



WEEKLY LEGISLATIVE REPORT

July 1, 2011

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Please route to all interested parties in your township.

REVENUE SHARING ADJUSTMENTS APPROVED FOR CENSUS & SALES TAX

A supplemental appropriations bill (SB 138) for the current state fiscal year (2010-11) has been approved by the Legislature in part to make necessary adjustments for changes in census counts and to implement new sales tax estimates. The supplemental bill, sponsored by Sen. John Pappageorge (R-Troy), includes \$33 million in additional revenue sharing funding for local governments, which is needed for several reasons. First, the added revenue sharing funds are being approved due to better than expected sales tax collections. The improved sales tax collections were part of the numbers agreed to by the Consensus Revenue Estimating Conference conducted in May. The \$18.8 million increase in constitutional revenue sharing and \$14.3 million increase in statutory revenue sharing is needed to recognize the 2010 U.S. Census population changes to keep communities whole that lost population and institute increases in others. MTA had been advocating for this action for the last several months.

ZONING LEGISLATION RELATED TO GRAVEL OPERATIONS GAINS FINAL APPROVAL

Legislation designed to reverse a significant Michigan Supreme Court case, *Kyser v Kasson Twp.* (2010), related to how local governments can zone for gravel/aggregate operations and other "valuable natural resources", gained approval in the Senate on Thursday and final concurrence from the House. HB 4746, sponsored by Rep. Matt Huuki (R-Stanton Twp.), amends the Zoning Enabling Act to try and restore provisions of a previous Supreme Court case, *Silva v Ada Twp.* (1982). The bill was substituted in the Senate (S-5) and was improved considerably over the House-approved version. The bill is now on its way to the governor's desk where it will undoubtedly be signed into law. MTA worked against the bill, but did make the bad bill better. MTA appreciates the work of Sens. Mike Kowall (R-White Lake Chtr. Twp.) and Tom Casperson (R-Wells Twp.) for their willingness to make changes. The bill was given final approval two weeks after it was introduced.

HOUSE COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN HOLDS ACTION ON SEPTAGE BILL

After Tuesday's additional testimony, House Natural Resources, Tourism & Outdoor Recreation Committee Chairman Frank Foster (R-Pellston) chose to keep a bill in committee that would restrict the ability of local units to effectively ban the land application of septage waste. HB 4578, introduced by Rep. Ken Goike (R-Ray Twp.), would enact additional requirements if a local unit were to take this action. While some progress was made towards a compromise prior to Tuesday's hearing in negotiations between the bill's sponsor and MTA, an agreement was not reached. MTA appreciates Rep. Foster's willingness to allow more time to work on this issue in committee rather than on the House floor. Both sides are committed to trying to reach common ground before a committee vote is taken after the summer recess.

LOCAL GOVERNMENTS PROHIBITED FROM HAVING MINIMUM STAFFING STANDARDS

The Legislature introduced and passed a series of bills, including SBs 489 and 490, which would prohibit local governments from establishing minimum staffing requirements. This was in response to situations where residents amended city charters to specify firefighter staffing levels. MTA opposed the legislation based on the fact that unlike cities, these decisions are strictly board issues in townships. MTA did convince the Legislature to remove the language that prohibited resolutions from having minimum standards, because it would have prohibited contracts between governmental units for services such as police patrols, accepting some state or federal grants or potentially even purchasing insurance.

MTA SUMMER LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE ROOM BLOCK RELEASE DATE EXTENDED

Yesterday, we sent an alert to all township officials with e-mails advising them that our conference room block at Crystal Mountain Resort was due to be released on July 3. MTA was able to get that release date extended to July 10. In order to secure your preferred room-type (rate), we still strongly urge that you make your reservations as soon as possible. Don't forget early conference registration discount rates for attendees ends on July 3. Don't forget the Wednesday golf event, spouses and others are welcome!

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