

'ARE WE NUTS?'

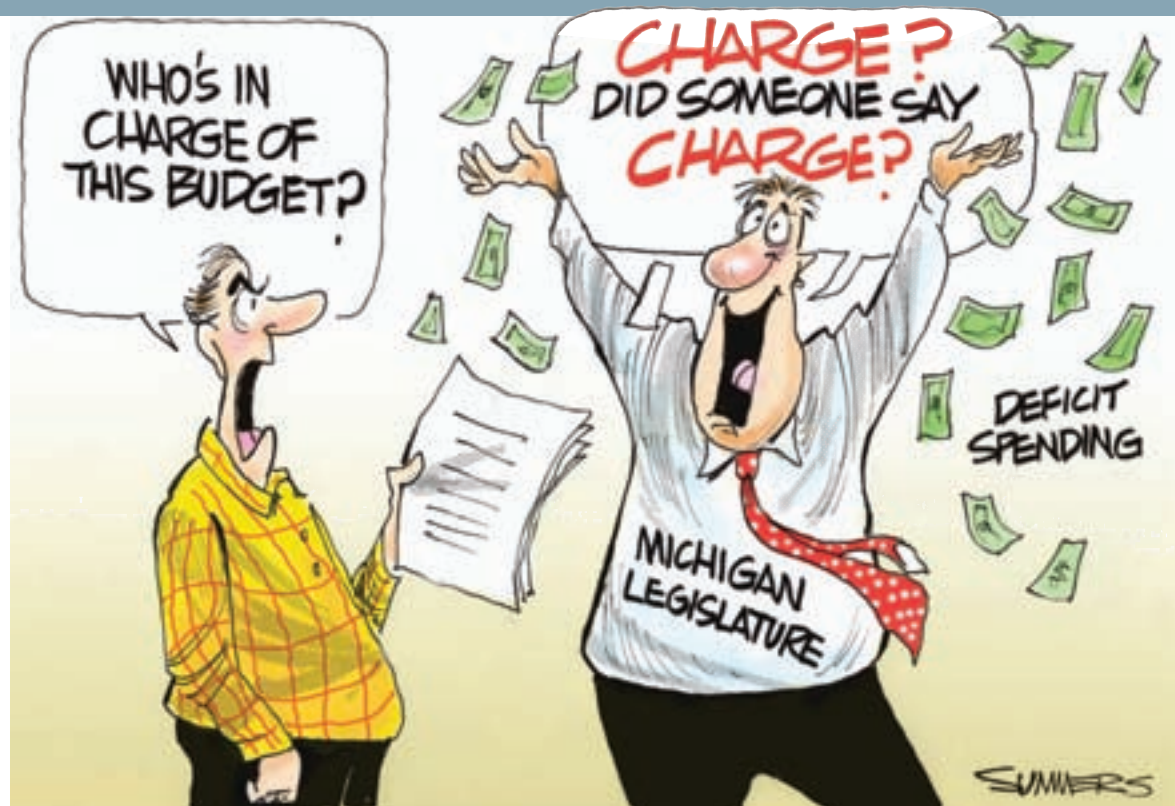
State budgeters wrestle with reality

Discrepancies between what policymakers think they can spend and how much money is actually available have been a recurring pattern in Michigan government since fiscal year 2002. Michigan lawmakers were again confronted with this familiar story in May when the revenue estimating conference announced that the official Jan. 11 estimate of tax revenues for the upcoming fiscal year had been too optimistic. Forecasters said that there would be another gap between desired spending and projected income, also known as a "deficit."

The projected shortfall for the fiscal year that begins on Oct. 1 is \$393 million. Because the rosier January scenario had been the basis for pending budget bills, as well as for the governor's 2009 Executive Budget Recommendation, the lower estimate will require a spending course correction.

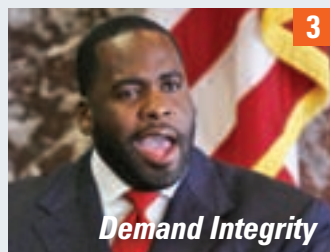
State Sen. John Pappageorge, R-Troy, is a member of the Senate's budget-writing Appropriations Committee and was arguably the lawmaker least in need of a course correction. When the initial, larger revenue projection was announced in January,

See "Are We Nuts," Page 4

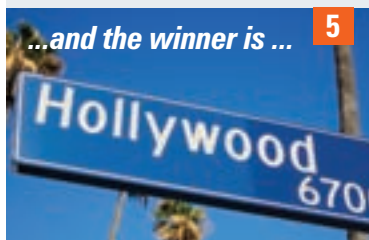


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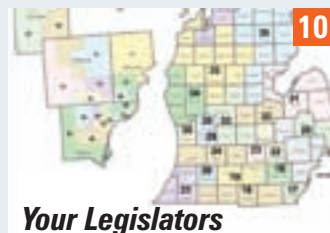
INSIDE THE ISSUE



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Your Legislators

NEVER ENOUGH

"Spending spree" on '09 public health budget

On March 25, the Michigan Senate narrowly approved its first proposal for a fiscal year 2009 budget to fund the state's Department of Community Health. As passed that day, Senate Bill 1094 would have appropriated just under \$12.5 billion. This was \$2 million less than what the governor requested and \$434 million more than what was budgeted for public health in fiscal 2008.

It could have been higher. During consideration of the bill, Senate Democrats requested seven amendments that totaled more than \$90.5 million worth of additional spending. Each was narrowly defeated, despite

receiving unanimous approval from the minority Democratic caucus, with five amendments receiving one Republican vote each. Two Republican senators voted in favor of least \$36 million from this proposed extra spending.

Extra funding for minority health, dental coverage, government smoking prevention programs, mental health courts and senior citizen home health programs were among the many spending proposals contained within the rejected amendments. Sen. Tom George, R-Kalamazoo, one of two physicians in the Michigan Senate, voted against all of the amendments and argued that supporting Senate Bill 1094 with comparatively less spending represented a preferable course of action:

"I would just point out that this budget shows an increase [of \$434] million, almost a half-[billion] dollars over the current

See "Never Enough," Page 6

SPECIAL INTERESTS

Children of the Corn

Lawmakers gas up on ethanol mythology

Despite growing international condemnation of the government promotion of corn ethanol, on April 17 the Michigan Senate overwhelmingly ratified legislation to increase state-based incentives for converting crops — primarily corn — into automotive fuel. The vote took place at a time when the price of corn in the United States was hovering near its historical high, driving up the cost of groceries across the nation and around the world.

Three of the bills in this legislative package passed with unanimous support and one — a proposal to create a specialty

See "Ethanol," Page 9

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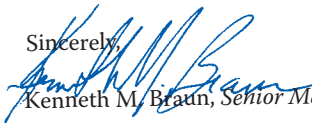
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GREENHOUSE GAS ACCORD WILL FURTHER DAMAGE MICHIGAN'S ECONOMY

By Russ Harding

On Nov. 15, 2007, the governors of nine Midwestern states — Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, South Dakota and Wisconsin — signed the Midwestern Greenhouse Gas Accord. The agreement states, “the effects of climate change present growing economic, social and environmental risks.... We know enough to act on climate change, and there is sufficient scientific certainty that we must begin to take action now....” In order to achieve greenhouse gas emission reduction targets, the accord relies primarily on a cap-and-trade mechanism.

Under a cap-and-trade policy, companies or utilities that have air emissions below the legal limits are able to sell credits to emitters that have not complied with the more stringent emission standards. Participants in the accord, for example, agree to reduce the current amount of carbon dioxide emissions in the region by an established, albeit arbitrary, amount. Michigan would be required to reduce its carbon dioxide emissions by a portion of that allotment.

Proponents of cap-and-trade systems for limiting air emissions

tout them as market-based and flexible. The trading of emission allowances does allow some flexibility for companies as they make investment decisions. However, proponents seldom talk about the cap. A cap on carbon dioxide emissions is a de facto energy cap.

