

## In This Issue:

- 3 2006 Public Acts Affecting Townships
- 4 Summer Legislative Conference



# capitol currents

Official Publication of the Michigan Townships Association

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## A Legislative Update for Township Officials

### Rep. Chris Ward Named MTA Legislator of the Year



The Michigan Townships Association (MTA) named State Rep. Chris Ward as the 2006 MTA Legislator of the Year at the 54th Annual Educational Conference and Expo at the Detroit Marriott at the Renaissance Center. Rep. Ward received the award in front of roughly 1,500 township officials, legislators, vendors and guests at the Association's Annual Banquet, January 25.

Ward represents the 66th Michigan House District and resides in **Brighton Township** (Livingston Co). He is currently the House Minority Floor Leader and served as the House Majority Floor Leader during the 2005-06 session when Republicans were in the majority.

At 32 years of age, Rep. Ward is certainly one of the younger (if not the youngest) recipients of MTA Legislator of the Year Award. His age, however, is not a reliable indicator of his experience. Before being elected to the Michigan House of Representatives, Rep. Ward was elected at age 18 as a trustee on the Brighton Township Board. He was re-elected twice before being appointed as township clerk. He was elected twice as clerk and completed the program to become a Certified Municipal Clerk. His

township tenure lasted 10 years before going to Lansing.

In his first-term in the Legislature, Ward was named Chairman of the Local Government Committee and had an astronomical amount of legislation (24 bills) signed into law, especially for a freshman. Some of those notable pieces of legislation included: election consolidation, conditional rezoning, the ability to allow for exclusionary zoning where joint planning exists, as well as the legislation that allows noncontiguous PUDs to be established (effectively creating the first law in Michigan to allow transfer of development rights).

Rep. Ward was recently named as a member of the House Ethics and Elections Committee, the Health Policy Committee and the Regulatory Reform Committee for the 2007-08 session. MTA looks forward to our continued work with him. We extend our sincere congratulations to Rep. Chris Ward. ■

### Speaker Dillon Announces Membership of House Committees

Following the renaming and addition of several House Committees, Speaker Andy Dillon (D-Redford Chtr. Twp.) announced the membership of all standing House committees during the last full week of January. Listed below is the membership, including chairs (C) and majority (VC) and minority vice-chairs (MVC) for those committees of key importance to MTA and local units of government. Democrats are listed first, with Republicans listed starting with the minority vice-chair. Contact information is available at: [www.house.michigan.gov](http://www.house.michigan.gov).

#### Agriculture (7 Democrats, 4 Republicans)

Jeff Mayes (C-Bangor Chtr. Twp.)  
Barb Byrum (VC-Onondaga Twp.)  
Kathy Angerer (Dundee Twp.)  
Terry Brown (Winsor Twp.)  
Kathleen Law (Gibraltar)  
Gabe Leland (Detroit)  
Joel Sheltrown (Ogemaw Twp.)  
Howard Walker (MVC-Peninsula Twp.)  
Richard Ball (Bennington Twp.)  
Arlan Meekhof (Olive Twp.)  
Neal Nitz (Baroda Twp.)

*Continued on page 2*

**Appropriations (18 Democrats, 11 Republicans)**

George Cushingberry (C-Detroit)  
Doug Bennett (Muskegon Chtr. Twp.)  
Joan Bauer (Lansing)  
Pam Byrnes (Lyndon Twp.)  
Marsha Cheeks (Detroit)  
John Espinoza (Croswell)  
Matt Gillard (Alpena)  
Lee Gonzales (Flint Chtr. Twp.)  
Richard Hammel (Flushing)  
Morris Hood III (Detroit)  
Shanelle Jackson (Detroit)  
Michael Lahti (Hancock)  
Richard LaBlanc (Westland)  
Gary McDowell (Rudyard Twp.)  
Michael Sak (Grand Rapids)  
Alma Wheeler Smith (Salem Twp.)  
Dudley Spade (Franklin Twp.)  
Aldo Vagnozzi (Farmington Hills)  
Daniel Acciavatti (MVC-Chesterfield Twp.)  
Dave Agema (Grandville)  
Fran Amos (Waterford Chtr. Twp.)  
Darwin Booher (Osceola Twp.)  
Jack Brandenburg (Harrison Twp.)  
Bruce Caswell (Adams Twp.)  
Bill Caul (Mt. Pleasant)  
Geoff Hansen (Hart Twp.)  
Chuck Moss (Birmingham)  
John Proos (St. Joseph Chtr. Twp.)  
Rick Shaffer (Three Rivers)

