



WEEKLY LEGISLATIVE REPORT

June 26, 2009

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 SLASHES STATUTORY REVENUE SHARING THEN REVERSES COURSE

On Tuesday, the House Appropriations General Government Subcommittee addressed SB 245, the budget bill containing revenue sharing. To the surprise of many around the Capitol, the subcommittee cut statutory revenue sharing payments to cities, villages and townships by 25 percent for FY 2010 (which begins on Oct 1, 2009). Instead of softening the cuts made by the Senate as expected, the House subcommittee made cuts of \$12 million deeper than the cuts approved by the Senate last week. The House subcommittee chose to hold county governments harmless from any revenue sharing cuts for FY 2010 by cutting an additional \$12 million more from cities, villages and townships as compared to the Senate appropriation. However, the subcommittee action was short-lived as the action was reversed on Wednesday at a full House Appropriations meeting. Significant amounts of revenue sharing funding were restored by the full House Appropriations committee to a level designed to give all cities, villages and townships a 3.6% cut in FY 2010 compared to the current year. The 3.6% cut would apply whether your township is receiving a combination of statutory and constitutional revenue sharing or only constitutional revenue sharing. MTA appreciates the actions of many representatives in the House Democratic Caucus who refused to vote for the steep revenue sharing cuts proposed by the House subcommittee. Later the full House concurred with the House Appropriations Committee. This action changes a section (titled: *The House's Revenue Sharing Proposal*) of a memo sent earlier this week by MTA to our members. Differences between the House and Senate on revenue sharing will be one of many hot budget items that will be addressed during the summer months. The Legislature will be on a Fourth of July break until July 14.

HOUSE PASSES ELECTION REFORM BILLS

On Thursday, the House passed two bills to make the voter registration process and the registration by mail identification requirement more convenient for voters. HB 4993, introduced by Rep. Tim Melton (D-Auburn Hills), would allow an individual to register to vote by submitting a voter registration application in person to any county, city or township clerk or any authorized full-time or part-time employee of any county, city or township clerk in the state. Under HB 4993, a clerk taking the voter registration of an individual from outside their geographical area would need to forward the registration to the appropriate local clerk. HB 4383 would permit a person who registers to vote by mail to satisfy the identification requirement, and thus the requirement that he or she vote in person if a first-time voter, by going to any county, city or township clerk in the state and presenting a valid form of identification. Under HB 4383, introduced by Rep. Tom Pearce (R-Cannon Twp.), a clerk who views the proper identification would then transfer to the voter's local clerk a notice that the voter had met the identification requirement. This transfer would take place in a manner prescribed by the secretary of state but would likely be accomplished through the Qualified Voter File. The bill is tie-barred to HB 4993, which means that both bills must pass in order to be enacted into law. The bills now to go to the Senate for consideration.

PLANNING TO RIDE THE BUS TO NATAT CONFERENCE? LET MTA KNOW ASAP!

MTA is organizing a bus for township officials in Michigan who are planning to attend NATaT's annual conference, "America's Town Meeting" being held September 8-11, 2009, in Washington, D.C. Township officials need to reserve seats on the bus by Tuesday, June 30. Please contact Debbie Shue at MTA at debbie@michigantownships.org or at 517-321-6467 to reserve your spot or to get further information. MTA will need a certain minimum number of riders to make the bus trip affordable.

END