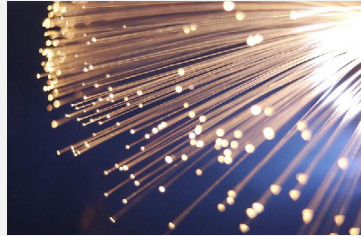


Dec. 5, 2025

## Federal measure has significant negative local implications

Federal legislation may soon be before the U.S. Congress that will have significant negative impact to local units of



government. [H.R. 2289](#), opposed by the Michigan Townships Association and National Association of Towns and Townships, is a comprehensive federal permitting and preemption bill covering wireless siting, wireline broadband deployment, cable franchising and environmental/historic review processes. While framed as a broadband deployment accelerator, the bill would significantly restructure how local governments may regulate the placement, construction and modification of communications facilities in public rights-of-way and on locally controlled property. The legislation was reported by the U.S. House Energy and Commerce Committee this week. MTA urges members to contact their [U.S. representative](#) and share the following in opposition to H.R. 2289:

- **Protect local control/federalism:** MTA supports broadband deployment; however, this bill goes too far in overriding local authority, imposes unfunded mandates on small municipalities, and creates federal deemed-granted approvals that take away due process for communities and property owners. It also shifts local zoning authority from local governments to Washington, DC, undermining conservative principles of local control.
- **Property rights and community decision-making:** Deemed-granted approvals let companies build by default, with no regard for landowners, neighbors or public safety. Many township boards meet monthly; 60-day deadlines are unworkable and override property-rights protections.
- **Unfunded mandates on local government:** The bill forces local governments, especially smaller municipalities, to meet “big city” permitting timelines, without resources, staff or technical support. If a community has part-time staff or volunteer boards, Washington DC shouldn’t punish them for not being able to process applications in a very limited time frame.
- **Support broadband deployment—but with flexibility:** MTA is not asking to slow deployment. We’re asking for provisions that recognize that many local governments have limited staff, seasonal construction windows and legitimate safety concerns.

## Protection to individuals administering emergency care

Civil liability protection may soon be extended to individuals who voluntarily provide bleeding control in an emergency. The current

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## Upcoming MTA Training

Dec. 17: *Now You Know* Lunchtime Webinar [Legislative Wrap-up](#)

Jan 13-14: Hone your [board leadership skills](#) at MTA's Winter Academy in Frankenmuth, with sessions including:  
\*\*Board Roles & Relations  
\*\*How Boards Make Decisions  
\*\*At Your Service: Meeting Township Needs

## ALLIED SERVICE PROVIDERS



[www.Acrisure.com/GreatLakes](http://www.Acrisure.com/GreatLakes)



[www.mersofmich.com](http://www.mersofmich.com)

\* [Bauckham, Thall, Seeber Kaufman & Koches PC](#)

\* [Consumers Energy](#)

law shields certain individuals from liability when they administer emergency care in specific situations. [Senate Bill 590](#), sponsored by Sen. Rick Outman (R-Belvidere Twp.) and reported by a Senate committee this week, would add protection from liability for damages for anyone who, in good faith, assists in an emergency medical situation by applying bleeding control measures. Measures would include direct pressure, applying a dressing, wound packing and using a tourniquet. However, the immunity from liability proposed by the bill would not extend to an act or omission that constitutes gross negligence or willful or wanton misconduct. SB 590 is similar to [House Bill 4108](#), sponsored by Rep. Dave Prestin (R-Cedarville Twp.), also approved by the committee and passed by the House earlier this fall. SB 590 and HB 4108 will next be considered by the Senate.

[\\* Fahey Schultz Burzych Rhodes PLC](#)

[\\* Foster Swift Collins & Smith, PC](#)

[\\* Hartleb Agency](#)

[\\* ITC Holdings Corp.](#)

[\\* Rosati, Schultz, Joppich & Amtsbuechler, P.C.](#)

[\\* Mika Meyers, PLC](#)



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## FY 2026 BUILD Grant Program now open

Submissions for the U.S. Department of Transportation [FY 2026 Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development \(BUILD\) grant program](#) can now be submitted. The program supports surface transportation projects that will have a significant local or regional impact. The minimum project amount for rural projects is \$1 million, and the application deadline is Feb. 24, 2026. Urban and rural definitions for the BUILD program are:

- **Urban:** A project is designated as urban if it is located within (or on the boundary of) a Census-designated urban area that had a population greater than 200,000 in the 2020 Census
- **Rural:** A project is designated as rural if it is located outside a Census-designated urban area that had a population greater than 200,000 in the 2020 Census.

