Michigan Township INSIGHTS

May 15, 2026

No vote on housing preemption bills; locals say legislation 'undermines local governance without a guarantee of success'



While no action was taken on the housing preemption bills in the House Government Operations Committee, MTA wishes to thank all the township leaders who came to Lansing on Thursday, and all our members who have reached out to their lawmakers to ask them to stand with local voices, with Michigan communities and oppose these bills. The fight is not over, and we need to continue the efforts to stop these preemption efforts. Please continue to talk with your state representative and reach out to committee members, and encourage residents and community members to do the same.

The legislation, House Bills 5529-5531 and 5581-5585, would significantly restrict local authority by preempting local decision-making on key zoning issues, including duplexes, accessory dwelling units, minimum setbacks, lot sizes, and dwelling unit sizes. While MTA and township leaders in attendance were prepared to testify, we were unable to do so. However, written testimony was submitted, along with more than 2,400 signatures gathered in our joint letter of opposition—please sign on today if you have not already done so. Following the hearing, township leaders joined fellow municipal officials in voicing their opposition to the legislation at a press conference held with the Michigan Municipal League and Southeast Michigan Council of Governments. (You can watch a recording of the press conference on MTA's Facebook page.)

Flanked by a chorus of local officials, as well as Reps. Samantha Steckloff and Jaime Green and Sen. Sue Shink, township officials shared their front-line perspectives on the harmful impact the legislation will have on local communities, while doing nothing to guarantee more affordable housing. Muskegon Charter Township (Muskegon Co.) Supervisor Jennifer Hodges shared her unique insights as both a township official and in her role as housing coordinator for Muskegon County, saying, "Michigan is not a one-size-fits-all state. We have urban, suburban and rural communities, all with different infrastructure capacity, housing markets and growth patterns. Many factors driving housing shortages and affordability challenges are far bigger than local zoning. Overriding local zoning does not build new homes or improve





UPCOMING MTA TRAINING

This June—Election Ready afternoon workshops:
June 4: Kalamazoo, WMU Fetzer Center
June 16: Marquette, NMU
June 17: Gaylord, Treetops Resort
June 23: Frankenmuth, Bavarian Inn Lodge
June 25: Online, 1-5 p.m.

June 10: *Now You Know* lunchtime webinar Meeting Misconceptions

July 14-15: Summer Academy at Bay Valley Resort, Bay City



affordability—it undermines local governance without a guarantee of success."

Clinton Charter Township (Macomb Co.) Supervisor Paul Gieleghem emphasized the role of local zoning and planning, guided by resident input and local insights and expertise about how communities want to grow and evolve. "Local leaders balance housing needs, economic development, environmental protection, infrastructure capacity and neighborhood character," he said. "Removing local flexibility risks undermining years of thoughtful work and community consensus. Local voices matter. Local accountability matters. And community-led decision-making must remain at the center of Michigan's future."

Several other township leaders (including Canton Charter Township (Wayne Co.) Supervisor Anne Marie Hudak-Graham, Macomb Township (Macomb Co.) Supervisor Frank Vivanio, Chesterfield Charter Township (Macomb Co.) Supervisor Brad Kersten and Allendale Charter Township (Ottawa Co.) Supervisor Adam Elenbaas) were also in attendance, spoke at the press conference, were prepared to testify and/or met with legislators during House session on the negative impact these bills will have on all communities in the state. Thank you to all our township officials for your efforts.



Treasury temporarily suspends Fire Equipment Grant Program applications

Earlier this week, the state Department of Treasury temporarily suspended access to the Fire Equipment Grant Program application due to anticipated modifications to eligibility requirements. Treasury sent separate communications to those communities that had completed an application or initiated the application process. Once updated eligibility requirements are available, the department will reopen the application process. MTA will also share information with our members when available. It is anticipated that the original deadline will also be extended.

State revenues indicate slight increase

State revenues for the current and next fiscal years were revised slightly upward today at the Consensus Revenue Estimating Conference (CREC). The consensus revisions indicate an increase from the January 2026 CREC. For the current fiscal year, the combined state General Fund and School Aid Fund estimates were increased by $307 million (1.2%) and estimates for the fiscal year beginning Oct. 1 are projected to be up by $173 million.

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MTA QUICK LINKS

Answer Center
Training
Advocacy
Classifieds
Community Connection
Webcasts
Store
Township Governance Academy
Allied Service Providers
NATaT

CREC establishes an official economic forecast of major variables of the national and state economies, as well as a forecast of anticipated state revenues. Economists from the House Fiscal Agency, Senate Fiscal Agency and state Department of Treasury presented their economic and revenue forecasts for fiscal years 2025-26, 2026-27 and 2027-28. CREC sets the revenue estimates for the governor and the Legislature as they work to finalize the upcoming FY 2026-27 state budget, as well as projects sales tax revenue for constitutional revenue sharing.

