



WEEKLY LEGISLATIVE REPORT

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Please route to all interested parties in your township.

GOVERNOR SIGNS CABLE DISPUTE RESOLUTION BILL INTO LAW

Governor Granholm recently signed into law legislation to address cable disputes that favor cable providers over local units of government before the Michigan Public Service Commission. SB 190 now becomes PA 4 of 2009, and has immediate effect. Prior efforts by MTA and MML, which focused on amending language in the legislation that favors cable companies for legal expenses, were largely unsuccessful before the bill was sent to the governor. MTA is skeptical that the dispute resolution process created under the new act will achieve its intended goal of encouraging parties to use the dispute resolution process in lieu of filing suit in circuit court.

GOVERNOR SIGNS SECOND STIMULUS APPROPRIATIONS BILL

The governor has signed into law the second supplemental appropriations bill dealing with federal stimulus dollars. HB 4558, now PA 7 of 2009, officially appropriates approximately \$1.8 billion in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds. The money goes primarily for various state programs and includes \$900 million for public education; \$248 million for the state's drinking water and clean water (sewer) infrastructure low-interest loan programs; \$244 million for weatherization programs; \$235 million for worker training; \$190 million for various community-based programs and food assistance; and \$48 million for public safety programs. An earlier supplemental appropriation bill was signed into law for numerous transportation-related projects. Meanwhile, those of you pursuing stimulus dollars should continue to follow any new developments at www.michigan.gov/recovery or www.michigantownships.org (and follow the stimulus story).

SENATE APPROVES WATERWAYS LEGISLATION

Just prior to the Easter break, the Senate passed legislation to strengthen and bring further clarity to Proposal 1 of 2006. Proposal 1 was a constitutional amendment overwhelmingly supported by the voters to restrict spending of the state's recreational funds and to ensure that money collected by the funds goes for its intended purpose. This curtailed prior efforts to raid these funds to help balance the state budget during difficult economic times. SB 34, introduced by Sen. Randy Richardville (R-Monroe), maintains previous uses of the Waterways Fund and adds several additional uses that are consistent with the 2006 constitutional amendment. New funding uses include: boat ramps, the building of restroom facilities, access roads to recreational boating facilities, and land acquisition for the development of recreational boating facilities to mention a few. Of special note are provisions to provide signage for the effective use of recreational boating facilities, which could include proper care of boats prior to launch to assist efforts in stopping the spread of aquatic invasive species. The bill now goes to the House for consideration.

PRESIDENT OBAMA'S COMMENTS MAY BE HURTING AUTO INDUSTRY EFFORTS

The president's use of the word bankruptcy recently when talking about the future of the U.S. auto industry has caused concern in the Granholm administration and among Michigan economists. Several have expressed that just the mention of bankruptcy severely damages consumer confidence in the American auto industry and toughens efforts by the industry and others to secure loans. Meanwhile, efforts continue at both the state and national level to help the industry survive.

IT'S NOT TOO EARLY TO CONSIDER MTA POLICY RESOLUTIONS

Have a policy idea for the 2010 MTA policy platform? It's not too early to act. Under rules adopted by the MTA Board of Directors, advance resolutions involving legislative policy must be submitted to MTA 150 days prior to the Annual Meeting held in conjunction with the MTA Annual Educational Conference & Expo. The deadline for submissions is Wednesday, Sept. 2, 2009. Resolutions adopted at the Annual Meeting in January 2010 will be the basis for MTA's 2010 Policy Platform.

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