



WEEKLY LEGISLATIVE REPORT

October 23, 2009

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MTA Web site: www.michigantownships.org

Please route to all interested parties in your township.

STATE BUDGET STILL INCOMPLETE; NO DECISION ON REVENUE SHARING

The threat of at least a partial state government shutdown remains as several budgets are unresolved with just a week before the new Oct. 31 deadline. The Legislature bought extra time back on Oct. 1 by approving a 30-day continuation budget in order to reach a long-term budget agreement. However, continued posturing between the governor and leadership in the Senate has kept the budget logjam in place. The general government budget, which includes appropriations for revenue sharing payments remains in limbo. In what appears to be a high stakes game of “budget chicken,” the Senate was holding up the presentation of six budget bills to the governor, through a procedural move, because of the governor’s threat of vetoing portions of the bills due to the severity of cuts. After holding the bills for almost three weeks, Senate Majority Leader Mike Bishop (R-Rochester) finally released the bills to the governor on Tuesday. The governor quickly acted on the K-12 budget by vetoing \$51.5 million of it, stating she had no choice because the Senate sent her a budget that was \$60 million short in funding. The theory is that with a week before the new budget deadline, the Legislature still has time to approve budgets with higher funding levels. One of the six unsettled budget bills is the general government budget that contains revenue sharing and payments-in-lieu-of-taxes (PILT) for local governments. The governor has made statements that she believes cuts to revenue sharing (police and fire protection) are too severe. If the governor were to line-item veto revenue sharing, it would eliminate all statutory revenue sharing funding for townships, cities, villages and counties. The theory, again, would be to force the Legislature to go back to work on a higher funding amount. Higher funding amounts would also require approval of new state revenues.

RALLY AT THE CAPITOL FOR REVENUE SHARING AND PUBLIC SAFETY

Township, city and village officials, police officers and firefighters gathered in front of the State Capitol on Thursday, to urge the governor and Legislature to restore revenue sharing funding. The message at the rally came as a warning: public safety in Michigan will be at greater risk unless the Legislature and governor restore deep revenue sharing cuts for FY 2010. John Daher, supervisor of Lansing Charter Township, spoke on behalf of townships at the rally. He stated, “Decisions being made in the Michigan Legislature are a threat to the safety of all communities in Michigan, and constituents will know where the blame lies when their communities are threatened.” He said constituents should know that police and fire layoffs and communities pushed into insolvency are a direct result of the decisions made by this Legislature.

LEGISLATION WOULD ALLOW MOBILE HOME INSPECTIONS BY LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

The Michigan House is likely to address HB 4801 next week on the floor, a bill that would allow local governments to expand their rental housing inspections to include rented mobile homes. The bill amends the Mobile Home Commission Act to specify that a local government could inspect a mobile home for safety (whether it is located within or outside a mobile home park or a seasonal mobile home park), if the mobile home being inspected is being rented to a tenant by its owner. The period between inspections could not be longer than four years. MTA asks township officials to contact their state representative by next Tuesday to ask for their support of HB 4801. Please use the following link to find contact information for your state representative www.house.michigan.gov.

ENERGY GRANT APPLICATION DEADLINE EXTENDED

The Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) and the LED Demonstration grant application deadline for communities has been extended to Nov. 5, 2009. Applicants who’ve already submitted their proposals are permitted to resubmit by the new deadline. Villages are also now eligible to receive the grants along with cities, townships and counties. The original deadline was Oct. 22 at 5 p.m. Further information is available at www.michigan.gov/energyoffice.

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