MTA participates in NATaT Fly-in



Members of MTA's Board of Directors brought the township message to Washington, DC this week, where they met with members of Michigan's congressional delegation to discuss key issues of importance to townships in Michigan and across the nation. Participating in a federal advocacy and educational event organized by our national organization, the National Association of Towns and Townships (NATaT), were 2026 MTA President Kevin Beeson, Pine River Township (Gratiot Co.) supervisor; Immediate Past President Connie Cargill, Golden Township (Oceana Co.) treasurer; MTA First Vice President Malinda Cole-Crocker, MTA District 22 director and Buchanan Charter Township (Berrien Co.) supervisor; MTA Second Vice President Marvin Radtke Jr. MTA District 8 director and Green Lake Township (Grand Traverse Co.) supervisor; MTA Treasurer Glenn Rowley, MTA District 13 director and Bangor Charter Township (Bay Co.) supervisor; and MTA Secretary Matt Beattie, MTA District 9 director and Boon Township (Wexford Co.) supervisor. They spent their time on Capitol Hill sharing insights and perspectives on critical federal issues, including broadband, transportation issues including direct funding for local roads and bridges and a realistic definition of rural, and tax priorities. The members met with U.S. Reps. John Moolenaar, Bill Huizenga, Jack Bergman and Tom Barrett, and staff with U.S. Sen. Elissa Slotkin and U.S. Reps. Haley Stevens, Kristen McDonald-Rivet, Hillary Scholten and Tim Walberg. MTA thanks the federal leaders for their interest in and support of Michigan's townships and the value of local government.



Single stairway for multifamily housing approved by committee

Legislation supported by MTA allowing multifamily buildings with up to four or five levels to have a single interior exit stairway was approved by the House Government Operations Committee this week. House Bills 5770 and 5771, sponsored by Reps. Parker Fairbairn (R-Harbor Springs) and Stephen Wooden (D-Grand Rapids), implement fire safety requirements for multifamily housing to allow for the development of apartment buildings with smaller footprints. Requirements include a maximum of four units on each level, a maximum distance of 125 feet to the exit from the furthest point within a level, automatic smoke detection and smoke detectors in common areas, and automatic sprinkler locations in the exit stairway. To be permitted for five-story buildings, the building must also be serviced by an accredited fire department with a class 1 or 2 ranking by the Insurance Services Office, which includes aerial apparatus requirements. The bills head to the House floor for consideration by the chamber.

House prohibits local governments, public safety agencies from using certain drones

Under legislation approved by the House this week, local governments could be prohibited from purchasing or operating a drone manufactured by companies associated with certain foreign entities. House Bill 5329, sponsored by Rep. Josh Schriver (R-Oxford Chtr. Twp.), and HB 5331, sponsored by Rep. Jennifer Conlin (D-Ann Arbor Chtr. Twp.), adopts three federal lists of prohibited foreign manufacturers into state law, which include the popular Chinese manufacturer DJI. HB 5331 defines public entities to include both local governments and entities receiving money from a local government, such as public safety agencies, in the purchase and operation bans. Under the bill, the requirements would be phased in so public entities could not contract with a person to acquire a drone from a listed manufacturer beginning one year after enactment, purchase a drone from a listed manufacturer beginning two years after enactment, and operate a drone from a listed manufacturer beginning five years after enactment. There is an exemption to allow for the use of drones from the prohibited manufacturers in response to a state of emergency or state of disaster declared by the governor. Both bills are tie-barred to a third bill, HB 5330, which has not yet passed the House, meaning they could not take effect until HB 5330 passes. The bills advance to the Senate to discussion.



Bills expanding ordinances for golf carts on streets approved

Similar House and Senate bills permitting more local units to allow golf carts on their streets were approved by their

respective committees this week. House Bill 4644, introduced by Rep. Alicia St. Germaine (R-Harrison Chtr. Twp.), was approved by the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee while Senate Bill 900, sponsored by Sen. Kevin Hertel (D-St. Clair Shores), received a green light from the Senate Local Government Committee. Under current law, cities, villages and townships with a population under 30,000 may allow the operation of golf carts on their streets via a resolution. HB 4644 and SB 900 raise the population threshold to 65,000, increasing the number of municipalities that could opt to allow golf cart operations on their roads. The bills do not alter existing provisions allowing a county board of commissioners to disapprove of the operation of golf carts on the roads within a township. Each bill moves to its chamber's floor for a vote.

