

Oct. 27, 2023

Update on action expected on renewable energy preemption bills

Action is expected next week on House Bills [5120](#), [5121](#), [5122](#) and [5123](#). While a vote was anticipated this week based on information shared, no vote occurred, and a Senate committee meeting was cancelled for Senate Bills [585](#), [586](#), [587](#) and [588](#). Given that the Legislature is anticipated to adjourn by Nov. 9, your outreach to your state representative, your state senator, and the governor with your opposition is critical, **as every vote matters** in the fight to retain local authority. These bills will preempt local authority on the location and permitting of utility-scale wind and solar facilities in communities, and shift authority to the Michigan Public Service Commission, an unelected, appointed regulatory commission.



MTA strongly opposes this legislation that negates all adopted local zoning ordinances and will create a lasting change for local communities, their future development, their businesses and farmland for decades. The bills, supported by developers, will undo what communities and residents have worked hard to put in place for the best land use in their communities.

If you reached out to your legislator already, thank you—but please do so again as legislators are receiving a lot of pressure and some may change their vote. **Your (and your residents') outreach to your [state representative](#), [senator](#), and the [governor's office](#) remains critical given the aggressive timeframe on this legislation.** Additional information and talking points can be found on [MTA's "Renewable Energy Siting and Permitting" webpage](#). **Remember—the Legislature will be adjourning within two weeks so every call and contact matters.**

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[Financial Fundamentals](#)
(Dec. 5, Gaylord; Dec. 7, Lansing)

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Measure would exempt certain charter townships from annexation

Charter townships with a population greater than 20,000 would be exempt from annexation under a bill discussed before the House Local Government and Municipal Finance Committee this week. [House Bill 4866](#), sponsored by Rep. Matt Koleszar, would prohibit the annexation and detachment of territory in a charter township with a population of over 20,000 if the township fulfills certain requirements, and it would not be subject to the annexation exceptions provided under current law. MTA testified in support of the bill as did a representative from Northville Charter Township. It is uncertain when the bill will be next considered by the committee.

Bill expanding online voter registration reported from committee

Potential voters who do not have a Michigan driver's license or state-issued identification card would be able to utilize the Secretary of State's (SOS) online voter registration interface under changes in a bill that was reported from the Senate Elections Committee this week. Current law requires a potential registrant to enter their driver's license or state ID number to use the interface. [Senate Bill 594](#), sponsored by Sen. Jeremy Moss (D-Southfield), would allow qualified voters to register to vote by providing the last four digits of their Social Security number. The SOS would be required to authenticate the identity of the applicant through a process to be developed using the last four digits, their full name and their date of birth. Additionally, the SOS would be required to develop a process for an applicant to submit an electronic signature through the interface. The bill would not take effect until June 30, 2025, to allow the SOS time to develop the new procedures. The bill now moves to the full Senate for a vote.

Required tenant notification of 'serious and imminent' housing violations

The enforcing agency of a municipality will soon be required to notify the occupants of an apartment building of a serious and imminent hazard violation involving the property under [House Bill 4273](#), sponsored by Rep. Amos O'Neal (D-Saginaw). The bill is intended to ensure adequate notice is given to tenants when a dangerous condition in the premises, if it is not immediately corrected by the owner, could reasonably be expected to cause

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death or serious bodily harm to the occupants of the premises. The notice would be required to be provided in a manner reasonably calculated to give actual notice of the violation. The legislation also updates information that is required to be included in the notice provided to the owner and occupants, as well as changing the kinds of violations the state Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) must be notified about. MTA worked to amend the bill to eliminate required written notification to “each person” in a unit. The bill is pending concurrence by the House before being sent to the governor. Once signed, it will not take effect until the 91st day after the Legislature adjourns for the calendar year.



More elections bills headed to governor

Two bills received final approval this week that now go to the governor for signature.

[House Bill 4567](#), sponsored by Rep.

Penelope Tsernoglou (D-East Lansing),

eliminates the need to automatically

process certain ballots as challenged

ballots. With the passage of Proposal 3 of

2018 and same-day registration, voters

have been allowed to register and vote in the last 14 days prior to

the election as well as on Election Day. These voters are required

to prove residency. If they are not able to do so with a driver’s

license or personal ID, they may sign an affidavit and use other

acceptable documents to prove residency to vote. However, those

ballots are automatically processed as challenged ballots. HB 4567

would remove the requirement that these ballots be automatically

challenged. And [HB 4568](#), sponsored by Rep. Karen Whitsett (D-

Detroit), removes the current statutory prohibition on hiring a

motor vehicle transport to transport voters to a polling place.

