate. The package may have different dollar amounts and programs when it comes back to the House for a final vote, but its commitment to putting people back to work, assisting struggling families, and sustaining a full economic recovery will remain intact.

Of the \$819 billion in the House-passed package, HR 1 can be broken down into three sections. The first section creates jobs investing in our infrastructure, roads, bridges, and ports. The second section assists American families by extending and increasing unemployment benefits, food stamps, and health insurance coverage. The final piece of the bill sustains our eco-

omic recovery with tax cuts for 95% of all Americans, and increased depreciation and projected loss "carry over" provisions for businesses.

The House bill ensures that the billions of dollars to be appropriated for the purchase of raw materials for infrastructure projects are spent here at home to create American jobs. A "Buy America" provision in the bill requires that construction projects funded through this legislation be built with American steel. This "Buy America" provision will help our domestic steel industry and, in turn, the Northern Michigan mines that provide the iron ore to produce the steel.

The economic spark provided by this package requires a well-oiled engine for the long road to recovery that lies ahead. Critical investments in education; hybrid battery technology; cleaner, greener alternative fuels, and America's electrical grid will create jobs now and in the future. The 3 to 4 million jobs envi-

sioned in this package will not provide all 11 million unemployed Americans a job today, but it does provide the hope of a brighter future.

The economic struggles facing American families every day were created over a number of years by mismanagement on Wall Street, policies that helped the wealthy at the expense of the middle class, and abuses in corporate America. Our economic struggles will not be solved in the weeks and months ahead by this economic package alone. Working with President Obama, we must still address the credit and housing crises and hold government and corporate officials accountable.

Our economy will begin to rebound once faith and confidence are restored. It is a new day in America with a brighter future if we work together and assist each other to build a stronger economy, a greater country, and a more compassionate people.

## Michigan Politics

By  
George Weeks



### Granholt Bold in Annual Message

*The days when our government could be all things to all people are behind us.*

– State of the State, February 3

Governor Jennifer Granholm, not noted for bold strokes, had an array of them in her State of the State Address last week, including a call to reduce the number of departments from 18 to eight.

With apologies to Republican Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger in California, Democrat Granholm in her address was The Michigan Terminator, saying:

- *Eliminate* 10 departments, earmarks in the budget, and state funding of the traditional State and Upper Peninsula fairs

- *Ban* smoking in public places, and utility shut-offs for the remainder of this winter for vulnerable folks

- *Freeze* university and college tuitions and auto insurance rates
- *Cut* "the salaries of all state elected officials in Michigan by 10%"

Such Republicans as State Chairman Saul Anuzis and Attorney General Mike Cox, likely 2010 contender for her open seat, welcomed Granholm's nod to government-shrinking/living within means. But – standard for the opposition party in State if state reaction – they lamented lack of details, some of which will come in the budget.

On Monday, Anuzis called Granholm's comment that is atop this column "The Quote of the Day," and "Granholm rhetoric... if only she and other Democrats believed it. Their campaign rhetoric continues to NOT match reality."

Also on Monday, Anuzis' counterpart, Democratic State Chairman Mark Brewer started his annual weeklong winter trip to the Upper Peninsula to meet with local Democrats. He said: "They did a great job in 2008 up and down the ticket from President Obama to Supreme Court Justice Diane Hathaway. I have made this trip for several years and I enjoy the opportunity to talk to our Party leadership and grassroots activists in the U.P. I will thank them for their work in 2008, talk to them about the challenges of 2009-10, and listen to their concerns." He planned stops in Mackinaw City, St. Ignace, Escanaba, Bruce Crossing, Ironwood, Houghton, Marquette, Munising, Newberry, and Sault Ste. Marie.

I have read the State of the State Messages of every governor since Stevens T. Mason, who at age 25 presided over admission to statehood as the national Panic of 1837 was building and Michigan headed for its first economic fall. Granholm's ranks high as well-crafted, and, among addresses I have watched, well-delivered.

Although Granholm is in a long line of governors to deal with inherited deficits and impacts of national economic downturns, Michigan, leading the nation in unemployment and reeling from woes of the auto industry, poses a particular challenge among governors in state history and among current governors across the land.