Supporters of cap-and-trade claim that requiring the reduction of CO₂ emissions does not mean that energy use must be limited, but rather that it can be replaced by less carbon-intensive alternative energies. Although solar- and wind-generated electricity can play a supporting role in supplying Michigan's electricity needs, neither are 100 percent reliable since the sun doesn't always shine and the wind doesn't always blow. Nuclear energy is the only commercially feasible non-CO₂-emitting alternative to coal-fired power plants. If a commitment to build new nuclear power plants in Michigan were made today, it would take a decade or more to actually license and construct the plants.

Administering a cap-and-trade policy would also necessitate increased costs to taxpayers. If initiated, a set of complicated rules would need to be established to

See “Greenhouse Gas,” Page 8

NOTES ON STATESMANSHIP

People must demand honesty and integrity in their leaders

By Lawrence W. Reed

From time to time, Detroit Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick has shown good policy instincts. He has talked about reducing the city's “bloated and wasteful budget” and has taken some steps to rein in the cost and expanse of local government.

How inadequate those brief moments become in light of the mayor's lies under oath, secret deals, cover-ups and abuse of trust. These things are hardly leadership by example.

laced and old-fashioned. We cut corners and sacrifice character for power, money, attention or other ephemeral gratifications.

Yet character is ultimately more important than all the college degrees, public offices or even all the knowledge that one might accumulate in a lifetime. It's the one thing over which every adult has total, personal control in virtually all circumstances. It puts a concrete floor under your future and an iron ceiling over it. It may be what others will remember about you more than anything

A deficit of character shows up every time somebody who knows the right thing to do neither does it nor defends it because doing so might be discomforting or inconvenient. Moreover, when a person shirks his duty, succumbs to temptation, foists his problems and burdens on others, fails to exert self-discipline, or shamelessly flaunts his breach of trust, he subtracts from his character. When he is so self-absorbed he ceases to be of service to others unless there's something in it for him, he subtracts from his character. When he attempts to reform the world without reforming himself first, he subtracts from his character.

A free society flourishes when people seek to be models of honor, honesty and propriety at whatever the cost in material wealth, social status or popularity. It descends toward chaos when they abandon what's right in favor of self-gratification at the expense of others; when lying, cheating or stealing are winked at instead of shunned.

Having character means that there are no matters too small to handle the right way.

At all levels of government and throughout society, we need more men and women who can't be bought; who don't mortgage integrity to pay for expediency; who have their priorities straight; whose word, oath, handshake and vows are ironclad; and who realize that the most impressionable among us—youths—are learning from the way we behave.

It will not suffice for any one bad figure to depart the scene if we don't raise the standards of character we demand of all our leaders and those who aspire to lead. Character matters. It's time we settle for nothing less. ■

Lawrence W. Reed is president of the Mackinac Center for Public Policy.



Detroit Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick, takes the witness stand in the courtroom of Judge Michael J. Callahan in Wayne County's 3rd Circuit Court in this Aug. 29, 2007, file photo. Kilpatrick exchanged romantic and sexually oriented text messages with a top aide, contradicting their denials in court that they had romantic ties, the Detroit Free Press reported on Jan. 23, 2008. (AP Photo/Gary Malerba, File)

Leadership — and the personal character that produces it — counts. Its absence is costly. However the current scandal plays out in Detroit, this can be an instructional moment for all of us.

By almost any measure, the standards we as citizens keep and expect of those we elect to lead us have slipped badly in recent years. Too many of us are willing to look the other way when politicians misbehave as long as they are of the right party or deliver the goods.

Our celebrity-drenched culture focuses incessantly on the vapid and the irresponsible. Insisting on sterling character seems strait-

else. Who would want to live in a world without it?

The evidence of a person's character is the choices that person makes. You can't choose your height, race or many other physical traits, but you fine-tune your character every time you decide what's right or wrong and act accordingly.

Your character is further defined by how you interact with others and your standards of speech and conduct. Character is such an important ingredient in leadership that it is almost synonymous with it. If you've got character, others will look on you as a leader; flush it away and you'll be seen for what you really are.



he tried to persuade the governor and Legislature to craft budgets that assumed only 96 percent of the money would be available. At the time, State Treasurer Robert Kleine dismissed this suggestion, saying that budgeting 4 percent beneath the estimate would require slicing \$800 million from what the administration would like to spend.

Had Pappageorge's advice been heeded, policymakers would likely have gotten through the May revision with a substantial and still intact surplus between anticipated tax receipts and desired spending.

To help break this destructive pattern of deficit spending, Pappageorge introduced a proposed amendment to the state constitution — Senate Joint Resolution E — that would prevent future legislatures from appropriating in advance more than 96 percent of projected revenues for the next fiscal year. Any surplus revenue would go into the state's rainy day fund. To be placed on the ballot for voter approval, this pro-

posal would require a two-thirds majority vote in both the House and Senate, but neither chamber had done so as of press time. The Michigan Chamber of Commerce has endorsed a similar concept. SJR E is awaiting action in the Senate Appropriations Committee chaired by Sen. Ron Jelinek, R-Three Oaks.

The need for restraint was demonstrated on June 10 when the House of Representatives wrestled over funding levels for K-12 public school districts. Of the \$393 million downward revenue revision, \$186 million was the result of a decline in School Aid Fund tax receipts — the primary funding source for schools. Yet the House voted 61-48 to spend \$32.2 million more than the latest estimate of available funding. Five Republicans voted in favor, along with 56 Democrats.

"Are we nuts, or what?" asked Rep. Chuck Moss, R-Birmingham, who cast one of the dissenting votes. "How in heavens do we propose to pay for all this stuff?"

Rep. Marsha Cheeks, D-Detroit, portrayed the overspending as a matter of virtue and resolve. "This overage says to me that we have made the commitment to find the money to fund schools in our coffers throughout the year," she said. Cheeks defined her fiscal priorities as the following: "I say fund education by any means necessary."

The next morning, the House version of the school aid budget was rejected by the Senate, forcing both chambers to meet in a conference committee and attempt to compromise on a budget that — presumably — will also conform to the balanced budget requirements of the state constitution. The deadline is Oct. 1.

Had it been enacted, the House version of Senate Bill 1107 would have spent more than \$13.4

The House voted 61-48 to spend \$32.2 million more than the latest estimate of available funding. Five Republicans voted in favor, along with 56 Democrats.

billion, exceeding the highest previous school aid budget by half a billion dollars. The governor's recommendation was \$600 million above that benchmark, and the Senate proposed breaking the record by \$400 million (but not overspending expected revenue).

According to official state estimates, the public school population will decline by 25,000 pupils between 2008 and 2009. The

largest-ever state public school population was recorded in 2003; the estimate for 2009 is 86,000 fewer students than that peak. To put these declines in perspective, the combined student counts in the second-largest through fifth-largest Michigan school districts was 88,606. And only the second largest district — Utica Community Schools — had more than 25,000 pupils.

The MichiganVotes.org vote tally for the House version of Senate Bill 1107 is below. The contact information for members of the House of Representatives is on page 11. ■

For additional information and an opportunity to comment on this issue, please see www.mackinac.org/9615.