Once signed, the measures will not be effective until the 91st day

after the Legislature adjourns for the calendar year.



Temporary license for EMS candidates could be extended

Currently, first responders, emergency medical technicians and paramedics can obtain a nonrenewable temporary license if they have applied for licensure but have not completed the required examination for up to 120 days. That period would be extended to allow the temporary license to be valid for one year under [House](#)

[Bill 4613](#), sponsored by Rep. Dave Prestin (R-Cedarville Twp.). A companion bill, [House Bill 4614](#), sponsored by Rep. John Fitzgerald (D-Wyoming), would require those with temporary licenses to practice only under the direct supervision of someone who holds a permanent license. The bills were reported this week by the House Regulatory Reform Committee and now move to the full House for further consideration.

Salvage vehicle inspections fees could be used for more purposes

Local police agencies can currently charge up to \$100 for salvage vehicle inspections with the revenue from those fees to be used only for law enforcement purposes related to stolen vehicles— including equipment and road patrol services that would increase the likelihood of recovering stolen vehicles. Under [House Bill 4716](#), sponsored by Rep. Brian BeGole (R-Perry Twp.) and reported from committee this week, the use of the fees would be expanded and could be used for any law enforcement equipment and training that are necessary to protect the public health or safety. The House will next consider the bill.

Senate approves bill regarding opioid settlements

Political subdivisions of the state would be prohibited from commencing or maintaining legal action related to the released claims of entities in the Allergan, CVS, Teva, Walgreens and Walmart settlements. Currently, statute prohibits a local unit of government from commencing or maintaining specified legal actions related to opioid settlements. [Senate Bill 592](#), sponsored by Sen. Rosemary Bayer (D-Keego Harbor) and approved by the Senate this week, moves to codify the above five existing settlements. The bill will next be considered by the House.

Workers' compensation benefits for certain firefighters and public safety personnel would be extended

Volunteer, part-time and on-call firefighters, as well as public safety officers, could be allowed



workers' compensation benefits for respiratory or heart diseases. Current law states that a respiratory or heart disease can be designated as a compensable injury if the disease develops while the individual is in active service because of the performance of their duties, as it is presumed that the illness can be attributed to their employment. However, it only applies to full-time employees. [House Bill 4729](#), sponsored by Rep. Will Snyder (D-Muskegon), would extend this to volunteer, part-time and on-call employees as well. MTA opposes the bill as introduced but supports utilizing the First Responder Presumed Coverage Fund for this purpose. The fund receives \$4 million annually from gambling proceeds, and expected claims for the current year would expend less than half of available funds. It is unclear when the bill will next be considered.

Grants available for financially distressed townships

Townships experiencing financial struggles can now apply for a grant to help fund special projects and free up tax dollars for important services. Funding may be used to pay for specific projects or services that move a community toward financial stability. Townships interested in applying for the [Financially Distressed Cities, Villages and Townships](#) grant must submit applications to the state Treasury Department by **11:59 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 8, 2023**. Preference will be given to applications from municipalities that meet one or more of the following criteria:

- A financial emergency has been declared in the past 10 years.
 - An approved deficit elimination plan for the general fund is currently in place.
 - Two or more conditions indicating “probable financial distress” currently exist.
 - The fund balance of the general fund has been declining over the past five years, and the fund balance is less than 3% of the general fund revenues.
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MIHI Partnership Roundtable is Nov. 1

Join the Michigan High-Speed Internet Office (MIHI) on Wednesday, **Nov. 1**, from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. for a Partnership Roundtable virtual meeting. The meeting will include an overview of key aspects of the draft Broadband Equity Access and Deployment (BEAD) Initial Proposal Volume 2, including defining project areas, deconflicting projects, scoring applications, and an overall timeline for the subgrant process. MIHI will also share information about the public comment process for Volume 2. [Register here](#) for the Nov. 1 event.