An [interactive map](#) helps to identify these areas. Additional information on the BUILD program can be found at [here](#).

## Guidance for local leaders on responding to marijuana complaints

Environmental challenges associated with marijuana, including odors, water discharges, land use and waste, can cause concerns and complaints from residents. The state Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy's next Local Leaders [webinar](#) on Dec. 17 at 10 a.m. will provide guidance from the Cannabis Regulatory Agency on how local agencies can manage the impacts of marijuana in their communities.

# WINTER ACADEMY

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[CLICK HERE FOR MORE INFORMATION!](#)

## Brownfield activities grant opens for applications

Townships can submit grant applications to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) through Jan. 28, 2026, to assist brownfield redevelopment efforts. The programs accepting solicitations for this funding cycle are the [Multipurpose, Assessment, Revolving Loan Fund](#) and [Cleanup](#) (MARC) grant programs. Eligible activities include site assessment, public outreach and cleanup efforts, with additional resources for projects spanning multiple jurisdictions. For application information, visit the EPA [webpage](#).

## 2026 threshold for publishing minutes set at \$117 million for general law townships

The 2026 taxable value threshold for exempting general law townships from the requirement to publish minutes has increased to \$117 million. The 2025 rate was \$114 million. The rate is determined by the Michigan Department of Treasury's Office of Revenue and Tax Analysis, which is required to determine the adjusted amount each year. Public Act 465 of 1996 exempts general law townships with a taxable value under a threshold from the requirement to publish township board meeting minutes, or a synopsis of the proceedings, within 21 days after the meeting. According to PA 465, the limit must be adjusted annually for inflation each Jan. 1 and rounded to the next million. For more information, [download MTA's updated "Just the Facts! Taking Township Minutes" resource toolkit](#), which includes legal requirements for taking minutes, suggested format and style for minutes, and a sample minutes synopsis (member login is required).



## Submitting environmental complaints through the MiEnviro portal

Michigan's environmental data and reporting tool [MiEnviro](#) can be used to submit pollution, spills or other environmental hazards to the state without making an account. The Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) is hosting an [informational webinar](#) on Dec. 16 at 10 a.m. covering the types of complaints that can be submitted, the details needed, and what happens after EGLE receives the complaint. For an overview of what data is accessible in the portal and how to use it, a recording of an introductory webinar is [available online](#). On Jan. 28, a third [webinar](#) will cover how to use the site map explorer and decipher documents.

## Workplace mental health report findings webinar

The Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity will review workplace mental health trends identified in a new report in a Dec. 18 [webinar](#) at 2 p.m. No registration is required for this 30-minute review of how the data can help guide employers' approach to mental health.

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### Reminders for clerks

- **May election dates:** The [May 2026 Election Date Calendar](#) is now available. Dates will soon be added to the election date Google Calendar maintained by the state Bureau of Elections (BOE).
  - **End-of-year "Training Tidbits":** The BOE Training Team is hosting a short series of "Training Tidbits" in December. The 30-45 minute sessions will each be held at noon and recap topics presented by the team at the BOE's September conference in Lansing. The following sessions will be offered: [Voter List Maintenance](#), on Dec. 9; [How to Use the eLearning Center](#), on Dec. 11; and [Early Voting Preparation for 2026](#), on Dec. 16.
  - **Business reply mail:** BOE has begun to transition from Business Reply Mail to Qualified Business Reply Mail to make the permit process more streamlined and cost effective. Clerks are asked to complete a survey for [Qualified Business Reply Mail Transition](#) by Friday, Dec. 19, to help with a smoother transitioning process.
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### Read the December issue of *Township Focus*—online now!

[Your December issue of \*Township Focus\* is here!](#)

In this month's cover story, *Township democracy at the grassroots: Reasons for optimism, reasons for concern*, we explore township officials' sentiments—including changing trends and reflections—shared through a statewide survey that has captured local perspectives on the key issues shaping Michigan communities for more than 15 years. Our feature story highlights **Chesterfield Charter Township** (Macomb Co.), which was recently recognized by MTA with a Certificate of Achievement in election administration, through our "Township of Excellence" program. This issue's "Hello, MTA...?" column examines the role of township committees, while "Financial Forum" discusses the fiduciary responsibilities of township boards and the critical role they play in sound financial governance.

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### Federal updates for week of Dec. 1

Check out the National Association of Towns and Townships [Weekly Legislative Update](#) for the latest on federal actions impacting townships.

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