**Commerce (12 Democrats, Seven Republicans)**

Andy Meisner (C-Ferndale)  
Robert Jones (VC- Kalamazoo)  
Frank Accavitti (Eastpointe)  
Barb Byrum (Onondaga Twp.)  
Ed Clemente (Lincoln Park)

Andy Coulouris (Saginaw)  
Robert Dean (Grand Rapids)  
Marty Griffin (Jackson)  
Bert Johnson (Detroit)  
Joel Sheltrown (Ogemaw Twp.)  
Mike Simpson (Liberty Twp.)  
Mary Valentine (Muskegon)  
Dave Hildenbrand (MVC-Lowell Chtr. Twp.)  
Bill Huizenga (Zeeland)  
Rick Jones (Oneida Chtr. Twp.)  
Marty Knollenberg (Troy)  
Kim Meltzer (Clinton Twp.)  
Dave Palsrok (Manistee)  
John Stakoe (Highland Chtr. Twp.)

**Energy & Technology (12 Democrats, Seven Republicans)**

Frank Accavitti (C-Eastpointe)  
Jeff Mayes (VC-Bangor Chtr. Twp.)  
Kathy Angerer (Dundee Twp.)  
Terry Brown (Winsor Twp.)  
Ed Clemente (Lincoln Park)  
Kate Ebli (Frenchtown Chtr. Twp.)  
Ted Hammon (Burton)  
Hoon-Yung Hoppood (Taylor)  
Lamar Lemmons, Jr. (Detroit)  
Steven Lindberg (Marquette Twp.)  
Fred Miller (Mt. Clemens)  
Tim Melton (Auburn Hills)  
Mike Nofs (MVC-Battle Creek)  
John Garfield (Rochester Hills)  
Ken Horn (Frankenmuth)  
Bill Huizenga (Zeeland)  
John Moolenaar (Midland)  
Paul Opsommer (DeWitt)  
Dave Palsrok (Manistee)

**Ethics & Elections (Five Democrats, Three Republicans)**

Mark Corriveau (C-Northville)  
Ed Clemente (VC-Lincoln Park)

ren)  
Kathleen Law (VC-Gibraltar)  
Paul Condino (Southfield)  
Bob Constan (Dearborn Heights)  
Gino Polidori (Dearborn)  
Coleman Young, Jr. (Detroit)  
Jack Hoogendyk (MVC-Texas Chtr. Twp.)  
Joe Hune (Hamburg Twp.)  
David Law (West Bloomfield Chtr. Twp.)

**Great Lakes & the Environment (Nine Democrats, Six Republicans)**

Rebekah Warren (C-Ann Arbor)  
Marie Donigan (MVC-Royal Oak)  
Kate Ebli (Frenchtown Chtr. Twp.)  
Marty Griffin (Jackson)  
Kathleen Law (Gibraltar)  
Gabe Leland (Detroit)  
Mark Meadows (East Lansing)  
Fred Miller (Mt. Clemens)  
Mary Valentine (Muskegon)  
Dave Robertson (MVC-Grand Blanc Twp.)  
Judy Emmons (Bushnell Twp.)  
Arlan Meekhof (Olive Twp.)  
John Moolenaar (Midland)  
Brian Palmer (Bruce Twp.)  
Howard Walker (Peninsula Twp.)

**Intergovernmental, Urban & Regional Affairs (Seven Democrats, Four Republicans)**

Barb Byrum (C-Onondaga Twp.)  
Coleman Young, Jr. (VC-Detroit)  
Andy Coulouris (Saginaw)  
Barbara Farrah (Southgate)  
Marty Griffin (Jackson)  
Bert Johnson (Detroit)  
Mark Meadows (East Lansing)  
Phillip Pavlov (MVC-St. Clair Twp.)  
Arlan Meekhof (Olive Twp.)  
Neal Nitz (Baroda Twp.)  
Paul Opsommer (DeWitt)

**Tax Policy (Ten Democrats, Seven Republicans)**

Steve Bieda (C-Warren)  
Paul Condino (VC-Southfield)  
Barbara Farrah (Southgate)  
Robert Jones (Kalamazoo)  
Jeff Mayes (Bangor Chtr. Twp.)  
Andy Meisner (Ferndale)  
Tim Melton (Auburn Hills)  
Joel Sheltrown (Ogemaw Twp.)  
Rebekah Warren (Ann Arbor)  
Coleman Young, Jr. (Detroit)  
Kim Meltzer (MVC-Clinton Twp.)  
Brian Calley (Portland)

Steve Bieda (Warren)  
Marie Donigan (Royal Oak)  
Ted Hammon (Burton)  
Tom Pearce (MVC-Cannon Twp.)  
Chris Ward (Brighton Chtr. Twp.)  
Lorence Wenke (Richland Twp.)