Treasury seeks comment on numbered letter revision on deficit elimination plans

Township officials and finance directors are encouraged to review and provide comments on revisions to Numbered Letter 2016-1 that clarifies how to determine if a deficit elimination plan is required for local governments with fund deficits. The revision specifically updates the requirements for determining if a plan is needed for Proprietary Funds, Fiduciary Funds and Discretely Presented Component Units (Full Accrual). For the working capital calculation, current liabilities may no longer exclude the current portion of long-term debt.

Distance Learning & Telemedicine Grant opportunity for rural communities

Local governments can apply to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) for Distance Learning and Telemedicine Grants to help rural communities improve access to education and health care using technology. The program, targeted to rural areas with populations 20,000 or fewer, will provide approximately $27 million in funding, with grants ranging from $50,000 to $750,000 dollars. State and local governments, nonprofit organizations, businesses and groups that provide education or health services in rural areas are among the eligible entities that can apply. Applications are open through June 30.

Open house on aerial geological survey

The U.S. Geological Survey and Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy have begun conducting an aerial geological survey in 16 counties in southwestern and south-central Michigan to gather data about groundwater to assist in sustainable water resource planning. Residents may have noticed a low-flying helicopter carrying a suspended metal hoop. Those interested in seeing the technology up close and learning more about the study are invited to an open house on May 19 at 10 a.m. at Brooks Field Airport at 1243 S. Kalamazoo Ave. in Marshall.

Funding for flood mitigation projects available



The Michigan State Police is now accepting applications for federal flood hazard mitigation funding. The Flood Mitigation Assistance program offers funding to local governments to reduce or eliminate the flood risk to structures and buildings insured by the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and to enhance community flood resilience within NFIP participating communities. Notice of Intent (NOI) forms are due June 1. See the guide on how to complete the NOI and a bulletin with further details about eligible projects.

Free asbestos and lead awareness training opportunities

The Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Administration (MIOSHA) Training Institute is offering free training opportunities focused on asbestos and lead awareness and compliance. Courses will be held in five locations across the state May–July, including:

- May 27 – Gaylord
- June 2 – Monroe
- June 24 – Clinton Charter Township
- June 30 – Lansing
- July 14 – Hancock

Courses are limited to 25 registrants and include an introduction to MIOSHA's new database "AMIS 2.0" designed to help employees and employers access data and apply for asbestos accreditations with greater ease. In addition to information related to standards and safe handling procedures, participants can also get their questions related to asbestos and lead policies answered by MIOSHA staff. To learn more or register, visit the MIOSHA Asbestos Program website.

AG releases opioid settlement report and direction

This week, the Michigan Department of Attorney General released guidance and local government expenditure data related to opioid settlement funds. To help ensure funding is used in compliance with the settlement, the department has developed a list of unallowable uses and reminds local leaders that expenditures must align with Exhibit E of the settlement. The initial report covering expenditures between 2023-2025 provides insight for local leaders on how other townships, cities, villages and counties are spending their funds. This report will be updated on an annual basis. Opioid settlement funds must be used for opioid remediation purposes.

Healthy workplace webinar series

The next installment of the Healthy Work, Healthy Mind webinar series, sponsored by the state Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity, is scheduled for May 21 at 2 p.m. The 30-minute webinar will cover supportive and healthy work practices and strategies for creating a supportive team

culture. No registration is required; join the Teams meeting to participate in the free training. A recording of the first session offering an introduction to psychosocial hazards and job stress is available.

Updates for clerks

- Reimbursement opportunities via the Electronic Orders & Requests (EOR) system opening TODAY, May 15:
  - The **May early voting wage reimbursement** form is now available and will remain open for reimbursement claims through July 13. Townships that conducted early voting without the county may submit a reimbursement application directly to the state Bureau of Elections. Training on reimbursements is available via BOE's eLearning Center.
  - BOE funding is available for the purchase or reimbursement of eligible **drop boxes and/or security cameras**. To review directions, clerks should check BOE's Quick Guide for Dropbox Ordering.
- Electronic Delivery and Return Portal (EDARP) access training is required before election administrators can access the EDARP system. This may be completed via eLearning through the EDARP Access Training Module or during one of two upcoming live virtual trainings scheduled for May 20 at 10 a.m. and June 8 at 2 p.m. Live training sessions are identical and space is limited. Interested election officials should can register here.

Share your township's America250 celebrations with MTA



Is your township planning celebrations, events, projects or proclamations to celebrate our nation's 250th birthday? MTA wants to know! We'd like to highlight in our July 2026 issue of *Township Focus*, in subsequent issues and in other MTA communications how Michigan's townships are commemorating and celebrating the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. Send details to jenn@michigantownships.org or call (517) 321-6467, ext. 229.

Federal update for week of May 11

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



MICHIGAN TOWNSHIPS ASSOCIATION

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