



# This Week in Lansing

MHSA • Muchmore Harrington Smalley & Associates, LLC

Highlights of the Latest Major Legislative, Administrative and Regulatory Activity in the State Capitol

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**HOUSE & SENATE TACKLE OPIOID LEGISLATION** – Members of both the *House* and *Senate Health Policy Committees* began hearings on legislation that addresses the state’s opioid epidemic this week, each committee noting the issue is one of the most serious currently facing the state. As announced on Friday of last week, the state received a federal grant of roughly \$16 million to use toward its efforts, including treatment, prevention and education practices and availability.

During the *Senate* meeting, *Committee Chair Senator Mike Shirkey* (R-Clarklake) acknowledged the hearing would be the first of many on *Senate Bills 166* and *167*, legislation that would require prescribers to use the state’s update tracking system when prescribing *schedule II-V* drugs. *Senator Tonya Schuitmaker* (R-Lawton), sponsor of the bills, noted that though the *U.S.* hosts only 5 percent of the world’s population, 80 percent of all opioids are used here. *Ms. Schuitmaker* also noted that the current *Michigan Automated Prescription System (MAPS)* tool is underutilized and recent and continuous improvements will make it more available and user friendly. Utilizing *MAPS* more routinely to track certain drugs, according to the *Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA)*, would align Michigan with 49 other states in using a drug monitoring system.

Also according to *LARA*, within the other states where use of monitoring systems is mandated, it has been shown that the abuse of monitored drugs has decreased markedly. Noting that the goal right now is to educate those interested in using *MAPS* on the system’s benefits, *Kim Gattica* from *LARA* told *Committee* members that the *Department’s* overall hope is to have 80 to 90 percent of registered prescribers using the monitoring system. *Mr. Shirkey* agreed that in order to address the epidemic of abuse and addiction, there must be education at all levels, stating, “Ultimately this is a community level issue, not a statutory issue, but we can enable some things to make a difference.”

While the *Senate* attempts to work through the regulation and monitoring of opioids via *MAPS* and prescribers themselves, the *House* began discussions on a six-bill package on the issues of student education, pain management clinics and pharmacist legal rights, among others. *Committee Chair Hank Vaupel* (R-Fowlerville) noted the seriousness of the issue, stating most of the abuse stems from legally-prescribed and medically-necessary use of the drugs, something *House Bills 4403-4408* address on multiple levels. The bills, as brought up in *Committee*, call for:

- The allowance of opioid addiction treatment to be covered under the *Social Welfare Act (HB 4403)*, sponsored by *Representative Andy Schor* (D-Lansing))
- The creation and implementation of licensing and fees for pain management clinics (*HB 4404*, sponsored by *Representative Sam Singh* (D-East Lansing))
- The allowance of pharmacists to refuse to fill or refill a prescription if he or she believes said

prescription is not legitimate, and also exempts the pharmacist from civil liability if that decision is made (**HB 4405**, sponsored by **Representative Kathy Crawford** (R-*Novi*))

- The inclusion of opioid addiction and abuse instruction into health education curriculums in schools throughout the state (**HBs 4406 & 4407**, sponsored by **Representative Beth Griffin** (R-*Mattawan*))
- The requirement for doctors to have discussions with parents regarding the side effects and potential for addiction before prescribing a minor with any opioid medication/drug (**HB 4408**, sponsored by **Representative Joseph Bellino** (R-*Monroe*))

Both sets of bills remain in their respective *Committees*, with more hearings and testimony expected in the coming weeks.

**BUDGETS CONTINUE TO MOVE OUT OF APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEES** – As the month of April comes to a close, more budgets for the **2017-2018 Fiscal Year** continue to be reported from committee, including several large budgets this week. Updates are as follows:

- *House Appropriations Committee* members sent budgets for the *Michigan Department of Education (MDE)*; the *Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD)*; the *Michigan Department of Corrections (MDOC)*; the *Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)*; the *Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)*; and General Government to the full *House* for a vote
- *Senate Appropriations Committee* members moved six budgets to the *Senate* floor for a vote, including: *Michigan Department of Education (MDE)*; *K-12* education; higher education; community colleges; judiciary; General Government; the *Michigan Department of Corrections (MDOC)*; and the *Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)*

Members from both *Committees* will continue to report remaining budgets as the full *House* and *Senate* prepare for discussion and passage over the coming weeks.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE BRINGS BACK BODY CAMERA TALKS** – On Tuesday of this week, members of the *House Judiciary Committee* began discussing legislation reintroduced on the issue of police body cameras, the retention of their footage and exemptions of disclosure if recorded in a private place. **House Bill 4277**, as sponsored by **Representative Jim Runestad** (R-*White Lake*), would place additional policies on video of body cameras versus those of dashboard cameras, a distinction **Mr. Runestad** is crucial to make. Commenting on his bill and its importance for law enforcement as well as citizens, **Mr. Runestad** noted that body cameras are more apt to catch a subject in a compromising or embarrassing position or situation, and therefore should be used but the video should be released or retained with discretion.

