

March 20, 2026

Township leaders convene for MTA's 2026 Capital Conference

Nearly 200 township officials from across the state convened in Lansing on Tuesday for MTA's 2026 Capital Conference to gather insights and information on key township issues evolving in Lansing that impact townships across the state. MTA President Kevin Beeson welcomed attendees, telling gathered officials, "This day is an opportunity to help shape legislative and state policies that impact the future of our townships and our state. Today is a chance for us to listen, learn and act." It's through the collective voice of members that we continue to provide the best service for our communities. Attendees gained valuable insights into legislative policy, siting of data centers and renewables, revenue sharing, property tax reform proposals, election updates, housing policy, the upcoming 2030 Census, website accessibility compliance and grant programs. They were also able to meet with legislators and staff during a networking lunch, allowing them to discuss their local government perspectives on matters being debated in the Legislature. The Capital Conference connects local leaders with those who represent them in Lansing, to ask them to affirm their commitment to standing with township government and our ability to make decisions that impact our communities every day.



Primary date change passes Senate

The state primary election would move from August to May under a series of bills approved by the Senate this week. [Senate Bill 691](#), sponsored by Sen. Sam Singh (D-East Lansing), would set the primary election on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in May, eliminate the August election and provide an optional election on the fourth Tuesday in February. Currently, a February election can only occur in a presidential primary year. Additional bills in the package would move up election filing dates, update campaign finance filing deadlines and align petition thresholds for statewide candidates without party affiliation in compliance with a federal court ruling. If signed into law, the legislation would take effect in 2027. The bills move to the House for further consideration.

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UPCOMING MTA TRAINING

April 8: *Now You Know* lunchtime webinar [What Your Township Needs to Know About Franchises](#)

April 20-23: Register now for [MTA's 2026 Annual Educational Conference & Expo](#) at the Grand Traverse Resort. *Early-bird rates ends March 23.*

[Planning & Zoning Primer](#), held from 4-8 p.m at:

May 6—Lawrence

May 13—Frankenmuth

May 18—Harbor Springs

May 13: *Now You Know* lunchtime webinar [Dig up Your Township's Cemetery Ordinance](#)

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**AFFORDABLE AND RESPONSIVE
TECH SUPPORT FOR MUNICIPALITIES****(734) 338-8658** **info@black-rock.tech****House approves expansion of emergency alert system to include 'missing veteran at risk'**

Local law enforcement agencies could soon be required to include at-risk veterans under the state's missing vulnerable adult alert system under [House Bill 5387](#), sponsored by Rep. Cam Cavitt (R-Mullett Twp). When notified of a missing vulnerable adult, the law requires law enforcement agencies to develop a report that includes a physical description of the missing individual, the date, time and location the individual was last seen, the individual's home address, and any preliminary investigation findings. Supporters of the bill have indicated the goal is to improve public awareness and response, particularly for veterans who may be facing a mental health crisis. The House approved HB 5387 by a vote of 100-2 on March 19. It now heads to the Senate for further consideration.

Salvage vehicle inspection fees change clears House

Law enforcement agencies could use salvage vehicle inspection fees for a wider variety of purposes under legislation approved by the House this week. [House Bill 5234](#), sponsored by Rep. Brian BeGole (R-Perry Twp.), eliminates the requirement that fees collected for salvage vehicle inspection only be spent on reducing auto theft, instead allowing agencies to use the fees for general law enforcement purposes, including equipment, training and road patrol. The bill makes other changes to the process of changing ownership of distressed vehicles between auto dealers and scrap metal processors. The legislation passed the House by a vote of 102-2 and continues to the Senate for discussion.



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Keep reaching out to lawmakers to help protect local decision-making and community-led housing solutions

As local leaders, we have a chance to stand united in opposition to zoning preemption legislation before the House Government Operations Committee. [House Bills 5529-5531 and 5581-5585](#) would strip local elected officials and

www.Acrisure.com/GreatLakeswww.mersofmich.com[* Bauckham, Thall, Seeber Kaufman & Koches PC](#)[* Consumers Energy](#)[* Fahey Schultz Burzych Rhodes PLC](#)[* Foster Swift Collins & Smith, PC](#)[* Hartleb Agency](#)[* ITC Holdings Corp.](#)[* Rosati, Schultz, Joppich & Amtsbuechler, P.C.](#)[* Mika Meyers, PLC](#)**Michigan Township Participating Plan**Safeguarding Michigan Public Entities Since 1985
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planning commissions of their decision-making authority and dismiss years of community input and planning work. Purported to address affordable housing issues, the legislation is a clear override from Lansing on local voices and voter-backed decisions. MTA asks all township leaders to join our efforts and act **now** to share your opposition to this attack on local decision-making. Add your name to a [joint letter of opposition](#)—adding your voice to the more than 2,100 local leaders who have already signed, and contact your [state representative](#) and [state senator](#) today to ensure residents and locally elected leaders have the freedom to engage in vigorous debate on matters that impact their community every day. The legislation does not consider the full scope of factors impacting attainable housing, including labor shortages, rising labor, material and land costs, and state mandates, and instead places the blame solely on local governments. We ask lawmakers to instead work with local governments for a true, comprehensive solution to help resolve the housing shortage. Visit [MTA's "Housing Preemption" webpage](#) for additional information on the legislation and co-sponsors, and for more information and resources.