Check MichiganVotes.org

"Are We Nuts?": Legislators who voted IN FAVOR of a K-12 budget that overspent estimated revenue by \$32.2 million:

HOUSE REPUBLICANS (5)

Gaffney (R) Hune (R) Rocca (R) Ward (R) Marleau (R)

HOUSE DEMOCRATS (56)

Accavitti (D)	Condino (D)	Farrah (D)	Jones, Robert (D)	Melton (D)	Tobocman (D)
Angerer (D)	Constan (D)	Gillard (D)	Lahti (D)	Miller (D)	Vagnozzi (D)
Bauer (D)	Corriveau (D)	Gonzales (D)	Law, Kathleen (D)	Polidori (D)	Valentine (D)
Bennett (D)	Coulouris (D)	Griffin (D)	Leland (D)	Sak (D)	Warren (D)
Bieda (D)	Cushingberry (D)	Hammel (D)	Lemmons (D)	Scott (D)	Wojno (D)
Brown (D)	Dean (D)	Hammon (D)	Lindberg (D)	Sheltrown (D)	Young (D)
Byrnes (D)	Dillon (D)	Hood (D)	Mayes (D)	Simpson (D)	
Byrum (D)	Donigan (D)	Hopgood (D)	McDowell (D)	Smith, Alma (D)	
Clack (D)	Ebli (D)	Jackson (D)	Meadows (D)	Smith, Virgil (D)	
Clemente (D)	Espinoza (D)	Johnson (D)	Meisner (D)	Spade (D)	

Legislators who voted AGAINST the K-12 budget that overspent estimated revenue:

HOUSE REPUBLICANS (47)

Acciavatti (R)	DeRoche (R)	Jones, Rick (R)	Nofs (R)	Shaffer (R)
Agema (R)	Elsenheimer (R)	Knollenberg (R)	Opsommer (R)	Sheen (R)
Amos (R)	Emmons (R)	LaJoy (R)	Palmer (R)	Stahl (R)
Ball (R)	Garfield (R)	Law, David (R)	Palsrok (R)	Stakoe (R)
Booher (R)	Green (R)	Meekhof (R)	Pastor (R)	Steil (R)
Brandenburg (R)	Hansen (R)	Meltzer (R)	Pavlov (R)	Walker (R)
Calley (R)	Hildenbrand (R)	Moolenaar (R)	Pearce (R)	Wenke (R)
Casperson (R)	Hoogendyk (R)	Moore (R)	Proos (R)	
Caswell (R)	Horn (R)	Moss (R)	Robertson (R)	
Caul (R)	Huizenga (R)	Nitz (R)	Schuitmaker (R)	

HOUSE DEMOCRATS (1)

LeBlanc (D)

Legislators who DID NOT VOTE:

Cheeks (D)

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OSCAR-WINNING TAXES

An estimated \$600 million of the \$1.4 billion tax increase imposed on Michigan last fall will come from a 22 percent surcharge lawmakers added to the Michigan Business Tax, the state's primary income levy on companies doing business within the state. The end result, according to the Michigan Chamber of Commerce, has been to create a Michigan Business Tax that is much more complicated, costly and destructive to economic growth than even the notorious Single Business Tax that it replaced.

From a spring survey of nearly 10 percent of its more than 7,000 members, the Michigan Chamber announced that 77 percent reported a higher tax burden. One-third of those reporting hikes said the increase was in excess of 100 percent over the SBT; eleven percent reported a hike of more than 300 percent and one member reported a tax increase of 1,000 percent.

Forty-five percent of those reporting higher taxes said they would cope by laying-off employees or by delaying/cancelling planned salary increases; 15 percent stated they would cancel planned expansion within the state or leave the state entirely.

Senate Bill 1242 would offer a small amount of relief. The Gongwer News Service reports that its enactment would reduce the surcharge portion of the MBT by an es-

timated \$130 million per year for three years. However, this provides only a partial remedy: It would still leave the entirety of the original MBT rate and most of the surcharge in place, meaning a net tax increase on Michigan businesses would remain.

Even this modest reform is unlikely: State government has already created new programs that spend the money being brought in by the tax hike. The Michigan Chamber has drawn particular attention to the package of subsidies for film producers that was requested by the governor and approved by lawmakers earlier this year. Carrying an estimated price tag of \$118.2 million for just the first year, the moviemaker incentives are an example of state spending that makes even the meager tax cut in Senate Bill 1242 less likely.

"This administration thinks it's OK to send refund checks to Hollywood producers who have no incentive to keep a presence here and not to hard-working job providers who are trying to improve this economy," noted Tricia Kinley, the Michigan Chamber's tax policy director.

Further driving home the point, the Chamber later produced a "movie" of its own: "How to Lower Your Michigan Business Tax Liability ... and Win an Oscar While You're At It." It features State Rep. Chuck Moss, R-Birmingham, narrating a satirical lesson regarding how all Michigan job

providers can pretend to be film producers, thereby tricking politicians into giving them tax rebates. When the "folks from Lansing" ask about the non-existent script, he warns, "just tell 'em it's in re-write."

STUDENT HOUSING BUBBLE

Undergraduate students living in the University of Michigan's West Quad dorms on the Ann Arbor campus paid \$8,190 for a double room last school year, according to a May 19 article in the Michigan Daily, the campus student newspaper. This year, that price will jump \$400 because of a 4.9 percent hike in residence hall room rates. The article states that on-campus housing at the university is more expensive than nine of the Big Ten institutions, with just Northwestern University – the conference's only private school – charging more.

Meanwhile, the Ann Arbor Area Board of Realtors reported in April that the average home sale price in the region surrounding the campus was 6.58 percent lower during the 2008 January-April selling period than during the same months in 2007. This is consistent with a statewide 11.56 percent average sale price decline between the same selling periods, as measured by the Michigan Association of Realtors.

The campus housing director is quoted as defending the higher dorm costs by pointing to benefits that are not offered elsewhere:

"We're the only housing in the nation that has our own security for housing," she said. "Another thing is we have multicultural lounges – we have multicultural hall councils (and) peer advisors."

The article quotes one student acknowledging the value that comes with higher relative housing costs. Another resident expressed skepticism that additional spending is needed for student activities, alleging that a recent surplus in one dorm budget went toward questionable ends:

"In Markley, we had money left over. We spent it on random stuff, hall t-shirts and a Harry Potter week. I didn't think we needed as much money as we had left at the end."

A CORRECTION

The May/June 2008 edition of "The Lowdown" reviewed a report from Taxpayers for Common Sense (www.taxpayer.net) that itemized the dollar amount of fiscal 2008 federal budget earmark requests that can be credited to each member of Congress. The findings for each member of the Michigan congressional delegation were listed at the end of this article, but Rep. Joe Knollenberg, R-Oakland County, was erroneously left off of the list.

According to the TCS report, Knollenberg was the sponsor of \$33,317,990 worth of earmark requests in the fiscal 2008 federal budget.

Michigan Capitol Confidential apologizes for the oversight. ■

To watch the video of Rep. Moss or for additional information and an opportunity to comment on all of these issues, please see www.mackinac.org/9615.

NEVER ENOUGH

from Page One

budget. It is rising from \$12 billion to nearly \$12.5 billion, and yet, it is never enough.”

Sen. Nancy Cassis, R-Novi, asserted that those who voted for the amendments were endorsing a “spending spree” and asked whether they would “dare to increase taxes” again as a means of paying for their spending increases.

After the spending amendments failed, every Democratic senator but one voted against sending the Senate draft of the public health budget to the House of Representatives. Sen. Martha Scott, D-Detroit, explained that “there are some amendments that we did not pass today that I think are very, very important.”

“I would just point out that this budget shows an increase [of \$434] million, almost a half-[billion] dollars over the current budget. It is rising from \$12 billion to nearly \$12.5 billion, and yet, it is never enough.”

— Sen. Tom George

She added that “until we get a real grasp on who it is we need to be taking care of, then I will continue to vote ‘no’ on these kinds of bills.”

On May 16, the official state tax revenue estimate for fiscal 2009 was downgraded, with the new analysis projecting \$393 million less than had been anticipated

in January 2008. Nonetheless on July 17, the Legislature and the governor agreed to a 2009 funding level of \$12.5 billion for the Department of Community Health. This is \$485 million above the amount appropriated for fiscal 2008 and the largest budget of its kind in state history.

The amount of additional public health spending that each state senator supported among the \$90.5 million in budget amendments is displayed in the table below. ■

For additional information and an opportunity to comment on this issue, please see www.mackinac.org/9615.

