

# Michigan's Governance Gap

## When State Systems Amplify Harm — and the Case for a Performance Audit

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### What is State-Created Risk?

State-created risk occurs when government systems, policies, or public records expose citizens to harm that would not otherwise exist — because agencies lack safeguards or coordination to respond to documented threats.

#### The Pattern

Warning signals exist inside state systems — courts, legislative offices, agencies.

Responsibility is diffused. No mechanism forces the pieces together.

Harm accumulates while agencies follow their own procedures correctly.

#### The Mechanism

Public records systems expose sensitive information without safety review.

Court databases allow bad actors to weaponize filings.

Legislative offices escalate constituent questions into security events.

#### Michigan Has Seen This

Larry Nassar — complaints siloed across MSU, USA Gymnastics, and law enforcement for years.

Flint Water — state held contamination data while residents reported harm.

Both times: no coordination. Harm compounded.

### FOUR QUESTIONS A PERFORMANCE AUDIT MUST ANSWER

#### Cross-Agency Protocols

Do Michigan agencies have protocols when state systems contribute to citizen harm?

#### Risk Communication

Are safety risks shared across courts, legislative offices, and executive agencies?

#### Records Safeguards

Do public records systems flag individuals with documented threatening conduct patterns?

#### Oversight Capacity

Can existing mechanisms identify systemic failures before harm escalates?

### The Structural Failure Behind the Pattern

The problem is rarely a single bad decision. Information about dangerous conduct remains siloed. State actors lack protocols when harassment crosses jurisdictional lines. Victims re-report the same conduct to offices with no shared visibility. The system rewards persistence by offenders while exhausting those seeking protection.

### The Ask: Michigan Office of the Auditor General

Auditor General Doug Ringler should initiate a performance audit examining whether Michigan state agencies have the internal controls, interagency coordination, and safety protocols to prevent state systems from amplifying harm to citizens.

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