



WEEKLY LEGISLATIVE REPORT

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Please route to all interested parties in your township.

GOVERNOR-ELECT SNYDER TURNS TO VETERANS FOR KEY STAFF APPOINTMENTS

Over the past two weeks, Governor-elect Snyder has named experienced veterans to fill six key positions in his new administration. He has named current Speaker of the House Andy Dillon (D-Redford Chtr. Twp.) to serve as the next state treasurer, former Lt. Gov. and state Sen. Dick Posthumus to serve as senior advisor on legislative affairs, and current CEO of Public Sector Consultants and key Gov. Bill Milliken staffer Bill Rustem to serve as the new director of strategy. Named earlier this week was the founder of multi-client lobbying firm Muchmore, Harrington, Smalley and Associates and longtime Capitol insider Dennis Muchmore as the new chief of staff. In addition, two former staffers of Gov. Engler were named to key positions. They include: Paul Gadola, who will serve as the governor's new legal counsel, and Geralyn Lasher as the new communications director. Gadola has served as Supreme Court counsel since 2001 and Lasher has served in a variety of communications positions around the Capitol. The MTA legislative staff looks forward to working with all of these experienced individuals as well as other key appointments yet to come.

GOVERNOR-ELECT SNYDER TO INTRODUCE TWO-YEAR BUDGET

Governor-elect Snyder also announced this week that he intends to propose a two-year budget to the Legislature early next year. The budget would cover both Fiscal Years 2011-2012 and 2012-2013. The idea has been talked about for years but it appears that the governor-elect will be the first to try to implement the procedure. Meanwhile, according to the Senate Fiscal Agency, the state will be starting budget negotiations with a \$1.6 billion deficit as federal dollars will be lacking to shore up next year's budget. The governor-elect's plan to replace the Michigan Business Tax with a 6 percent corporate tax could add an additional \$1.5 billion shortfall if enacted. Regardless, Michigan's budget will continue to be the major challenge for both the new governor and Legislature next year.

PHOSPHORUS LEGISLATION REPORTED FROM SENATE COMMITTEE

Last week, the Senate Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs Committee reported HB 5368 to prohibit the application of lawn fertilizers containing phosphorus under most circumstances. Exceptions would apply for new turf and those situations where a test indicates the level of phosphorus in the soil is deficient. The legislation would prohibit local units of government from adopting and enforcing future local ordinances as of the bill's enactment date. MTA worked to ensure that any existing local ordinances would be grandfathered in under the legislation. It remains to be seen what will happen to the bill as minor changes were made to it from the earlier House-passed version. It would still need approval by the full Senate and concurrence by the House before going to the governor in a shortened lame-duck session.

LEGISLATION WOULD OPEN UP DRAINAGE SPECIAL ASSESSMENT HEARING

Unlike the procedures that must be followed for establishing a special assessment at the township level, drainage special assessments take the focus away from group meetings of all of the property owners that are involved and instead focus on individual discussion over the course of the day. SB 715, offered by Sen. Gerald Van Woerkom (R-Muskegon), is designed to infuse more information into the early stages of the approval process for drainage special assessments. The legislation also requires language to appear on the notices that makes it clear that the property owner may be subject to the assessment if the proposal moves forward. The legislation has cleared the House Intergovernmental and Regional Affairs Committee and only needs approval from the full House in order to be presented to the governor for signature.

MTA OFFICE CLOSED FOR THANKSGIVING

The MTA office will be closed on both Thursday and Friday (Nov. 25 & 26) for the Thanksgiving holiday and therefore no *Legislative Report* will be issued until the following week on Dec. 3.

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