

Another week and budget remains unresolved

With less than two weeks until the state's next fiscal year on Oct. 1, no resolution has been reached on the state's FY 2025-2026 budget.

While there are major differences between the Senate, House and governor's budget recommendations, these need to be negotiated before the end of September to avoid a government shutdown. Additionally, road funding and public safety funding are expected to be part of a final agreement.



As previously shared, the major item for townships to be resolved is funding for statutory revenue sharing (*which is separate from constitutional revenue sharing*). For the fiscal year ending Sept. 30, townships, cities and villages are receiving \$333 million in statutory revenue sharing. The funding differences for FY 2025-2026 range from a decrease in funding to a 10% increase. While the House-passed budget includes higher funding levels for public safety and roads, their funding reduction removes statutory revenue sharing funding for 88% of Michigan townships, eliminating the current fiscal year inclusion for ALL townships, cities and villages *for the first time in nearly two decades*. MTA encourages members to advocate their [state representative](#) and [state senator](#) to ensure all local units of government receive statutory revenue sharing—not just a portion of local governments in the state.

Committee takes testimony on requiring postmark as date of receipt for property tax payment

The House Finance Committee heard testimony this week on requiring local units to accept the postmark from the U.S. Postal Service as the date of receipt for property tax payments. MTA testified in opposition to [House Bill 4799](#), sponsored by Rep. Sarah Lightner (R-Tomkins Twp.), as it would require townships and other local units of government to consider the postmark date as the date of payment or notification from property tax owners, regardless of when the payment or notification/communication was received. Further, the proposed change would apply to nondelinquent property taxes, assessments or other amounts on a property tax statement, as well as all related penalties, interest or fees. The bill could be considered by the committee as soon as next week. Members are urged to share their opposition with the [state representative](#).

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Civil fines for impeding individuals from voting

Legislation to establish civil fines of up to \$1,000 per violation for individuals making a false statement or misrepresentation with the intent to impede or prevent someone from voting was approved by the Senate this week. [Senate Bill 533](#), sponsored by Sen. Mary Cavanagh (D-Redford Chtr. Twp.), now moves to the House.

Bills pass to include forestry in recreational authorities

Local governments may soon be permitted to create a local Forest and Recreation Authority to own, govern and manage non-state, public lands for forestry and recreational purposes under legislation approved by the House this week. House Bills [4694](#) and [4695](#), sponsored by Rep.



Greg Markkanen (R-Hancock), would amend the requirements for forming a recreational authority, the purposes for which such an authority can be created, and the powers and responsibilities of an authority. The changes would expand the scope and flexibility of Michigan's Recreational Authorities Act, particularly to help Upper Peninsula communities, without impacting current communities or authorities. The proposed changes do not alter, remove or limit the existing powers or duties of current recreational authorities in Michigan but instead offer greater flexibility and increased local options for all authorities, existing or future. The changes are being sought by local governments and residents in Keweenaw County along with the Nature Conservancy. A third bill, [HB 4798](#), also sponsored by Rep. Markkanen, would amend the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act (NREPA) to include a recreational authority in the definition of a local unit of government or public authority. All three bills move to the Senate.

* [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](#)



Roadway interference misdemeanor bill approved by House

Protestors who block or obstruct vehicle or pedestrian traffic on a highway could face legal consequences under a bill that passed the House this week. [House Bill 4664](#), sponsored by Rep. Alicia St.

Germaine (R-Harrison Chtr. Twp.), creates a misdemeanor punishable by imprisonment for up to 93 days and a fine of up to \$5,000 for a protestor acting as part of an assembly to impede vehicle, streetcar or pedestrian traffic on a highway. Current law provides for a civil infraction for the unauthorized blocking of public roads; this provision would be retained for actions not taken as part of an assembly. The bill moves to the Senate for consideration.

