



MICHIGAN TOWNSHIPS ASSOCIATION

## WEEKLY LEGISLATIVE REPORT

August 15, 2008

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Please route to all interested parties in your township.

### **NO SESSION; NO CONFERENCE COMMITTEE ON WIND GENERATION**

Members of the Legislature were expected to return to Lansing on Wednesday for another one-day session to put the final touches on the state budget, but a snag remains in the transportation budget. Session was canceled and so was a conference committee meeting on SB 213 scheduled for the same day. SB 213 is a key bill in the energy package that was drastically amended on the floor of the Senate on June 27 to include among other things, language that would preempt local zoning for siting wind generators and transmission lines. Negotiations have been taking place over the past two weeks between select members of the House and Senate to try and work out differences between the sides. The House approved version of SB 213 was free of any threats to zoning, however, the threat to zoning remains because it is an item of difference.

### **SPOTLIGHT ON NOVEMBER**

Over the next two months, MTA will spotlight some of the more competitive races for open seats in the House of Representatives in November. In the 21<sup>st</sup> District, which includes all of Belleville, Van Buren Charter Township and most of Canton Charter Township, a son is trying to follow the footsteps of his father. MTA-PAC endorsed candidate Todd LaJoy is currently serving as a trustee on the Canton Charter Township board. This is the same position his father, Phil LaJoy, held prior to being elected state Representative six years ago. Phil was honored in the past as MTA Legislator of the Year for his work on transportation issues as well as school zoning. The Republican candidate, Todd LaJoy, owns and operates a small business that assists others in finding employment. The Democratic candidate in the 21<sup>st</sup> District is Dian Slavins, who works as a respiratory therapist for Henry Ford Health Systems. The district has traditionally voted Republican, but the margin has been narrowing over the past few years.

### **CHANGES TO THE ASSESSING 14-POINT REVIEW PROCESS**

A memo was released from the State Tax Commission and Department of Treasury announcing a change to the 14-point review program, which evaluates the assessing programs in each community of the state. In the past, the scoring key has been available on the Department of Treasury Web Site, and it was included in the annual compact disc distributed by the commission to each township and city. This key allowed communities to understand how much weight each of the 14 issues covered under the review went to passing or failing. The state has decided that this information will no longer be made public. All reviews will be scored by the State Tax Commission. The commission will then notify the local unit of its final score. Assessing offices will no longer be informed which areas of operation are considered more or less of concern under the review process.

### **Fall District Meetings Focus on Restoring Michigan's Prosperity**

MTA's annual *Fall District Meetings* have arrived for the southern and central parts of the state. This full-day event will examine the economic challenges facing Michigan, and offer redevelopment strategies, techniques and approaches. Get involved in something that matters—not only can you make a difference in your community, you can influence the future of Michigan. Building prosperous communities is our ultimate goal and one that will take many hands to accomplish. Discount rates for the event are available through Aug. 26. Please see the MTA Web site at [www.michigantownships.org](http://www.michigantownships.org) for dates, location and registration information.

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