**Government Operations (Six Democrats, Three Republicans)**

Lisa Wojno (C-War-

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Fulton Sheen (Plainwell)  
Glenn Steil, Jr. Cascade Chtr. Twp.)  
Lorence Wenke (Richland Twp.)

**Tourism, Outdoor Recreation & Natural Resources**  
**(Seven Democrats, Four Republicans)**

Joel Sheltrown (C-Ogemaw Twp.)  
Kate Ebli (VC-Frenchtown Chtr. Twp.)  
Terry Brown (Winsor Twp.)  
Ted Hammon (Burton)

Bert Johnson (Detroit)  
Kathleen Law (Gibraltar)  
Steven Lindberg (Marquette Twp.)  
Mark Meadows (East Lansing)  
Mike Simpson (Liberty Twp.)  
Tom Casperson (MVC-Wells Twp.)  
Ken Horn (Frankenmuth)  
John Stakoe (Highland Chtr. Twp.)  
Howard Walker (Peninsula Twp.)

**Transportation (10 Democrats, Seven Republicans)**

Hoon-Yung Hopgood (C-Taylor)  
Marty Griffin (VC-Jackson)  
Frank Accavitti (Eastpointe)

Steve Bieda (Warren)  
Marie Donigan (Royal Oak)  
Kate Ebli (Frenchtown Chtr. Twp.)  
Gabe Leland (Detroit)  
Jeff Mayes (Bangor Chtr. Twp.)  
Fred Miller (Mt. Clemens)  
Coleman Young, Jr. (Detroit)  
Phil LaJoy (MVC-Canton Chtr. Twp.)  
Tom Casperson (Wells Twp.)  
Marty Knollenberg (Troy)  
Neal Nitz (Baroga Twp.)  
Phillip Pavlov (St. Clair Twp.)  
Tom Pearce (Cannon Twp.)  
John Stahl (Arcadia Twp.) ■

## 2006 Public Acts Affecting Townships



PA 13 (Rep. Green) Expands ability for Board of Review to correct assessing problems at July and December meetings.

PA 33-37 (Sens. Birkholz, Patterson, Van Woerkom, Basham and Brater) Expands protection of groundwater and surface water including regulating certain municipal water systems.

PA 56-59 (Sen. Bishop, Reps. Acciavatti, Pavlov and Palsrok) Places restrictions on solid waste imported from other countries.

PA 76 (Sen. Switalski) Transfers funds from the survey and remonumentation fund to the state general fund.

PA 81 (Sen. Basham) Increases the minimum wage in Michigan.

PA 85-86 (Rep. Palmer) Revises the procedure for establishing speed limits on certain dirt roads.

PA 87 (Sen. Switalski) Revises the deadline to file as a write-in candidate.

PA 110 (Rep. Elsenheimer) Eliminates the Township Zoning Act and creates the Municipal Zoning Enabling Act.

PA 114 (Sen. Cassis) Extends the principal residence exemption for revocable trusts of certain individuals.

PA 122 (Rep. Ward) Creates a uniform date for when nominating petitions must be submitted including village elections.

PA 132 (Sen. VanWoerkom) Preempts seeds from local ordinances.

PA 139-141 (Sens. Prusi, Gilbert and Rep. Casperson) Local match for road construction.

PA 143 (Rep. Walker) Allows the appointment of an alternate to the Board of Review.

PA 154 (Sen. Kuipers) Revises the procedure for adopting budgets where county tax allocation boards operate.

PA 189-209 (numerous sponsors) Creates Bureau of Fire Services and transfers responsibility to the new bureau.

PA 214 (Rep. Hune) Expands definition of agricultural property to include the raising of horses and deer along with certain other animals.

PA 237 (Rep. Hansen) Revises the procedures to establish special rules for the use of inland lakes.

PA 244 (Sen. Stamas) Limits liability when donating fire equipment to another fire department.

PA 245 (Sen. Goschka) Increases the number of allowable installments on certain special assessments to 40.