Granholm asserted in her address to the Legislature: "Michigan has done more to restrain general funding than any other state in the country. Already, I've cut more than any governor in Michigan history. And the budget I will present to your next week will cut even deeper."

At a 1981 Michigan Historical Commission "Gathering of Gov-

ernors" at Michigan State University, 1949-60 Democratic Governor G. Mennen "Soapy" Williams said: "Each and every one of us stands on the shoulders of our predecessors."

That's not to say governors always *build* upon predecessors. Sometimes they *undo*, which is what Granholm would do to the departmental structure crafted by 1991-2002 Republican Governor John Engler.

Hopefully, Granholm's restructuring means she will finally deliver on her campaign vow to reunite the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). Engler split the environmental and natural resources functions.

*The Detroit News* said Granholm told its editorial board that one of the eight areas of consolidation would be "state sustainability, which she said takes in the departments of natural resources, environmental quality, and agriculture." There goes the farm vote.

Another area she cited, as described by the paper, is "public safety, including the departments of Corrections, Military and Veterans Affairs, and the Michigan State Police."

The role of the State Police, an elite and independent organization that has among other things important investigative functions, should not be diluted as state government goes through yet another restructuring.

Granholm asked Lieutenant Governor John Cherry, another 2010 gubernatorial contender, "to lead a comprehensive effort to dramatically change the shape and size of state government," including the reduction in number of departments and "reforming our civil service system, creating public/private partnerships, and infusing technology everywhere, because we won't settle for 9 to 5 government in a 24/7 world."

Granholm, as Engler and others before her, has the power to reshuffle state departments through executive order, subject to legislative approval of the order. So, ask Republicans, why go through the ritual of a study commission headed by Cherry?

Cherry, in remarks before the Michigan Press Association in Grand Rapids last week, said the administration, through hearings and online opinions, wants to reach out to "build a broad consensus on how to modernize" the state.

In reaction to Granholm's State of the State pitch, GOP State Chairman Anuzis said: "It is encouraging that the Granholm/Cherry administration has finally seen the wisdom in what Republicans have been telling them from the beginning. With the administration opting to reform our state instead of passing another mammoth tax increase, I hope that our state's government can finally work in a bipartisan fashion to root out the structural inefficiencies that have plagued us for too long."

Michigan's current problems do not stem from structural inefficiencies. But partisans who argue that they do and want to assign blame should be aware that since about the mid-20th century, half of Michigan's governors have been Democrats, half Republicans.

*George Weeks retired in 2006 after 22 years as political columnist for The Detroit News. His weekly Michigan Politics column is syndicated by Superior Features.*

### Morning, Evening Book Clubs Meet Next Week at St. Ignace Library

The evening book club will meet Wednesday, February 18, at 6:30 p.m. at the St. Ignace Public Library. The club is reading "A Passage to India" by E. M. Forster.

The morning book club will meet Thursday, February 19, at 9 a.m. at the St. Ignace Public Library to discuss "Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society" by Mary Ann Shaffer.

### Wawatam Seniors Host Potluck Dinner

The Wawatam Area Senior Citizens will host a potluck dinner Sunday, February 15, at 1 p.m. at the Lion Dan Russell Building, also known as the former Mackinaw City Senior Center, in Mackinaw City.

Participants are asked to bring a dish to pass and tableware. For more information, call (231) 436-5626.

## Northern Michigan News Roundup

*The news in brief from communities around the U.P. and northern Michigan*

Compiled using information published in various community newspapers.

### Proposed Theme Park Turned Down Near Grayling

With no proof that a developer could finance the project, a proposal to sell state land near Grayling for a theme park has been rejected by Michigan officials.

The ruling was announced Thursday, February 5, in Lansing.

A Rochester-based firm had proposed building a 1,400-acre park called Main Street America, to include roller coasters, water parks, and other attractions, but the developer has failed to show it could fund the project.

Supporters said the park would give the struggling northern Michigan economy a boost, while critics had questioned whether it could succeed.