Treasury shares information on small business taxpayer exemption reimbursement

In Tax Year 2023, the small business taxpayer exemption (SBTE) was expanded to include taxpayers that own, lease or possess personal property with a combined true cash value equal to or greater than \$80,000 but less than \$180,000. The Michigan Department of Treasury is required to calculate and distribute SBTE reimbursements to municipalities for personal property tax revenue lost due to this expanded exemption. Treasury calculates the SBTE reimbursement amount using 50% of the property's true cash value, the municipality's millage rate, and adjustments for other exemptions (i.e., Industrial Facilities Tax and Renaissance Zone) and tax increment finance authority (TIFA) captures. The SBTE reimbursements for Tax Year 2023 were to be issued today, Sept. 19. Treasury shared information this week on how 2023 SBTE reimbursements were calculated, where to find reports, how to record the revenue, and who to contact for additional questions or concerns.

Treasury is working to finalize the 2024 SBTE data and aims to have funds distributed by Nov. 30, 2025. The 2023 and 2024 SBTE reimbursements have been delayed due to implementation of this new reimbursement program and the large volume of data involved in processing claims across the state. Going forward, SBTE reimbursements will be issued annually in May, immediately following the tax year of the exemption. For more information or questions, visit [Small Business Taxpayer Exemption \(SBTE\) Reimbursements](#) or contact TREAS-ORTA-SBTE@michigan.gov or (517) 335-7484.



MTA RETREATS

RETURNING TO FRANKENMUTH

CLERKS | SEPT. 29-30
TREASURERS | OCT. 1-2
SUPERVISORS | OCT. 14-15
TRUSTEES | OCT. 27-28
PLANNING & ZONING | OCT. 29-30

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Reminders for clerks

- **MOVE deadline.** For townships with a Nov. 4 election, **Saturday, Sept. 20** is the deadline for clerks to transmit ballots to military and overseas (MOVE) voters who have applied for ballots.
- **Reporting weekend.** All clerks with a November election must report the hours the clerk's office will be open for absentee voting the Saturday and/or Sunday prior to the Nov. 4 election.

- **Absent voter (AV) ballot availability.** AV ballots must be available to all voters by the 40th day prior to the election, which is Thursday, Sept. 25. Beginning that day, clerks should issue ballots over the counter and process ballots for voters who requested a ballot by mail.
 - **Drop box collection.** Beginning [Tuesday, Sept. 30](#), clerks with November elections are required to collect election materials from each drop box in their jurisdiction every day that the clerk's office is open for business.
 - **Election security.** Earlier this week, the state Bureau of Elections sent a communication seeking clerks to participate in an engaging, hands-on **Election Official's Tabletop Exercise on Monday, Oct. 13** in Muskegon.
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Busting common plastics recycling myths

Public perception of which plastics can be recycled is often different than industry realities. On Oct. 9 at 11 a.m., the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy will host a [webinar](#) debunking top myths about recycling plastics and discussing challenges for certain types of plastics. The session is intended to help sustainability professionals and others be informed and equipped to cut through recycling misinformation.

Final highway cleanup starts tomorrow

Drivers may notice volunteers in high visibility safety vests along state highways throughout the week. The third and final Adopt-a-



Highway cleanup for 2025 is scheduled from Sept. 20-28. Volunteer crews help clean up Michigan roads, picking up 36,000 bags of trash in 2024. Sections of highway are available for adoption all over the state. Interested community groups and others can get more information on joining the program at www.Michigan.gov/AdoptAHighway.

Member input sought for MTA's 2026 legislative issues

Township officials can review and provide input on the MTA legislative policy platform. The legislative policy objectives—reviewed, updated and approved annually—guide the Association's government relations efforts and reflect emerging issues and goals. MTA members are encouraged to review the current [2025-2026 Policy Platform](#) and share any proposed additions and revisions by Monday, Nov. 24. Member-proposed policy changes will be reviewed by MTA policy committees and will be presented at the 2026 MTA Annual Meeting in conjunction with our 2026 Annual Educational Conference in April. Contact legislation@michigantownships.org with questions, comments or suggestions.

Federal updates for week of Sept. 16

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

townships.

Michigan Townships Association | 512 Westshire Drive | Lansing, MI 48917 US

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