



## WEEKLY LEGISLATIVE REPORT

August 6, 2010

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Please route to all interested parties in your township.

### **MTA-PAC SCORES WELL IN “HIGH TURNOUT” AUGUST PRIMARY**

With interest in both the Democratic and Republican gubernatorial primaries high, turnout for the Aug. 3 primary election was nearly 1.7 million voters or about 23 percent, surpassing prior turnout in recent gubernatorial primary elections with the exception of 2002. The MTA-PAC did well in the endorsement process. Overall, MTA-PAC made endorsements in 35 Senate races, winning 32 for a success rate of 91 percent. In the House, MTA-PAC made endorsements in 93 races, winning in 80 of those races for a success rate of 86 percent. Congratulations to all winning candidates and special thanks to township officials in helping with the endorsement and election process.

### **MOST CURRENT AND FORMER TOWNSHIP OFFICIALS DO WELL IN AUGUST PRIMARY**

Among the MTA-PAC success stories was that several endorsed current and former township officials won competitive primary elections where only one candidate was endorsed. In the 15<sup>th</sup> Senate District in Oakland County, White Lake Chtr. Township Supervisor Mike Kowall won in a six-way Republican primary. Other Senate non-incumbent primary winners with township backgrounds include Rep. Jim Marleau who also won in a six-candidate field in the 12<sup>th</sup> Senate District (Oakland County); Rep. Arlan Meekhof in a heated three-way primary for the 30<sup>th</sup> District (Ottawa/Kent Counties); and Rep. Darwin Booher in a three-way primary in the 35<sup>th</sup> District (several counties in northwest Michigan). In the House, former township supervisor David Rutledge won a very competitive six-way Democratic primary in the 54<sup>th</sup> District (Washtenaw County); in the 73<sup>rd</sup> House District (Kent County), Cannon Township Supervisor Peter MacGregor won handily in a nine-person Republican primary; in the 79<sup>th</sup> District (Berrien County), former township trustee Al Pscholka won a three-person Republican primary; and in the 89<sup>th</sup> House District (Ottawa County), Park Township Supervisor Amanda Price won an eight-way Republican primary. Current township officials who were not first-place finishers were Richfield Township Trustee Gerald Masters in a five-way Democratic primary in the 50<sup>th</sup> House District (Genesee County); and Greg Dietrich, a trustee in Buena Vista Charter Township, running in the 95<sup>th</sup> House District (Saginaw County). All of the above winners are expected to win in November.

### **GOVERNOR SIGNS BILL GIVING MORE FLEXIBILITY TO FUNDING OF ROAD PROJECTS**

On Tuesday, Gov. Jennifer Granholm signed into law legislation that will allow more flexibility to county road commissions in spending funds on local road projects. House Bill 4848, sponsored by Rep. Joel Sheltrown (D-Ogemaw Twp.), will allow county road commissions to spend up to 50 percent of the funding they receive from the Michigan Transportation Fund for county primary roads on the county local road system. Prior to the legislation, road commissions were limited to transferring no more than 30 percent of primary road funding for local roads. MTA beat back repeated efforts to require a match from “other sources” be included in state statute in order to expend the additional money on local roads. The bill becomes PA 143 of 2010 and has immediate effect.

### **USDA AWARDS RURAL BROADBAND GRANTS**

On Wednesday, the U.S. Department of Agriculture and Gov. Granholm announced \$42 million in rural broadband infrastructure funding for five Michigan companies. The funding comes from the second round of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) USDA’s Rural Utilities Service (RUS) grant program. The money will be used to provide broadband infrastructure to underserved communities throughout Michigan. Companies receiving the grants will provide services to areas in Gratiot, Ionia, Mecosta, Montcalm, Oceana, Kalamazoo and Lenawee counties, northeastern Michigan, Climax, Scotts, and Mackinac Island. Previously, Merit Network, Inc. received more than \$33 million and MSU received nearly \$1 million to expand broadband access to communities through the state. MTA encouraged townships and others to apply for the ARRA funding last year.

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