– *Petskey News-Review*

### Residents Question Fate of U.P. State Fair

Officials from the Michigan Department of Agriculture led a meeting Thursday night, February 5, in front of a packed crowd at Bay College in Escanaba to discuss the future of the U.P. State Fair now that it will likely no longer receive state funding.

The fair will continue as it is through 2009, officials said, but they suggested forming a strong local group to decide whether to continue the fair through local efforts. Governor Jennifer Granholm officially announced cutting funding for Michigan's two state fairs in her State of the State address Tuesday, February 3.

The state-owned fairgrounds could be conveyed to another state entity through legislative action, while any private, for-profit agency would have to purchase it at fair market price, according to state law.

With local support, the U.P. State Fair could continue to operate, probably even under the same name, but outside the auspices of state government, meeting participants learned.

A U.P. State Fair Board meeting is set for February 20 to discuss making up a transition committee for fair leadership, and what entities may want to take over organizing the fair.

– *Daily Press, Escanaba*

## Les Cheneaux Chamber Will Host 'Breakfast of Champions' Meetings

The Les Cheneaux Chamber of Commerce will be holding a series of breakfast meetings for chamber members to exchange ideas and network with other members.

The "Breakfast of Champions" morning meetings will be on Fridays, February 6, May 15, and

July 10 at Ang-Gio's Restaurant in Cedarville at 7:30 a.m. Topics to be discussed include what chamber members would like to see happen in the Les Cheneaux area and at their respective businesses.

Contact the chamber at 484-3935 to make reservations.

## St. Ignace News Policies

### Letters:

All responsible letters will be considered for publication and may be edited. They must be signed and a telephone number must be included for verification. Personal thank-you notes, personal attacks against other people, form letters, and letters promoting political candidates are not accepted, although letters for or against ballot proposals are welcome.

### Obituaries:

The St. Ignace News maintains a policy of not charging for obituaries and we do often add information or rewrite them for clarity and reader interest. Obituaries that the family wants published exactly as submitted can be placed in the newspaper for \$75. Photographs are welcome at no charge.

### Weddings:

Weddings with photographs are published without charge within 45 days of the ceremony. After 45 days, a photograph can be included for \$35.00.

### Internet:

The complete edition of The St. Ignace News is available online at [stignacenews.com](http://stignacenews.com).

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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Oppose Freedom of Choice Act

To the Editor:

Our new President and Congress face serious national challenges at this time, requiring all Americans to unite for the common good of all. This is no time to divide our nation by attacking the weakest and most powerless among us, or ignoring the pro-life values of millions of Catholics and other Americans.

A bill in Congress called the "Freedom of Choice Act," or FOCA, represents the most serious legislative threat to unborn children ever. It would create a "fundamental right" to abortion that government could not limit but would be required to fund and support. It would overturn a broad range of pro-life policies currently allowed under the Supreme Court's *Roe v. Wade* abortion decision; laws protecting parental involvement in an underage daughter's abortion decision, laws upholding conscience rights, limits on abortion funding, bans on partial-birth abortion, and so on.

FOCA itself may become law, or the harmful policies it represents may become law one step at a time. In either case, we must oppose FOCA and all that it stands for.

Jackie Bolander  
Mackinac Island

## Sports Should Be Fair

To the Editor:

I had a letter written pointing out my concerns over the waste of money at City Hall and was going to turn it in for this week's paper, until I read the article published last week regarding the abuse toward Coach Dorene Ingalls.

Any coach, referee, or anyone else who would denigrate a coach of Mrs. Ingalls' caliber should be ashamed of themselves; rules or no rules. This is a high school basketball game; it's called sport, so let's act like one.

Joe Durm  
St. Ignace

## The St. Ignace News

and Les Cheneaux Islands Weekly Wave

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The quotation under the flag of *The St. Ignace News* on Page 1 is from the 10 triads written by Dr. Fred Newton Scott, creator and teacher of the first continuous course in journalism in the United States at the University of Michigan in 1890. The 10 triads are chiseled on the parapet of the Detroit News Building at 615 Lafayette Boulevard, Detroit. They were headed "Ideals of the Press" or "The Newspaper as a Free Society," and serve as a reminder of what a free press means to us.