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“Never Enough”: The amount of additional spending that each state senator supported from the \$90.5 million in budget amendments to the Dept. of Community Health Budget:

SENATE REPUBLICANS

Allen (R)	ZERO
Birkholz (R)	\$36,600,000
Bishop (R)	ZERO
Brown (R)	ZERO
Cassis (R)	ZERO
Cropsey (R)	ZERO
Garcia (R)	ZERO
George (R)	ZERO
Gilbert (R)	ZERO
Hardiman (R)	ZERO
Jansen (R)	ZERO
Jelinek (R)	ZERO
Kahn (R)	ZERO
Kuipers (R)	ZERO
McManus (R)	ZERO
Pappageorge (R)	ZERO
Patterson (R)	\$11,700,000
Richardville (R)	\$39,010,000
Sanborn (R)	ZERO
Stamas (R)	ZERO
Van Woerkom (R)	ZERO

SENATE DEMOCRATS

Anderson (D)	\$90,510,000
Barcia (D)	\$90,510,000
Basham (D)	\$90,510,000
Brater (D)	\$90,510,000
Cherry (D)	\$90,510,000
Clark-Coleman (D)	\$90,510,000
Clarke (D)	\$90,510,000
Gleason (D)	\$90,510,000
Hunter (D)	\$90,510,000
Jacobs (D)	\$90,510,000
Olshove (D)	\$90,510,000
Prusi (D)	\$90,510,000
Schauer (D)	\$90,510,000
Scott (D)	\$90,510,000
Switalski (D)	\$90,510,000
Thomas (D)	\$90,510,000
Whitmer (D)	\$90,510,000

2008 Senate Roll Call 192-198 on SB 1094

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Here's the Drill

Great Lakes directional drilling ban should be lifted

By Russ Harding

Editor's note: A shorter version of this commentary appeared in the Lansing State Journal on June 29, 2008.

Perhaps it takes \$4 a gallon gasoline to restore reason to U.S. energy policy. President Bush has called on Congress to lift the ban on off-shore drilling for oil and gas. Recent national polling indicates that consumers struggling with higher costs for food and energy have shifted their opinion — a majority now supports the development of offshore oil and gas reserves. This change in public opinion presents an opportune time to reconsider directional drilling for oil and natural gas under the Great Lakes, which was prohibited by state law in 2002 and by federal law in 2005.

Forbidding directional drilling was bad energy policy then and it's bad energy policy now. Based on an analysis prepared by the Senate Fiscal Agency in 2002, continuing the practice would have resulted in an economic benefit to the state of approximately \$1 billion. Adjusted for the price of oil today, the economic benefit of tapping Michigan's Great Lakes reserves would be \$3 billion to \$4 billion.

State geologists estimate that approximately 30 wells could be directionally drilled under the Great Lakes. Directional drilling, also called slant drilling, is performed at an angle, allowing placement of the well head onshore rather than on a drilling platform in the lake. While director of the Department of Environmental Quality in 1996, I was approached by oil companies interested in exploring for oil and gas under the Great Lakes. After consulting with then-Gov. John Engler, I asked the Michigan

Environmental Science Board (a group of scientists mostly from universities with environmental and natural resource expertise) to examine if directional drilling under the Great Lakes posed any threat to natural resources.

The Board concluded: "[T]here is little to no risk of contamination to the Great Lakes bottom or waters through releases directly above the bottom hole portion of directionally drilled wells." The Board went on to say: "There is, however, a small risk of contamination at the well head." The board made recommendations on steps that could be taken to mitigate any impact to the Great Lakes from the well head, including locating the wells at least 1,000 feet from the shoreline and implementing proper waste disposal measures. Before the ban, eight wells had been directionally drilled under the Great Lakes without environmental harm.

I received a call from a state senator who apologized in advance for voting for the ban. He acknowledged that directional drilling posed no real environmental threat, but told me that it was the right "political vote."

Even though environmental safeguards recommended by the Michigan Environmental Science Board were put in place, the Michigan Legislature still voted to ban directional drilling under the Great Lakes. The day before the vote, I received a call from a state senator who apologized in advance for voting for the ban. He acknowledged that

directional drilling posed no real environmental threat, but told me that it was the right "political vote." Unfortunately, such actions are all too common among state and federal legislators who would rather reap the short-term perceived political benefit of appearing "green" without taking responsibility for the long-term damage done to energy supply and jobs.

No matter how bullish one might be about alternative energy, experts agree that we will be dependent on oil to meet our nation's transportation and energy needs for many years to come. Our leaders in Washington and Lansing should encourage the responsible development of our abundant oil and natural gas reserves by eliminating arbitrary road blocks such as the ban on directional drilling. By doing so, they would display a sincere attempt at meeting the nation's energy needs while providing a much needed boost to the state's lagging economy. Additionally, our state leaders should reject the worn-out argument that Michigan does not have enough untapped oil and gas to make a difference — a reasoning that if followed ensures a permanent energy stalemate. ■

Russ Harding is director of the Property Rights Network and senior environmental analyst at the Mackinac Center for Public Policy.

For additional information and an opportunity to comment on this issue, please see www.mackinac.org/9615.

Check MichiganVotes.org

"Here's the Drill": Current Michigan lawmakers who were in office in 2002 and voted TO PROHIBIT drilling for oil and gas underneath the Great Lakes:

REPUBLICANS

Sen. Jason Allen (R)	Sen. Wayne Kuipers (R)
Sen. Patty Birkholz (R)	Rep. Brian Palmer (R)
Sen. Michael Bishop (R)	Sen. John Pappageorge (R)
Sen. Nancy Cassis (R)	Sen. Bruce Patterson (R)
Sen. Tom George (R)	Sen. Randy Richardville (R)
Sen. Jud Gilbert (R)	Sen. Alan Sanborn (R)
Sen. Mark Jansen (R)	Sen. Tony Stamas (R)
Sen. Ron Jelinek (R)	Sen. Gerald VanWoerkom (R)

DEMOCRATS

Sen. Glenn Anderson (D)	Sen. Martha Scott (D)
Sen. Ray Basham (D)	Rep. Alma Wheeler Smith (D)
Sen. Hansen Clarke (D)	Sen. Michael Switalski (D)
Sen. Gilda Jacobs (D)	Sen. Buzz Thomas (D)
Sen. Mark Schauer (D)	Sen. Gretchen Whitmer (D)

Current Michigan lawmakers who voted TO ALLOW drilling for oil and gas underneath the Great Lakes:

REPUBLICANS

Sen. Cameron Brown (R)	Sen. Valde Garcia (R)
------------------------	-----------------------

DEMOCRATS (NONE)

2002 Senate Roll Call 85 on HB 5118
2002 House Roll Call 306 on HB 5118



CAPITOL CONFIDENTIAL

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GREENHOUSE GAS

from Page 3

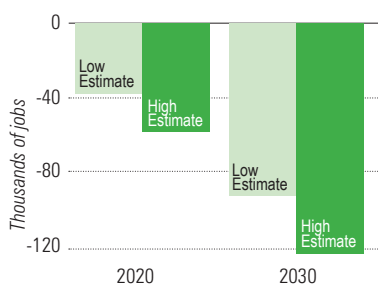
inventory, monitor and enforce carbon dioxide allotments from various energy users. An agency would then be assigned or created to ensure that no one cheats the system. The transaction costs to operate a regional CO₂ cap-and-trade system are very likely to be high as there is a strong likelihood that some emitters will seek special treatment, exemptions or loopholes.

Gasoline prices would rise between \$2.17 and \$5.15 a gallon; residential electric costs would increase between 6.61 and 10.33 cents per kilowatt-hour and natural gas prices would rise by similar levels.

Additionally, you do not need to be an economist to recognize that when supply does not meet demand, prices will increase and create a greater risk of shortages. The U.S. Congress is considering legislation (the Lieberman-Warner Climate Security Act) that would establish a national cap-and-trade system for greenhouse gases similar to the approach stipulated in the Midwestern Greenhouse Gas Accord.

