



MICHIGAN TOWNSHIPS ASSOCIATION

WEEKLY LEGISLATIVE REPORT

September 5, 2008

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Please route to all interested parties in your township.

SECRETARY OF STATE AND SPEAKER DILLON APPEAL RULING ON RECALL

The secretary of state has filed an appeal with the 6th U.S. Circuit Court in Cincinnati asking the court to block a U.S. District Court ruling ordering the question of recalling the speaker of the House, Andy Dillion, be placed on the November ballot. The lower court had ruled that the secretary of state should not have disqualified signatures on petitions that were circulated by nonresidents of the district. The court further ordered that the question only be placed on the ballot if it was found that there were enough valid signatures on the petitions, taking into account the court's position on the circulator's residency status. The secretary of state argued that the order, "sets up a unique, if not potentially confusing, situation whereby the recall of the elected official will be placed alongside his bid to be re-elected to the very same office. Moreover, if the recall is allowed to proceed, and is successful, the electors of the affected district will lack representation in the Michigan House of Representatives during the six week lame-duck session of the Legislature."

NOVEMBER BALLOT TAKING SHAPE

Monday is the deadline for finalizing the November ballot. As noted above, one of the issues that is still in doubt for the residents of the 17th House district, is the question of recalling the speaker of the House. However, there are other issues that will be resolved in the next few days. The state Republican Party has already held its nominating convention to fill out its slate of candidates for statewide office. The Democratic Party will be convening this weekend to choose its candidates for the same offices. The most heated battle in the state this fall is likely to be over the one seat up for election on the Michigan Supreme Court. That spot is currently held by Chief Justice Cliff Taylor who has been the focus of the Democratic Party leadership's ire for years. One of the final issues left to be resolved is whether a third statewide ballot proposal will join the issues of allowing the medicinal use of marijuana and the authorization of stem cell research in Michigan. The Michigan Supreme Court took testimony this week in a last ditch effort by the supporters of Reform Michigan Government Now. A lower court had ruled earlier that the proposal could not be placed on the ballot, because it was not simply an amendment to the state's constitution, but rather it was a rewrite of the document. The constitution allows amendments to be offered to the citizens through a petition process, but redrafting the constitution requires the convening of a constitutional convention. The question of convening a constitutional convention is required to be placed before the voters by mandate of the constitution during the general election in 2010.

SPOTLIGHT ON STATE HOUSE RACES

One of the most interesting races this past August for state representative occurred in the 82nd district in Lapeer County. The MTA-PAC-endorsed candidate, Kevin Daley, won the hotly contested seven-way primary race for the Republican spot on the ballot. Daley, who has served on the Arcadia Township board for over 20 years, has served as a trustee, treasurer and is currently the supervisor. Daley won by a narrow margin over Gary Howell, an attorney who has represented many townships in the county. It is interesting to note that nearly half of all of the township officials took the time to fill out the MTA-PAC questionnaire for this race. Daley is considered the favorite in the upcoming November general election against the Democratic candidate Bill Marquardt.

HERE COME THE MTA DISTRICT MEETINGS

MTA Fall District Meetings kick off this coming week for the southern half of our state. The meetings will take place over a three-week period with scheduled stops in Frankenmuth, Ann Arbor, Kalamazoo, Benton Harbor, Spring Lake, Port Huron and Lansing. This special set of meetings will focus on the township's role in moving Michigan to prosperity. Local governments must be on the frontlines in the battle to turn Michigan's economy around. One of the most important issues that must be addressed is ensuring that our communities are not only working individually, but with their neighbors to create an environment that will allow Michigan to prosper in the future. Please contact MTA for further information regarding attending these meetings. Please see the MTA Web site at www.michigantownships.org for full details.

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