

# The Daily News

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# Lower introduces fresh water project

SPECIAL TO THE DAILY NEWS

LANSING — State Reps. Jim Lower and Abdullah Hammoud have introduced legislation to improve inspection and maintenance of septic systems. Under state law, Michigan doesn't define the malfunction or failure of an onsite wastewater treatment system, and the proposal would establish standards.

"This plan offers needed and concise measures to monitor septic systems which would protect our natural resources and public health," said Lower. "Septic systems in our state often operate around rivers, streams, inland lakes, wells and other water sources that people and native species rely on. With these reforms, we will be able to more easily identify a failure and begin the remedial process between a locality and property owner to help limit the impact that a failure has in an effort to reduce contamination."

Lower's bill, along with bipartisan companion legislation sponsored by Hammoud, would establish state and local standards. This includes allowing alternative septic systems on a statewide basis as long as the systems have proper permitting and construction. The bills would place certain triggers on systems for more regular inspection.

"When systems fail and are left undetected, we all face the consequences," said Lower. "This plan will provide the framework for a robust inspection process that helps to increase awareness for the trouble that can impact areas — both financially and ecologically — when systems fail. Promoting proper maintenance will be a vehicle to preventing failures."

"Michigan has the nation's weakest septic system standards, which is unacceptable for a state with an economy built on fresh water," said Hammoud. "Removing contamination from our state's fresh water is vital for our public health — and is long overdue. I am proud to be working across the aisle with Rep. Lower to bring stakeholders together to solve this critical issue."