The American Council for Capital Formation and the National Association of Manufacturers recently completed a

Loss in Michigan Employment Relative to Baseline



Source: American Council for Capital Formation/
National Association of Manufacturers Study of the
Economic Impact of the Lieberman-Warner Climate
Security Act

study that employs the National Energy Modeling System to estimate costs to the U.S. economy if the Lieberman-Warner bill is enacted. Breaking out costs by state, the study concludes that the low-cost projection assumes that 300 new nuclear power plants would be built in the United States by 2030 and the high-cost projection assumes 100 new nuclear power plants will be built — both optimistic assumptions. According to the study, Michigan can expect by 2030 to lose 91,000 jobs under the low-cost projection and 122,000 jobs under the high-cost projection. During the same time period, the average income of Michigan households would

A cap-and-trade system to reduce greenhouse gases could be devastating to Michigan's economy and have no discernible impact on global climate change.

decrease \$3,867 under the low-cost projection and \$7,051 under the high-cost projection.

The study also says a greenhouse gas cap would greatly increase energy costs in Michigan: Gasoline prices would rise between \$2.17 and \$5.15 a gallon; residential electric costs would increase between 6.61 and 10.33 cents per kilowatt-hour and natural gas prices would rise by similar levels.

Michigan's future energy policy is far too important to leave to the behind-closed-doors manipulation of government officials. A cap-and-trade system to reduce greenhouse gases could be devastating to Michigan's economy and have no discernible impact on global climate change. The Michigan Legislature needs to intervene to ensure that transparency and the interests of Michigan residents are paramount in the further workings of the Midwestern Greenhouse Gas Accord states. ■

Russ Harding is director of the Property Rights Network for the Mackinac Center for Public Policy. A version of this commentary was originally published on June 9, 2008.

Michigan Capitol Confidential

Editor: Michael D. Jahr

Senior Managing Editor: Kenneth M. Braun

Graphic Designer: Daniel E. Montgomery

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140 West Main Street, Midland, Michigan 48640
989-631-0900 • www.mackinac.org • MichiganVotes.org

Dear Michigan Capitol Confidential

Here is a sample of what Michigan Capitol Confidential readers are saying.

How do you use Michigan Capitol Confidential?
Please write us and let us know!

MICAPCON@MACKINAC.ORG

TROY, MI

I must be a masochist to want to continue because every time I read the latest of Michigan Capitol Confidential, I go from blissful ignorance to informed anger!

WARREN, MI

We find it most interesting and informative. Have used the senators' addresses that you've provided to let them know how I feel about certain bills that will be voted on. Thank you for that opportunity.

GRAND RAPIDS, MI

I was pleased to receive what appears to be your first publication. I found it very insightful, informative and a needed tool to help fight the battle against the fools that have turned our capitol into a laughing stock monkey-house. Please continue to deliver this newspaper to me regularly.

OSCODA, MI

I just finished reading the latest issue of Capitol Confidential and I have decided on the days I read the magazine I can do without my treadmill work out because you folks do a much better job of raising my heart rate. I cannot believe what "We the people" are letting our politicians get away with.

GRAND RAPIDS, MI

Thank you for sending the "Michigan Capitol Confidential" to my home. I found it to be refreshing and informative reading. Where have you been? I have been looking and praying for good, sound, and honest reporting for decades.

ROCHESTER HILLS, MI

Excellent Paper!

I first read "Spending Restraint Loses in Legislature" and read it to a friend out loud and it got us both upset. Then I read another article and then wondered how I got it. This is a paper I hope I always get!!!!!!

I have always said we all need to know what was happening and get out and vote at the very least, but how can we if we are so engrossed in our everyday lives?

ETHANOL

from Page One

license plate for biofuels such as ethanol — drew just nine dissenting votes out of 38. These are among 32 ethanol-related bills pending before the Michigan Legislature. An earlier vote on one of these was the subject of a story in the January/February 2008 edition of Michigan Capitol Confidential: “Corny Energy Plans.”

In addition to state ethanol incentives, the federal government provides a 51 cent per gallon subsidy for domestically produced ethanol — primarily corn-based — and also a 54 cent per gallon tariff to deter the importation of foreign ethanol. Sugarcane is a comparatively rare crop in the continental United States, but is often the main ingredient of foreign ethanol and is considered by some energy experts to be far more efficient than corn-based ethanol.

Regardless, scientists, economists, energy experts and journalists representing nearly every point on the ideological spectrum have overwhelmingly come to appreciate that mixing food and fuel markets for political reasons has done American consumers no discernable good, while producing measurable harm. Noting that even a prominent left-wing economist had turned against ethanol, Mark J. Perry, professor of economics and finance at the University of Michigan-Flint, summed up a partial listing of skeptics:

“Anytime you have Paul Krugman agreeing on ethanol with such a diverse group as the [Wall Street Journal], Reason Magazine, the Cato Institute, Investor’s Business Daily, Rolling Stone Magazine, the Christian Science Monitor, The New York Times, John Stossel, The Ecological Society of America, the American Enterprise and Brookings Institutions, the Heritage Foundation, George Will and Time Magazine, you know that ethanol has to be one of the most misguided public policies in U.S. history.”



Eighty-five percent of American ethanol production requires corn and there are already five ethanol plants operating in Michigan with four more on the way.

Biofuel expert David Pimentel, a professor at Cornell University’s College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, asserts that ethanol diversions consumed 20 percent of American corn production in 2006, yet displaced just 1 percent of domestic oil production. The World Bank announced in April that world food prices had jumped 83 percent over the last three years. As much as one-third of this inflation can be blamed on ethanol production, according to Chris Peterson, professor of agribusiness at Michigan State University, testifying in May at a meeting of the Michigan Renewable Fuels Commission — an organization created by state lawmakers in 2006 to “encourage the production and use of biodiesel and ethanol products.”

While corn works well as energy for human bodies, it comes up short as a motor fuel. According to the U.S. Dept. of Energy, 1.33 gallons of E-85 (ethanol mixed with at least 15 percent gasoline) is needed to replace a single gallon of pure gasoline. Bloomberg News

reports that the U.S. Postal Service proved this between 1999 and 2005, when 30,000 E-85 vehicles purchased for its fleet drove down mileage by 29 percent, causing the consumption of 1.5 million additional gallons. On the production end, professor Pimentel reports that “40 percent of the energy contained in one gallon of corn ethanol is expended to produce it.” Ironically, he added, most of that production energy is derived from “oil and natural gas” through the use of inputs required to grow and transport the corn.

A proposal to create a specialty license plate for biofuels such as ethanol drew just nine dissenting votes out of 38.

In other words, corn ethanol has a voracious appetite for the very fossil fuels that its supporters claim it should be replacing.

Despite all of this, Don Koivisto, director of the Michigan Department of Agriculture, declares corn ethanol to be a “quantum leap forward in the biofuels boom,” and he predicts that the conflict between food and fuel will be avoided by a changeover to cellulosic etha-

no, which is derived from inedible agricultural products such as switchgrass.

But according to an otherwise optimistic article about cellulosic ethanol published on the Popular Mechanics Web site in January, this form of fuel is currently twice as expensive to produce as corn ethanol, not to mention regular gasoline. Similarly, Cornell’s Pimentel notes that cellulosic ethanol requires 70 percent more energy to produce than corn ethanol, again using mostly fossil fuels to get the job done. A Wall Street Journal editorial in May concluded: “...sometimes even massive government aid can’t turn science projects into products.”

According to the descriptions on the Mackinac Center’s MichiganVotes.org Web site, Senate Bill 1126 would require the state to market “renewable” fuel sites; Senate Bill 1128 would create an ethanol and alternative energy subsidy/regulation “how to” guide; and Senate Bill 1130 would establish new ethanol and alternative fuel subsidies.

