



WEEKLY LEGISLATIVE REPORT

May 28, 2010

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Please route to all interested parties in your township.

SENATE COMMITTEE APPROVES 5 PERCENT PAY CUT FOR ALL PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

In what appears to be election year maneuvering, the Senate Reforms and Restructuring Committee approved a constitutional amendment on Tuesday that would cut the pay of every public employee in the state, including all township officials and employees, by 5 percent. SJR U, sponsored by Sen. John Pappageorge (R-Troy), was approved on a 4-3 party-line vote with Republicans voting in favor and Democrats opposed. SJR U would need approval by two-thirds of both the Senate and House before it could be placed on the ballot for voters to decide. It would have to be approved by June 3, by both houses, in order to put it on the Aug. 3 primary ballot. Senate leadership admits that SJR U will likely not gain approval but a floor vote is still likely. This appears to be more about putting members on record on the issue rather than expectations of approval.

BILL CHANGES TIMEFRAME FOR SCHOOL DISTRICT COORDINATING COMMITTEES

On Wednesday, the Senate Campaign & Election Oversight Committee reported SB 1126 to the full Senate to extend the timeframe that school district election coordinating committees would meet from every two years to every four years. The bill was introduced by Sen. Michelle McManus (R-Leland Twp.). Currently, the meetings between the county clerk and local clerks are held to establish how school district elections will be conducted for a two-year period. MTA worked with the sponsor of the bill and other interested parties to alter the original bill so that the new timeframe would not start until Jan. 1, 2013. This will ensure that township clerks newly elected in November 2012 will have the opportunity to fully participate in the process and to "opt in" to running school district elections in their jurisdictions if they so desire. Under the substituted version of the bill, school district election coordinating committee decisions held in January 2013 would be binding for the next four years. School district election coordinating committees would still meet in January 2011 to make decisions for a two-year period until the January 2013 meetings are conducted.

HOUSE INCHING FORWARD ON REFORMING TERM LIMITS?

The House Judiciary Committee approved a constitutional amendment on Wednesday that would allow legislators to serve a combined total of 14 years between the House and Senate. Since term limits were approved by the voters in 1992, legislators have been limited to serving no more than six years in the House and eight years in the Senate. HJR EEE, sponsored by Rep. Richard LeBlanc (D-Westland), not only reforms term limits but also contains a provision that a fine be put on all legislators and the governor if the state budget is not completed by July 1 of each year. HJR EEE would require that each legislator forfeit his or her salary for each day after July 1 that all general appropriation bills have not been presented to the governor. The governor and lieutenant governor would forfeit their salary for each day after that date that all the general appropriation bills have not been signed. The proposal is essentially a combination of two separate ideas contained in HJR OO and HJR HH, to extend term limits and to require legislators to forfeit pay if the budget is unfinished. Action on the floor of the House is unclear as there were a lot of comments by committee members about possible amendments and expressions of support for similar proposals. MTA's policy platform calls for extending term limits to 12 years for all state offices (would allow 12 years in each house).

MTA WEEKLY LEGISLATIVE REPORT SOON TO BE ELECTRONIC ONLY

This report (*MTA Weekly Legislative Report*) that comes to you weekly from the MTA Legislative Department will become an electronic-only document, beginning on July 2, to save costs. Most subscribers currently receive the report via e-mail; however, there is still a small number who receive the document via fax. MTA is asking those fax subscribers to provide us with an e-mail address to replace their current fax number. There are a variety of ways to receive a free e-mail account. Please contact Erma at erma@michigantownships.org or at (517) 321-6467 for more about the change.

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