STC issues several bulletins

The State Tax Commission (STC) approved several bulletins and memos of interest to townships this week:

- [Bulletin 12 of 2023](#)—Property tax appeal procedures for 2024
- [Bulletin 13 of 2023](#)—Property tax and equalization calendar for 2024
- [Bulletin 14 of 2023](#)—Interest rates on Michigan Tax Tribunal judgements
- [Bulletin 15 of 2023](#)—3rd quarter certified interest rates
- [Bulletin 16 of 2023](#)—Inflation rate multiplier for 2024. For the 2024 Capped Value Formula, the inflation rate multiplier to be used is 1.05. The formula utilized 1.05 because the calculation inflation rate multiplier of 1.051 is higher than 1.05. The inflation rate multiplier of 1.051 must be used in the calculation of the 2024 "Headlee" Millage Reduction Fraction (MRF) required by MCL 211.34d.
- [Memo 2—System Economic Factors for the 2024 Year](#)—for electric distribution cooperatives

EGLE providing Part 115 implementation series to assist local communities

Information to help communities understand the solid waste management changes and requirements—effective earlier this year—under Part 115 of the Natural Resources and Environmental

Protection Act is available from the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE). Upcoming training opportunities include [regional meetings](#) to be held around the state—both in-person and virtual—and a virtual meeting on **Nov. 14, 11 a.m. to noon** regarding [Tools and Resources to Help Communities Navigate Materials Management](#). The changes make a fundamental policy shift from focusing on disposal capacity for waste to viewing waste as a resource to be utilized. The goals are to reduce overall waste generated, provide for innovative reuse of materials, create an integrated waste management system and increase recycling, waste diversion and utilization. Additionally, the changes create updated requirements for facilities that manage unwanted materials and include [Disposal Areas](#) and [Materials Management Facilities](#). More information is available on the [Materials Management in Michigan](#) webpage and questions can be emailed to EGLE-MMD-SW@michigan.gov.

Nov. 7 Fiscally Ready Communities webinar

Township officials and staff can participate in an upcoming training opportunity hosted by the Michigan Department of Treasury and Michigan State University Extension. The webinar, [Nuts and Bolts: Fees, Fines, Purchasing and Receipting](#), **will be held on Tuesday, Nov. 7, from 10 to 11:30 a.m.** and will include a deep dive into best practices related to fees, fines, purchasing, receipting and more. It will cover what they are, why such policies are necessary, how they contribute to local fiscal health, and how to get started on implementation. Additional information can be found on the [Fiscally Ready Communities webpage](#).

Office of Rural Development releases survey summary

The state Office of Rural Development launched a “Rural Michigan Perspectives and Priorities” survey during the summer of 2023, which drew more than 2,400 responses from those who live and/or work in rural Michigan. Respondents pointed to the geographic location/environment, outdoor recreation opportunities, and community connections as top rural strengths. According to the survey, top factors for deciding to live in a rural community include preferring a small community,



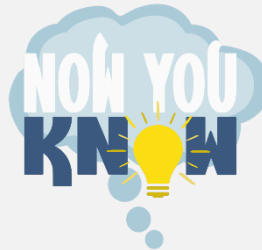
proximity to family or friends, and the availability of outdoor recreation. Lack of affordable housing was cited as the number one current issue, and increasing housing opportunities was cited as the biggest challenge facing rural communities over the next 10 years. The insights gathered through this survey along with extensive engagement with rural community leaders will help guide the Roadmap to Rural Prosperity report being released in 2024.

One month remaining for member input for 2024 MTA legislative policy platform

With just one month remaining, members can still provide input on MTA's legislative policy platform. Reviewed and updated annually, the legislative policy objectives guide MTA's government relations efforts and reflect emerging issues and goals. MTA members are encouraged to review the current [MTA 2023-24 Policy Platform](#) and share any proposed revisions and suggested additions by **Monday, Nov. 27**. Member-proposed policy changes will be reviewed by MTA committees for word selection and legality, and to ensure they conform with the Association's overall goals and objectives. The proposed policies will be presented at the 2024 MTA Annual Meeting in conjunction with our Annual Educational Conference in April. Contact the MTA Government Relations Department at legislation@michigantownships.org with questions, comments or suggestions.

Master township financial reports in just one hour—Register now!

Join MTA for our next lunchtime *Now You Know* webinar, **Financial Reporting: From Revenue to Red Flags**, coming to you live on **Nov. 8** at noon. Learn from MTA's Cindy Dodge as she reviews township financial reports and offers tips on recognizing red flag warnings that may indicate a developing situation or a need to amend the budget—and more! [Learn more here](#) or [register online now](#).



Federal update for week of Oct. 23

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