Every single member of the Michigan Senate voted in favor of these bills on April 17. Their names and contact information are listed on page 10.

Senate Bill 1129 also passed as part of this package by a vote of 29-9. MichiganVotes states that this bill would “authorize a specialty license plate recognizing alternative fuels, and give the net revenue generated from sale of the plates to the subsidy and promotion program proposed by Senate Bill 1130.”

The nine senators who voted against creating a specialty license plate for biofuels were all Democrats. Their names are as follows:

Sen. Ray Basham, D-Taylor
Sen. Liz Brater, D-Ann Arbor
Sen. Irma Clark-Coleman, D-Detroit
Sen. Gilda Jacobs, D-Huntington Woods
Sen. Michael Prusi, D-Ishpeming
Sen. Mark Schauer, D-Battle Creek
Sen. Martha Scott, D-Detroit
Sen. Michael Switalski, D-Roseville
Sen. Gretchen Whitmer, D-East Lansing ■

For additional information and an opportunity to comment on this issue, please see www.mackinac.org/9615.

Information appears as follows:

State Senate District
Last Name, First Name: Party
Location
Phone
E-mail

01
Clarke, Hansen: D
710 Farnum Building
517-373-7346
SenHansenClarke@senate.michigan.gov

02
Scott, Martha G.: D
220 Farnum Building
517-373-7748
SenMScott@senate.michigan.gov

03
Clark-Coleman, Irma: D
310 Farnum Building
517-373-0990
SenIClark-Coleman@senate.michigan.gov

04
Thomas III, Samuel Buzz: D
S-9 Capitol Building
517-373-7918
SenBThomas@senate.michigan.gov

05
Hunter, Tupac A.: D
915 Farnum Building
517-373-0994
SenTAHunter@senate.michigan.gov

06
Anderson, Glenn S.: D
610 Farnum Building
517-373-1707
SenGAnderson@senate.michigan.gov

07
Patterson, Bruce: R
505 Farnum Building
517-373-7350
SenBPatterson@senate.michigan.gov

08
Basham, Raymond E.: D
715 Farnum Building
517-373-7800
SenRBasham@senate.michigan.gov

09
Olshove, Dennis: D
920 Farnum Building
517-373-8360
SenDOlshove@senate.michigan.gov

10
Switalski, Michael: D
410 Farnum Building
517-373-7315
SenMSwitalski@senate.michigan.gov

11
Sanborn, Alan: R
S-310 Capitol Building
517-373-7670
SenASanborn@senate.michigan.gov

12
Bishop, Michael: R
S-106 Capitol Building
517-373-2417
SenMBishop@senate.michigan.gov

13
Pappageorge, John: R
1020 Farnum Building
517-373-2523
SenJPappageorge@senate.michigan.gov

14
Jacobs, Gilda Z.: D
1015 Farnum Building
517-373-7888
SenGJacobs@senate.michigan.gov

15
Cassis, Nancy: R
905 Farnum Building
517-373-1758
SenNCassis@senate.michigan.gov

16
Brown, Cameron: R
405 Farnum Building
517-373-5932
SenCBrown@senate.michigan.gov

17
Richardville, Randy: R
205 Farnum Building
517-373-3543
SenRRichardville@senate.michigan.gov

18
Brater, Liz: D
510 Farnum Building
517-373-2406
SenLBrater@senate.michigan.gov

19
Schauer, Mark: D
S-105 Capitol Building
517-373-2426
SenMSchauer@senate.michigan.gov

20
George, Thomas M.: R
320 Farnum Building
517-373-0793
SenTGeorge@senate.michigan.gov

21
Jelinek, Ron: R
S-324 Capitol Building
517-373-6960
SenRJelinek@senate.michigan.gov

22
Garcia, Valde: R
S-132 Capitol Building
517-373-2420
SenVGarcia@senate.michigan.gov

23
Whitmer, Gretchen: D
415 Farnum Building
517-373-1734
SenGWhitmer@senate.michigan.gov

24
Birkholz, Patricia L.: R
805 Farnum Building
517-373-3447
SenPBirkholz@senate.michigan.gov

25
Gilbert II, Judson: R
705 Farnum Building
517-373-7708
SenJGilbert@senate.michigan.gov

26
Cherry, Deborah: D
910 Farnum Building
517-373-1636
SenDCherry@senate.michigan.gov

27
Gleason, John: D
315 Farnum Building
517-373-0142
SenJGleason@senate.michigan.gov

28
Jansen, Mark C.: R
520 Farnum Building
517-373-0797
SenMJansen@senate.michigan.gov

29
Hardiman, Bill: R
305 Farnum Building
517-373-1801
SenBHardiman@senate.michigan.gov

30
Kuipers, Wayne: R
1005 Farnum Building
517-373-6920
SenWKuipers@senate.michigan.gov

31
Barcia, Jim: D
1010 Farnum Building
517-373-1777
SenJBarcia@senate.michigan.gov

32
Kahn, Roger MD: R
420 Farnum Building
517-373-1760
SenRKahn@senate.michigan.gov

33
Cropsey, Alan L.: R
S-8 Capitol Building
517-373-3760
SenACropsey@senate.michigan.gov

34
VanWoerkom, Gerald: R
605 Farnum Building
517-373-1635
SenGVanWoerkom@senate.michigan.gov

35
McManus, Michelle: R
S-2 Capitol Building
517-373-1725
SenMMcManus@senate.michigan.gov

36
Stamas, Tony: R
720 Farnum Building
517-373-7946
SenTStamas@senate.michigan.gov

37
Allen, Jason: R
820 Farnum Building
517-373-2413
SenJAllen@senate.michigan.gov

38
Prusi, Michael: D
515 Farnum Building
517-373-7840
SenMPrusi@senate.michigan.gov

WHY WE GIVE PARTY AFFILIATIONS:

The Legislature is managed as a partisan institution. Lawmakers segregate themselves by party in matters from daily meetings to seating. They have separate and taxpayer-financed policy staffs to provide them with research and advice from differing perspectives. As such, gaining a full understanding of the vote of an individual lawmaker requires knowing his or her partisan affiliation.

WHO ARE YOUR LAWMAKERS?

To find out which lawmakers represent you and to view interactive legislative district maps, please point your web browser to www.mackinac.org/9313.

If you do not have Internet access, then you may obtain copies of legislative district maps by calling 989-631-0900 or by sending a written request to us at: Mackinac Center for Public Policy, c/o MiCapCon District Maps 140 West Main Street, Midland, MI 48640

Did you know?

Members of the Michigan House and Senate are the second highest-paid state legislators in the United States, behind California.

Base member annual pay: \$79,650

Additional annual expense allowance: \$12,000

Supplements are paid to the following 12 legislative officers:

- Speaker of the House: \$27,000
- Majority leader in the Senate: \$26,000
- Minority leaders in both House and Senate: \$22,000
- Majority floor leaders in both House and Senate: \$12,000
- Minority floor leaders in both House and Senate: \$10,000
- Chair of Appropriations Committee in both House and Senate: \$7,000
- House speaker pro tempore and Senate president pro tempore: \$5,513

In more than 30 states, the position of state legislator is a part-time job with a salary of \$30,000 or less. Texas — the second most populous state and second largest geographically — pays lawmakers \$7,200 per year.

