



WEEKLY LEGISLATIVE REPORT

May 21, 2010

MTA Phone: 517-321-6467 MTA Fax: 517-321-8908

MTA Web site: www.michigantownships.org

Please route to all interested parties in your township.

HOUSE PASSES ANNEXATION REFORM

The House of Representatives passed two bills this week that change the way that annexation and detachments take place in charter townships that have populations that exceed 20,000. HB 6071 and 6072 were introduced by Reps. Marc Corriveau (D-Northville) and Mark Meadows (D-East Lansing), respectively. Both live in communities that have recently dealt with attempted annexations initiated by developers in an attempt to gain a rezoning advantage. Both had firsthand knowledge of the ill will generated by annexations between neighboring communities. Both bills passed the House handily with only a handful of no votes. Similar legislation was passed two years ago, but found rough sledding in the Republican-controlled Senate. Attention must now be turned to the Senate to convince them that cooperation rarely takes place in the aftermath of boundary wars.

REVENUE CONSENSUS: GOOD AND BAD

The chief finance officials for the state convened today to determine the financial position of the state budget for the remaining part of this year as well as what revenues are likely to be received in the next state fiscal year. The resulting consensus agreement concluded that the storm clouds are still concentrating on the state General Fund but the smallest ray of sunshine might be shining on the School Aid Fund and constitutional revenue sharing. The conferees concluded that the state is currently operating with a \$340 million deficit for this fiscal year. The main culprit is a huge decrease in the Michigan Business Tax receipts. On the other hand, sales tax receipts have been slightly higher than originally anticipated. Instead of a 6% decrease in these funds, the state may see a 1% increase compared to last year and potentially another 1% increase for next year. Since these revenues determine the amount of money distributed for constitutional revenue sharing, township officials can anticipate a little larger revenue sharing check compared to projections from just a few months ago. Unfortunately, for those townships that still receive statutory revenue sharing, any increases associated with higher constitutional payments will likely result in equal reductions from statutory sources.

HOUSE RETURNS TO HEALTH CARE FOR PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

The House Public Employee Health Care Reform Committee once again delved into the issue of creating a single statewide system to provide health care benefits for all public employees and retirees. The main piece of legislation is HB 5345, which is offered by Speaker Andy Dillon (D-Redford Chtr. Twp.). Speaker Dillon, who is a candidate for governor, testified before the committee this week, describing changes to his proposed legislation. The state would offer various health care plan choices, with rates that would vary for different regions of the state. Public employees would be required to participate in the state plan unless their plan costs less. The local government could retain a more expensive plan, however, the employees would be required to pay any cost difference between the state offering and the plan chosen by the public employer.

MTA-PAC MATERIALS ARE IN THE MAIL

Every elected township official should soon be seeing an envelope in their mail bearing the MTA-PAC logo. Please be sure to review and respond to the materials contained in the envelope. You will find a "ballot" listing the names of every candidate running for state senator and representative in your area. MTA is seeking your knowledge and insight on whom to endorse in the upcoming campaign. MTA wants to know whom do you like and why, whom don't you like and why. We also want to know which candidates you've never heard of. As a community leader, you are likely to be one of the best-informed sources of information on politics in your area. MTA needs your information to help us put the best possible candidates into office next fall. PLEASE TAKE THE TIME TO FILL OUT THE FORM AND RETURN IT TO MTA BY JUNE 14. Your information is critical to our endorsement process.

END