



# MICHIGAN SENATE

## Appropriations Requests for Legislatively Directed Spending Items

Date Submitted: 05/04/2026

**1. Sponsoring legislator's full name:**

Senator Winnie Brinks

**2. Cosponsoring legislators' names (if applicable):**

N/A

**3. Intended legislatively directed spending item recipient:**

John Ball Zoo

**4. Physical address of legislatively directed spending item recipient and the intended location of the project or activity:**

Address: 1300 Fulton St W, Grand Rapids, MI 49504 Intended Location: Kent County

**5. The recipient's employer identification number:**

38-6076879

**6. Requested amount of the legislatively directed spending item:**

\$30,000,000.00

**7. What is the purpose and how does the legislatively directed spending item provide a public benefit that is an appropriate use of taxpayer money?**

The proposed aquarium will be a national level attraction aquarium with an approximate total project cost of \$450 million, bringing in more than 1 million visitors per year. More than 65% of those visitors will be from outside of Michigan's borders. The LDSI will be used for construction of the facility as well as attracting additional local and philanthropic dollars. We expect that more than \$100 million in philanthropic funding will be used to match over and above the state dollars. The benefits to such a facility are broad and vast, including a \$3.4 billion economic impact in the state of Michigan over 10 years. This project also brings new state tax dollars (\$24 million per year ongoing and \$16 million during construction) with significant employment (2,400 ongoing and 3,700 construction) and an ultramodern

educational and tourist attraction that will attract visitors and new residents to Michigan.

- 8. Has the legislatively directed spending item previously received or been awarded any of the following types of funding in the past 5 years? If so, how much? Check all that apply:**

State

**Amount**

\$14,000,000.00

- 9. Estimated time frame for completion of the legislatively directed spending item project:**

2031

- 10. Is the recipient a nonprofit corporation?**

Yes

*Additional Information for Nonprofit Corporations (if applicable)*

*The answer to questions 1 to 3 must be "Yes" for the nonprofit corporation to qualify for a legislatively directed spending item.*

- 1. Has the nonprofit corporation continuously operated in this state for the preceding 36 months?**

Yes

- 2. Has the nonprofit corporation had a physical office in this state for not less than the preceding 12 consecutive months?**

Yes

- 3. Does the organization have a board of directors?**

Yes

- 4. List all of the officers and active members on the board of directors:**

Raul Alvarez Casey Aubi Jennifer Boezwinkle Mandy Bolter Johnny Brann Jr. Gary Carey Tim Gordon Tracey Hornbeck Mark Janes Jim Krzeminski Rachel Laug Sam Moore Rachel Mraz Curt Mulder Deborah Phillips Stan Ponstein Stan Stek Michael

Sytsma Amanda Van Essen Wirth Kyle Van Andel Rob VerHeulen

*Certification By Sponsoring Legislator*

*"I certify that my immediate family members, legislative staff members, and I have no direct or indirect pecuniary interest in the requested legislatively directed spending item."*

*"I certify that the intended recipient of this legislatively directed spending item is not a for-profit entity."*

*"I certify that the information in this form is true to the best of my knowledge."*

*Senator Winnie Brinks*