PA 275 (Sen. Birkholz) Provides permits and procedures for the removal of small dams.

PA 276 (Rep. LaJoy) Establishes procedure for local government input

on high school site plans.

PA 278 (Rep. Stahl) Defines hunting preserves as agricultural property for purposes of property taxation.

PA 279 (Rep. Bieda) Allows employees of businesses within DDA boundaries to serve on the governing board.

PA 297 (Sen. Stakoe) Allows traffic enforcement on certain private roads.

PA 326 (Sen. Allen) Exempts federally qualified health centers from personal property taxes.

PA 336 (Sen. Birkholz) Amends the procedure for approving final plats for county road commissions.

PA 367-371 (various sponsors) Revises procedures for condemning property under eminent domain.

PA 376 (Rep. Hildenbrand) Includes horse boarding stables as agricultural property for property tax purposes.

PA 378 (Sen. VanWoerkom) Exempts certain qualified forest property from the 18-mill school tax.

PA 379 (Sen. Stamas) Creates a recapture tax when qualified forest property is sold for development.

PA 381-382 (Sen. Johnson and Rep. Elsenheimer) Modifies the commercial forest tax and creates specific penalties for withdrawing property from the program.

PA 400 (Sen. Hardiman) Allows pooled investment programs for local governments.

PA 405 (Rep. Caul) Prohibits sale or possession

Continued on page 4



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*Continued from page 3*

of firefighter or EMS uniforms under certain circumstances.

PA 446 (Sen. McManus) Exempts certain property with deed restrictions from the "pop-up" provision of the constitution as a transfer of property.

PA 447-448 (Sens. George and Gilbert) Creates a moratorium on issuance of permits for billboards along state trunklines.

PA 465 (Rep. Stakoe) Shortens the time to review amendments to master plans of neighboring communities.

PA 466 (Rep. Stakoe) Authorizes townships to regulate public access sites on inland lakes when DNR is not present.

PA 467 (Rep. Kooiman) Allows the delay of tax capture on Brownfield Redevelopment projects to coincide with the start of construction.

PA 480 (Rep. Nofs) Modifies cable franchising to eliminate local cable franchises and establish statewide criteria.

PA 486 (Rep. Hildenbrand) Increases the number of small claims filed per week by municipalities.

PA 499 (Rep. Lipsey) Provides for the expansion of the county road commission to 5 members at the direction of the county commission.

PA 503 (Rep. Kuipers) Revises regulations of fertilizer use in residential area.

PA 519 (Sen. Birkholz) Clarifies the treatment of gas and oil rights in tax foreclosure process.

PA 520-530 (various sponsors) Extends the operation of the scrap tire program.

PA 549 (Rep. Stakoe) Allows enforcement of certain vehicle code violations on private roads.

PA 550 (Rep. Ball) Exempts methane digesters from property taxes.

PA 551 (Rep. Bieda) Requires local governments that sell dog licenses to include information on ear tattooing and micro chip implantation for identification purposes.

PA 554 (Rep. Pastor) Adds multifamily residential uses for commercial redevelopment districts.

PA 582 (Sen. Jacobs) Requires automatic defibrillators in all life support vehicles and requires all personnel be trained in its use.

PA 598 (Rep. Hoogendyk) Provides for the expansion of the county road commission to five members if approved by the county commission.

PA 605 (Rep. Gaffney) Revises procedures for voting absentee when military personnel are stationed outside our country.

PA 608 (Rep. Jones) Removes cap on compensation for certain joint fireboards and instead leaves the issue to the municipal governing boards.

PA 624 (Sen. Emerson) Eliminates the duty for state treasurer to collect summer taxes when municipality and county opt out of collections.

PA 627 (Rep. Farhat) Requires township to provide flag holders and flags for all veterans in all public and private cemeteries within the township.

PA 633 (Sen. Allen) Specifies that wind turbines (windmills) are personal property and may be exempted from personal property taxes.

PA 664 (Rep. Walker) Modifies the way bed & breakfasts are assessed for the purpose of determining principal residence exemption. ■

## Plan Ahead for the 2007 Summer Legislative Forum!

*Date: August 8, 9, 10, 2007*

*Place: Shanty Creek Resort & Club in Bellaire, MI*

The golf outing (not included in conference registration fee) is scheduled for Wednesday, August 8 and early-bird registration. Thursday, August 9 will be the opening date and the conference will conclude at noon on Friday, August 10.