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## MICHIGAN HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

# TODD COURSER

## STATE REPRESENTATIVE

July 2, 2015

This is submitted as an official request to the office of the Honorable Attorney General Bill Schuette, for an opinion as to the legality of the process in which the state senators procured the acquisition of the Capitol View (proposed Senate) Building.

At the end of the 2013-2014 legislative session, the Michigan Senate entered into a purchase agreement, backed by bonds from the Michigan Strategic Fund, to purchase office space within the Capitol View building in downtown Lansing. The purchase price was reportedly upwards of \$41 million dollars. The Assessor of Record for the city of Lansing, where the building is located, subsequently noted that the purchase price was vastly over the true cost and value of similar office space in downtown Lansing. The Assessor instead placed the value on the office space at closer to \$12 million, a stunning discrepancy.

Though no statute currently bars a house of the legislature for entering into these bonding agreements, the discrepancies raise several questions of which I would appreciate a legal opinion from the Attorney General's office.

The State of Michigan real estate division requires that an appraisal be done before buying any building. Why was there no appraisal done on the Capitol View (proposed Senate) Building prior to purchase?

Why is the office of the Senate Majority Leader saying that they felt that an appraisal was not necessary for this purchase?

William Fowler (Assessor of Record in Lansing) is on record saying that the current value of the building is just under \$12 million. What formula or computation was used to determine a purchase price of \$41 million?

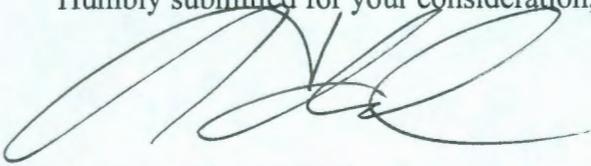
Why is the Michigan Strategic Fund floating the bonds for the purchase of the Capitol View Building? The House has not authorized the sale of the current Senate building. Is this an acceptable action for the Michigan Strategic Fund?

The Senate is claiming it will cost \$25 million to update their current building. They are using this as a justification for the move. The Governor's office is saying that the expense should be \$11.5 million. Why has nobody been able to see the engineering report that was done detailing the work needed? The Senate will not release this document.

Four bids were submitted, but none of them have been seen. Why are we to believe that this was the "best deal?" The Senate will not release this information either.

Did taxpayers overpay for this building, because the seller involved is a big political donor? Have certain Senators benefited by donations from the seller of this building?

Humbly submitted for your consideration,



Representative Todd Courser

This is the letter that was supposed to be sent to the LG. But didn't get sent due to staff issues @ that moment.  
Todd