Modernizing Michigan

Our Government Banking forum featuring:
Payments, Fraud Protection and Infrastructure Financing
March 26, 10am – 3pm, Troy, Michigan



To RSVP, scan the QR code to email
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State tax filing deadline extension opportunity for tornado, winter storm impacted taxpayers

Adverse weather events in southwest Michigan on March 6 and Northern Michigan on March 15-16 have led to declared states of emergencies in affected areas. Individuals and businesses affected by the severe storm and tornado in Branch, Cass and St. Joseph Counties, and the winter storm in Alcona, Alpena, Delta, Missaukee, Ogemaw, Roscommon and Wexford Counties may request additional time to file state tax returns and pay state tax bills. The extension is **not automatic**; eligible taxpayers must contact the state Department of Treasury via the [eServices portal](#), to Michigan Department of Treasury, Attn: Disaster Tax Relief, Lansing, MI 48922, or by phone at (517) 636-4486 (individual income tax line) and (517) 636-6925 (business tax line). Requests must contain the name and account number of the individual or business, a description of how the requester was impacted by the severe weather and the taxpayer or tax preparer address.

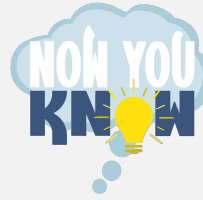
Scrap tire cleanup grant available

Townships can submit an [application](#) for a [Scrap Tire Cleanup Grant](#) through March 31. Funds are available for cleanup events of abandoned tire piles and community collection events designed to prevent illegal dumping. Priority will be given to sites where tires accumulated prior to 1991 and locations posing an immediate health or safety risk.



MTA's April webinar reviews franchise agreements

What exactly is a franchise—and does it require an ordinance or can we just vote on it? What's the process for renewal? A franchise agreement grants a public utility provider permission to install infrastructure within your township's public right-of-way. Join us April 8 at noon for our *Now You Know* lunchtime webinar, where MTA Legal Counsel Rob Thall will walk through the essentials, including fees and what considerations are negotiable. Can't attend live? A recording will be available to watch anytime. Click [here](#) to register.



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MICHIGAN'S EXPERTS IN WEB DEVELOPMENT

BOE reminders for clerks

- **May MOVE deadline:** The deadline for clerks to send ballots to military and overseas voters (MOVE) for the May 5 election is Saturday, March 21. Strict compliance is necessary and unlike other deadlines, the MOVE transmission date is not subject to extension to the following Monday. A [MOVE Electronic Delivery and Return Portal manual](#) is available in the state Bureau of Elections (BOE) eLearning Center for guidance.
- **April 6 deadlines:** The notice of registration for the May election must be posted in a newspaper of general circulation by Monday, April 6. Additionally, any clerk coordinating an early voting region should establish their regions and sites in the Qualified Voter File by April 6. While this date is not set in statute, clerks are required to ensure that BOE has the information necessary to include the locations, days, and hours of operation for each early voting site on Michigan.gov/Vote.
- **Business Reply Mail transition:** Beginning in 2026, the state will transition from Business Reply Mail to Qualified Business Reply Mail for absent voter return envelopes, eliminating the \$1,080 annual maintenance fee and renewal notices while allowing local election administrators to use existing envelope stock until vendors implement the change in future orders. Permit

information for Qualified Business Reply Mail available through eLearning. BOE regularly updates the list, which is shared with all known permit vendors. The list provided to your vendor can be requested at MDOS-BOEPermitsPostage@michigan.gov with the subject line "QBRM." All address updates should be directed to BOEPermitPostage@michigan.gov. Clerks with additional questions can call (800) 292-5973, select the option for the clerk's menu, enter your Unique Identifier Number, and an agent will assist you.

- **Upcoming election security workshop:** BOE has announced the 2026 workshop schedule that will provide an overview of key priorities, including physical security, cybersecurity, artificial intelligence and incident response. Clerks are encouraged to invite their staff, including IT personnel. The first workshop will be held on [April 30 from 1-3 p.m.](#) Watch for future workshops taking place in June, August and October.

Federal updates for week of March 17

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



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