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Michigan's Governor Just Apologized for the Flint Water Crisis Benjamin Snyder, 2016

There have been calls for his resignation.

Michigan Governor Rick Snyder, facing protests, lawsuits and calls for his resignation over drinking water contamination in Flint, on Tuesday apologized to the city's residents and called for the state to spend \$28 million on fixes.

"To you, the people of Flint, I say tonight as I have before, I am sorry and I will fix it," Snyder said in his annual speech to lawmakers, adding that federal, state and local leaders had failed residents.

Snyder, a Republican, asked lawmakers to authorize \$28 million in spending on diagnostic tests, health treatment for children and adolescents, replacement of old fixtures in Flint schools and day care centers and a study of the city's water pipes. He also said additional funding would be needed.

Some people have reported rashes, hair loss and other problems since Flint, under a state-appointed emergency manager, switched to Flint River water in April 2014 from a Detroit-run water system to save money, attorneys for the residents said.

Complaints about the water began within a month of the switch, but Flint did not return to Detroit water until October 2015 after tests showed elevated levels of lead in Flint tap water and in some children.

The corrosive river water caused more lead to leach from Flint pipes than Detroit water did, increasing contaminants in the tap water.

President Barack Obama met on Tuesday with recently elected Flint Mayor Karen Weaver over the crisis, which has become part of the U.S. presidential debate with candidates on both sides questioning the slow response.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency said it acted too slowly to address the situation in Flint. Snyder promised to release his Flint-related emails from 2014 and 2015 on Wednesday. He has rejected calls for his resignation by some protesters.

"Lansing failed in one of its most basic functions, ensuring the well-being and health of our citizens," state House Democratic Leader Tim Greimel said after the speech. At least 1,000 people protested at the Capitol on Tuesday, some holding baby bottles filled with brown water.

"The governor has a business agenda and his business agenda was to take over the water to profit in it," said Lila Cabbil, a demonstrator from Detroit.

Several lawsuits have been filed. The latest on Tuesday asks a judge to stop Flint from issuing shutoff notices to residents, who are still receiving bills for water declared undrinkable.

Attorney Cary McGehee said lawyers have heard from more than 500 people reporting health problems and financial hardships.