



MICHIGAN TOWNSHIPS ASSOCIATION

## WEEKLY LEGISLATIVE REPORT

July 18, 2008

MTA Phone: 517-321-6467

MTA FAX: 517-321-8908

Please route to all interested parties in your township.

### **SENATE RETURNS FOR ONE DAY SESSION; BOTH CHAMBERS COME BACK NEXT WEEK**

On Thursday, the Senate finished its action on the K-12 School Aid funding bill following a conference committee meeting earlier in the day to iron out final school budget differences between the House and Senate. With this action, the only remaining budget bills yet to be approved by the Senate are the general government (which includes revenue sharing), MI Department of Transportation (MDOT) and the capital outlay (state building projects) budgets. Both the general government and capital outlay budgets could be finalized next week when the House and Senate return to continue working on remaining budgets. Agreement has been reached on both the capital outlay budget and the general government budget, with a 2 percent increase for statutory revenue sharing. The MDOT budget may be the last to be formally passed as there remains wide disagreement between the House and Senate over funding to continue efforts to build a new Detroit River International Crossing. Meanwhile, Gov. Jennifer Granholm has signed into law the first three budgets for the fiscal year beginning on Oct. 1. The signed budgets include: Department of Education, Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, and Higher Education, which includes a 1 percent increase for our 15 public universities and for MSU's Cooperative Extension and agricultural experiment stations.

### **GOVERNOR SIGNS GREAT LAKES COMPACT/WATER WITHDRAWAL PACKAGE**

At Lake Michigan's Oval Beach in Saugatuck, Gov. Granholm signed into law the Great Lakes Compact and its accompanying water withdrawal bills. The governor was joined at the bill signing ceremony by the two chief negotiators on the 12-bill package, Sen. Patty Birkholz (R-Saugatuck Twp.) and Rep. Rebekah Warren (D-Ann Arbor). Michigan was the seventh of the eight Great Lakes states to sign the Compact into law, with Pennsylvania recently becoming the eighth state to do so. The final step in securing the Great Lakes Compact is to gain approval by the U.S. Congress and a signature from the president. Should this occur yet this year, President Bush has indicated that he would sign the Compact. If action on the Compact is delayed until next year, both John McCain and Barack Obama have indicated that they would sign it into law. While highly detailed, the overall package of bills accomplishes two major objectives. It protects the Great Lakes from large water diversions and implements a water management system utilizing the water assessment tool to assist new and expanding water users in determining if a proposed water withdrawal will cause an adverse resource impact to fish populations in Michigan's rivers and streams. The 12-bill package includes SBs 212, 723, 727, 858-860 and HBs 4343, 5065-5067, 5069, and 5073, which now become Public Acts 179-190 of 2008 in reverse order.

### **SECOND PRINCIPAL RESIDENCE EXEMPTION CAN BE GRANTED AT BOARD OF REVIEW**

Legislation was signed into law on Thursday which extends the ability for homeowners to receive a second principal residence exemption this year. This is granted in certain situations where a person is unable to sell their original home before moving. The program that was put into place this spring was enacted just days before the legal filing deadline. SB 1239 (PA 198) allows the July and December 2008 boards of review to grant these exemptions. In future years the original procedures will be followed, which require the form to be filed by May 1, and renewals be filed by the end of each year.

### **IT'S TIME TO START THINKING ABOUT ATTENDING THE NATaT CONFERENCE IN D.C.**

Don't miss the National Association of Towns & Township's (NATaT) 2008 *America's Town Meeting* Legislative Conference in Washington, D.C. This is your opportunity to be the voice on federal issues affecting local government. Join hundreds of local government officials from across the nation as they converge on Capitol Hill to network, attend educational sessions, and meet with lawmakers. Visit the MTA's Web site for more information and to download a registration brochure: <http://www.michigantownships.org/NATaTconference.asp>. **Registration deadline is Sept. 2, 2008!**

\*\*\*END\*\*\*