



Dear Friends,

In my last newsletter, I talked about two subjects: The City of Detroit and Senate Bill 4, which would repeal our state income tax over a period of five years. I also stated that this would put a hole in our budget of \$9 billion. Some residents thought that meant I would leave that \$9 billion hole, a fair assumption since I did not address that issue in the letter. However, I would never do that. I am confident that we could find the money to fill that hole, but that is a topic for the future.

Today, I want to talk with you about my rationale in repealing our state's income tax. I am advocating this legislation because first and foremost, the citizens of this state have not had any meaningful tax relief in over 20 years. Secondly, but just as important, we need to grow our population back. To me, both of these points are intertwined.

From 2010 to 2016, Michigan grew in population by a paltry 44,000 people, while North Carolina grew by over 390,000 in that same time frame. Texas grew by 2.7 million people, Florida by 1.8 million people, Washington by 563,000 people, and South Dakota grew more than Michigan at 51,000 people, despite being such a small state. These numbers are stunning and we must ask ourselves: What are these states doing that we are not doing?

We must ask ourselves why, in 1967, we had 19 Congressional Districts, but we now have only 14. After the 2020 census, that figure will drop to 13. That is a loss of 33% in our federal voting power. To say the least, this means and says a lot. Other states are gaining power because they are adding population, but we are falling further and further behind. This must stop!

Why is it that we have less population today than we did in 2006? Granted, the Great Recession had something to do with this, but this was not a single state recession. Many other states were affected by the Great Recession but kept growing. Lastly, I must ask, why in the 2010 census was Michigan the only, I repeat the only, state in the Union to lose population? We lost 54,000 people. These questions must be reckoned with in a very objective manner **if we are to become a vibrant and strong state that continues to grow.**

**There is no question in my mind that Michigan needs a "game changer!"** I believe that the repeal of the state income tax is just the stimulus we need to increase our population. Former Texas Governor, Rick Perry, stated: "Not having a state income tax is our state's greatest selling point." I have a better one and it goes like this: "Michigan is a right to work state and oh, by the way, we do not have a state income tax either." That is powerful, but what is even more powerful is putting more money back in your hands for you to spend. **After all, it is your money.**

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***"I AM WORKING FOR YOU!"***

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There are seven states in the U.S. that do not have an income tax: Texas, Florida, Nevada, Washington, South Dakota, Alaska, and Wyoming. From 2010 through 2016, in regard to population, Texas grew by 10.8%, Florida grew by 9.6%, Nevada by 8.9%, Washington by 8.4%, South Dakota by 6.3%, Alaska by 4.5%, and Wyoming by 3.9%. Michigan grew by only .004%.

The numbers above are absolutely stunning. These seven states are putting up gains that Michigan is not even getting close to. The gains spell out a heavy duty increase of revenue into their state coffers. As the process unfolds, they naturally have more money for tax cuts, infrastructure, education, and a lot more.

What is not surprising is the difference in personal income per capita when you compare Michigan to six of these states. Personal income per capita in 2015 in Michigan was \$42,427. In Alaska, it is \$54,012. In Washington, it is \$49,610. In Wyoming, it is \$54,534. In South Dakota, it is \$45,279. In Texas, it is \$45,669 and in Florida, it is \$42,737. This represents a 14.2% difference in personal income per capita when you compare these states to Michigan. Couple these figures with the growth of population in these states and it is pretty easy to understand why they are doing so well.

We need to do everything we can to attract new businesses and residents to Michigan. We need to motivate residents who have left to come back. In short, once again, we need a **“game changer.”** I am convinced that repealing our state income tax would do just that.

In closing, there is no reason to fear change. We must respond to our competition, keep moving forward, and most of all, we need to grow. If you have any comments or suggestions, by all means, please contact me. It is my pleasure and my honor to serve as your State Senator.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jack". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping initial "J" and a long, horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jack Brandenburg  
State Senator - District 8