Some pay much less: New Hampshire legislators are paid a salary of \$200 for a two-year term of office, Alabama pays \$10 per day and New Mexico offers no salary at all — just expenses. ■

Information appears as follows:**State House District**

Last Name, First Name: Party

Location / Phone

E-mail

—
*HOB = House Office Building
 CB = Capitol Building*

001
 Gaffney, Edward: R
 S 0585 HOB / 517-373-0154
 edwardgaffney@house.mi.gov

002
 Lemmons Jr., LaMar: D
 S 0586 HOB / 517-373-0106
 lamarlemmonsjr@house.mi.gov

003
 Scott, Bettie Cook: D
 S 0587 HOB / 517-373-1776
 bettiecookscott@house.mi.gov

004
 Young II, Coleman: D
 S 0588 HOB / 517-373-1008
 colemanyoungii@house.mi.gov

005
 Johnson, Bert: D
 S 0589 HOB / 517-373-0144
 bertjohnson@house.mi.gov

006
 Cheeks, Marsha: D
 S 0685 HOB / 517-373-0844
 marshacheeks@house.mi.gov

007
 Smith, Virgil: D
 S 0686 HOB / 517-373-0589
 virgilsmith@house.mi.gov

008
 Cushingberry Jr., George: D
 S 0687 HOB / 517-373-2276
 georgecushingberry@house.mi.gov

009
 Jackson, Shanelle: D
 S 0688 HOB / 517-373-1705
 shanellejackson@house.mi.gov

010
 Leland, Gabe: D
 S 0689 HOB / 517-373-6990
 gabeleland@house.mi.gov

011
 Hood III, Morris: D
 N 0690 HOB / 517-373-3815
 morrishood3rd@house.mi.gov

012
 Tobocman, Steve: D
 155 CB / 517-373-0823
 stevetobocman@house.mi.gov

013
 Farrah, Barbara: D
 N 0692 HOB / 517-373-0845
 barbarafarah@house.mi.gov

014
 Clemente, Ed: D
 N 0693 HOB / 517-373-0140
 edclemente@house.mi.gov

015
 Polidori, Gino: D
 N 0694 HOB / 517-373-0847
 ginopolidori@house.mi.gov

016
 Constan, Bob: D
 N 0695 HOB / 517-373-0849
 bobconstan@house.mi.gov

017
 Dillon, Andy: D
 166 CB / 517-373-0857
 andydillon@house.mi.gov

018
 LeBlanc, Richard: D
 N 0697 HOB / 517-373-2576
 richardleblanc@house.mi.gov

019
 Pastor, John: R
 N 0698 HOB / 517-373-3920
 johnpastor@house.mi.gov

020
 Corriveau, Marc: D
 N 0699 HOB / 517-373-3816
 marccorriveau@house.mi.gov

021
 LaJoy, Philip: R
 S 0785 HOB / 517-373-2575
 phillajoy@house.mi.gov

022
 Hopgood, Hoon-Yung: D
 S 0786 HOB / 517-373-0852
 hoon-yunghopgood@house.mi.gov

023
 Law, Kathleen: D
 S 0787 HOB / 517-373-0855
 kathleenlaw@house.mi.gov

024
 Brandenburg, Jack: R
 S 0788 HOB / 517-373-0113
 jackbrandenburg@house.mi.gov

025
 Bieda, Steve: D
 S 0789 HOB / 517-373-1772
 stevebieda@house.mi.gov

026
 Donigan, Marie: D
 N 0790 HOB / 517-373-3818
 mariedonigan@house.mi.gov

027
 Meisner, Andy: D
 N 0791 HOB / 517-373-0478
 andymeisner@house.mi.gov

028
 Wojno, Lisa: D
 N 0792 HOB / 517-373-2275
 lisawojno@house.mi.gov

029
 Melton, Tim: D
 N 0793 HOB / 517-373-0475
 timmelton@house.mi.gov

030
 Rocca, Tory: R
 N 0794 HOB / 517-373-7768
 toryrocca@house.mi.gov

031
 Miller, Fred: D
 N 0795 HOB / 517-373-0159
 fredmiller@house.mi.gov

032
 Acciavatti, Daniel: R
 N 0796 HOB / 517-373-8931
 danielacciavatti@house.mi.gov

033
 Meltzer, Kim: R
 N 0797 HOB / 517-373-0820
 kimmeltzer@house.mi.gov

034
 Clack, Brenda: D
 N 0798 HOB / 517-373-8808
 brendaclack@house.mi.gov

035
 Condino, Paul: D
 N 0799 HOB / 517-373-1788
 paulcondino@house.mi.gov

036
 Palmer, Brian: R
 S 0885 HOB / 517-373-0843
 repbrianpalmer@house.mi.gov

037
 Vagnozzi, Aldo: D
 S 0886 HOB / 517-373-1793
 aldovagnozzi@house.mi.gov

038
 DeRoche, Craig: R
 167 CB / 517-373-0827
 craigderoche@house.mi.gov

039
 Law, David: R
 S 0888 HOB / 517-373-1799
 davidlaw@house.mi.gov

040
 Moss, Chuck: R
 S 0889 HOB / 517-373-8670
 chuckmoss@house.mi.gov

041
 Knollenberg, Marty: R
 N 0890 HOB / 517-373-1783
 martyknollenberg@house.mi.gov

042
 Accavitti Jr., Frank: D
 N 0891 HOB / 517-373-0854
 frankaccavitti@house.mi.gov

043
 Amos, Fran: R
 N 0892 HOB / 517-373-0615
 franamos@house.mi.gov

044
 Stakoe, John: R
 N 0893 HOB / 517-373-2616
 johnstakoe@house.mi.gov

045
 Garfield, John: R
 N 0894 HOB / 517-373-1773
 johngarfield@house.mi.gov

046
 Marleau, Jim: R
 N 0895 HOB / 517-373-1798
 jimmarleau@house.mi.gov

047
 Hune, Joe: R
 N 0896 HOB / 517-373-8835
 joehune@house.mi.gov

048
 Hammel, Richard: D
 N 0897 HOB / 517-373-7557
 richardhammel@house.mi.gov

049
 Gonzales, Lee: D
 N 0898 HOB / 517-373-7515
 leegonzales@house.mi.gov

050
 Hammon, Ted: D
 N 0899 HOB / 517-373-3906
 tedhammon@house.mi.gov

051
 Robertson, David: R
 S 0985 HOB / 517-373-1780
 davidrobertson@house.mi.gov

052
 Byrnes, Pam: D
 S 0986 HOB / 517-373-0828
 pambyrnes@house.mi.gov

053
 Warren, Rebekah: D
 S 0987 HOB / 517-373-2577
 rebekahwarren@house.mi.gov

054
 Smith, Alma: D
 S 0988 HOB / 517-373-1771
 almasmith@house.mi.gov

055
 Angerer, Kathy: D
 S 0989 HOB / 517-373-1792
 kathyangerer@house.mi.gov

056
 Ebli, Kate: D
 N 0990 HOB / 517-373-2617
 KateEbli@house.mi.gov

057
 Spade, Dudley: D
 N 0991 HOB / 517-373-1706
 dspade@house.mi.gov

058
 Caswell, Bruce: R
 N 0992 HOB / 517-373-1794
 brucecaswell@house.mi.gov

059
 Shaffer, Rick: R
 N 0993 HOB / 517-373-0832
 rickshaffer@house.mi.gov

060
 Jones, Robert: D
 N 0994 HOB / 517-373-1785
 robertjones@house.mi.gov

061
 Hoogendyk, Jacob: R
 N 0995 HOB / 517-373-1774
 jackhoogendyk@house.mi.gov

062
 Nofs, Mike: R
 N 0996 HOB / 517-373-0555
 mikenofs@house.mi.gov

063
 Wenke, Lorence: R
 N 0997 HOB / 517-373-1787
 lorencewenke@house.mi.gov

064
 Griffin, Martin: D
 N 0998 HOB / 517-373-1795
 martingriffin@house.mi.gov

065
 Simpson, Mike: D
 N 0999 HOB / 517-373-1775
 mikesimpson@house.mi.gov

066
 Ward, Chris: R
 141 CB / 517-373-1784
 chrisward@house.mi.gov

067
 Byrum, Barb: D
 S 1086 HOB / 517-373-0587
 barbyrum@house.mi.gov

068
 Bauer, Joan: D
 S 1087 HOB / 517-373-0826
 joanbauer@house.mi.gov

069
 Meadows, Mark: D
 S 1088 HOB / 517-373-1786
 markmeadows@house.mi.gov

070
 Emmons, Judy: R
 S 1089 HOB / 517-373-0834
 judyemmons@house.mi.gov

071
 Jones, Rick: R
 N 1090 HOB / 517-373-0853
 rickjones@house.mi.gov

072
 Steil Jr., Glenn: R
 N 1091 HOB / 517-373-0840
 glennsteil@house.mi.gov

073
 Pearce, Tom: R
 N 1092 HOB / 517-373-0218
 tompearce@house.mi.gov

074
 Agema, David: R
 N 1093 HOB / 517-373-8900
 daveagema@house.mi.gov

075
 Dean, Robert: D
 N 1094 HOB / 517-373-2668
 robertdean@house.mi.gov

076
 Sak, Michael: D
 251 CB / 517-373-0822
 representativesak@house.mi.gov

077
 Green, Kevin: R
 N 1096 HOB / 517-373-2277
 kevingreen@house.mi.gov

078
 Nitz, Neal: R
 N 1097 HOB / 517-373-1796
 nealnitz@house.mi.gov

079
 Proos, John: R
 N 1098 HOB / 517-373-1403
 johnproos@house.mi.gov

080
 Schuitmaker, Tonya: R
 N 1099 HOB / 517-373-0839
 tonyaschuitmaker@house.mi.gov

081
 Pavlov, Phil: R
 S 1185 HOB / 517-373-1790
 philippavlov@house.mi.gov

082
 Stahl, John: R
 S 1186 HOB / 517-373-1800
 johnstahl@house.mi.gov

083
 Espinoza, John: D
 S 1187 HOB / 517-373-0835
 johnespinoza@house.mi.gov

084
 Brown, Terry: D
 S 1188 HOB / 517-373-0476
 terrybrown@house.mi.gov

085
 Ball, Richard: R
 S 1189 HOB / 517-373-0841
 richardball@house.mi.gov

086
 Hildenbrand, Dave: R
 N 1190 HOB / 517-373-0846
 rephildenbrand@house.mi.gov

087
 Calley, Brian: R
 N 1191 HOB / 517-373-0842
 briancalley@house.mi.gov

088
 Sheen, Fulton: R
 N 1192, HOB / 517-373-0836
 fultonsheen@house.mi.gov

089
 Meekhof, Arlan: R
 N 1193 HOB / 517-373-0838
 arlanmeekhof@house.mi.gov

090
 Huizenga, Bill: R
 N 1194 HOB / 517-373-0830
 billhuizenga@house.mi.gov

091
 Valentine, Mary: D
 N 1195 HOB / 517-373-3436
 maryvalentine@house.mi.gov

092
 Bennett, Doug: D
 N 1196 HOB / 517-373-2646
 dougbennett@house.mi.gov

093
 Opsommer, Paul: R
 N 1197 HOB / 517-373-1778
 paulopsommer@house.mi.gov

094
 Horn, Kenneth: R
 N 1198 HOB / 517-373-0837
 kennethhorn@house.mi.gov

095
 Coulouris, Andy: D
 N 1199 HOB / 517-373-0152
 andycoulouris@house.mi.gov

096
 Mayes, Jeff: D
 S 1285 HOB / 517-373-0158
 jeffmayes@house.mi.gov

097
 Moore, Tim: R
 S 1286 HOB / 517-373-8962
 timmoore@house.mi.gov

098
 Moolenaar, John: R
 S 1287 HOB / 517-373-1791
 johnmoolenaar@house.mi.gov

099
 Caul, Bill: R
 S 1288 HOB / 517-373-1789
 billcaul@house.mi.gov

100
 Hansen, Goeff: R
 S 1289 HOB / 517-373-7317
 goeffhansen@house.mi.gov

101
 Palsrok, David: R
 S 1386 HOB / 517-373-0825
 davidpalsrok@house.mi.gov

102
 Booher, Darwin: R
 S 1386 HOB / 517-373-1747
 darwinbooher@house.mi.gov

103
 Sheltroun, Joel: D
 S 1386 HOB / 517-373-3817
 joelsheltroun@house.mi.gov

104
 Walker, Howard: R
 S 1388 HOB / 517-373-1766
 howardwalker@house.mi.gov

105
 Elsenheimer, Kevin: R
 S 1389 HOB / 517-373-0829
 kevinelsenheimer@house.mi.gov

106
 Gillard, Matthew: D
 S 1485 HOB / 517-373-0833
 matthewgillard@house.mi.gov

107
 McDowell, Gary: D
 S 1486 HOB / 517-373-2629
 garymcdowell@house.mi.gov

108
 Casperson, Tom: R
 S 1487 HOB / 517-373-0156
 tomcasperson@house.mi.gov

109
 Lindberg, Steven: D
 S 1488 HOB / 517-373-0498
 stevenlindberg@house.mi.gov

110
 Lahti, Michael: D
 S 1489 HOB / 517-373-0850
 mikelahti@house.mi.gov



I'M JUST A BILL

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A sampling of proposed state laws, as described on MichiganVotes.org

SENATE BILL 1208

(Establish official state “Scottish Tartan”)

Introduced by state Sen. Glenn Anderson, D – Westland

Establishes that henceforth and forever more (or at least until a future legislature and governor see fit to declare otherwise), the official Scottish tartan of the great state of Michigan shall be the one described by the Scottish hand weavers and textile designers “thread count” denoted by the phrase “BG18* W2 BG8 W2 T8 DG2 T4 DG24 DR4 DG4*,” where the symbol “*” denotes 1/2 the total threads at the turning points. The bill is cosponsored by Senators John Gleason, Michael Prusi, Martha Scott, Deborah Cherry, Dennis Olshove, Michael Switalski, Raymond Basham, and Patricia Birkholz.

SENATE BILL 1348

(Authorize state Cobo Hall expansion subsidy)

Introduced by state Sen. Nancy Cassis, R – Novi

Would use \$50 million of the tobacco settlement money deposited in the “21st Century Jobs Fund” over the next years to subsidize an expansion of Cobo Hall in Detroit.

SENATE BILL 1251

(Expand state government Commission on Spanish-Speaking Affairs duties)

Introduced by state Sen. Valde Garcia, R – Howell

Revises the definition of “Spanish speaking” persons and populations in the law that created a state government Commission on Spanish-Speaking Affairs, and requires this commission to “coordinate a Hispanic Heritage Month celebration” in addition to its current duties. These include securing “appropriate recognition of Spanish-speaking accomplishments,” advising the governor and legislature on the “coordination of state programs serving Spanish-speaking people” and on “the nature, magnitude, and priorities of the problems of Spanish-speaking people,” etc.

HOUSE BILL 5598

(Establish rules for disposition of pets in divorce)

Introduced by state Rep. Michael Sak, D – Grand Rapids

Authorizes a court in a divorce case to order either the placement of any pets with one or the other party, or that the pet be surrendered to the humane society. A court could not order “shared custody”; however the parties could agree to this if they choose. Any agreement about pets between the parties would be made enforceable under the bill.

HOUSE BILL 6172

(Create state Asian Pacific American affairs commission)

Introduced by state Rep. Hoon-Yung Hopgood, D – Taylor

Creates a government Asian Pacific American affairs commission, an office of Asian Pacific American affairs, and an interagency council on Asian Pacific American affairs. Among other things the commission would have the mission of advising the governor and legislature on the coordination and administration of state programs serving Asian Pacific Americans; make recommendations for changes in state programs, statutes, and policies; and advise on the nature, magnitude, and priorities of the problems of Asian Pacific Americans in this state.

SENATE BILL 904

(Authorize new landfill materials bans)

Introduced by state Sen. Jud Gilbert, R – Algonac

Would ban disposal of newspapers or newsprint in a landfill.

To comment on these bills, please see www.mackinac.org/9615.