**Kimberley Buddin** with the *American Civil Liberties Union* agreed, and noted that the use of body cameras is intended to improve relations between officers and the public (not embarrass or revictimize those involved), and it seems to be working, stating, “Current research on police body cameras is limited but suggests they can be a valuable tool in helping to decrease citizen complaints against police, decrease the use of force by police, decrease assaults on officers wearing body cameras, and increase police accountability and transparency.” The bill would also call for the exemption of video disclosure if said video was recorded in a private place. The bill saw no action and remains in *Committee*.

**LINE 5 PIPELINE BALLOT PROPOSAL PETITION APPROVED** – A petition seeking to revoke an easement enacted in 1953 that has allowed the *Enbridge Energy* owned and operated **Line 5 Pipeline** to run under the *Straits of Mackinac* received approval from the *Michigan State Board of Canvassers* this week. The petition, circulated by **Keep Our Great Lakes Great**, would also create the

“*Great Lakes Pipeline Safety Regulation Act*”, which would prohibit the state from granting easements over, through, under or upon the *Great Lakes* bottomlands for pipelines carrying crude oil or light petroleum products. The law would not, however, ban the carrying of propane or other natural gas liquids through the *Straits of Mackinac*.

One stipulation specifically regarding *Enbridge’s Line 5 Pipeline* would be the allowance of anyone to file a claim for damages based on the operation of that pipeline or any other under the *Great Lakes*. If disputes regarding a pipeline were to occur and be resolved, the owner of the pipeline would be required to provide the state with a \$400 million surety bond as well as a \$4 billion liability policy or bond. In order for the petition to be successful and placed on the November ballot, 252,523 signatures would need to be collected in a six-month time period from registered voters. The petition was approved to form on a vote of 3-0.

## **ODDS & ENDS**

- *Michigan State Superintendent Brian Whiston* signed off on an accountability program created to keep *Detroit* schools open, with the plan to turn schools around within three years
- Former *State Representative Andrea LaFontaine* has been named as the *Michigan Department of Natural Resources* “*Special Advisor for Southeast Michigan*”
- The next *State Pipeline Safety Advisory Board* meeting will be held on June 12 at *Petoskey Middle School* from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
- Michigan’s *First Lady Sue Snyder* will host the third campus sexual assault summit on September 25 at *Eastern Michigan University*
- During a drunk driving crackdown between March 16 and March 29, law enforcement officers made 434 arrests, of which 82 persons were charged under the state’s high blood alcohol law
- *Governor Rick Snyder* ordered all state and *U.S.* flags to be lowered to half-staff today in honor of former *State Representative Alvin Kukuk*, who passed away last Saturday
- Both *House* and *Senate* members passed *House Bill 4329*, sending it to *Governor Rick Snyder* for signature, with the bill approving \$100 million in federal monies for *Flint*
- According to a report released by *Partnership for Michigan’s Health*, health care services in Michigan employed 588,000 people in 2015, making the health care sector the largest private employer in the state
- Michigan’s 17 labor markets all saw a decrease in unemployment rates in March of this year, but 16 of them also saw their total workforce decrease as well, according to the *Michigan Department of Technology, Management and Budget (DTMB)*
- Five business expansions and two community development projects have been approved by the *Michigan Strategic Fund*, with \$43 million in capital investment and 259 new jobs expected as a result
- *Michelle Beebe* has been named as the new director of *Michigan’s Unemployment Insurance Agency (UIA)*, having previously served as director of *Utah’s Unemployment Insurance Division*
- *Kevin Sehmeyer* has been named as the state’s fire marshal, becoming the state’s fifth fire marshal in the last three years
- According to a report released by the *Workers Compensation Research Institute*, Michigan’s total cost per claim for worker’s compensation were at or below the median level of 18 other states, showing a decrease from 2009 to 2013
- Since October 2014, Michigan’s unemployment rate is among the 10 highest in the country, based on numbers from the *Bureau of Labor and Statistics*
- *Scott Wamsley* has been named as deputy director for the *Aging and Adult Services Agency* housed within the *Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)*
- *Lieutenant Governor Brian Calley* released a video prepping viewers for a May 30 announcement, with many speculating an official gubernatorial run declaration

- **Paula Herbert** has been announced as the new president of the **Michigan Education Association (MEA)**, following the retirement of current president **Steven Cook** this coming August
- **House Republicans** announced the caucus raised \$817,300 in the first quarter of this year, while **Democrats** raised \$410,576
- Roughly 1,500 miles of roads across the state will see an increase in speed limits starting May 1, a map and list of roads effected can be viewed [here](#)
- The state is set to receive \$13 million from **Hewlett Packard Enterprise** for its role in the botched **Business Application Modernization** project
- The **Michigan Gaming Control Board** announced new rules for construction contractors in the hopes of attracting new contractors to **Detroit's** three casinos
- **Detroit Mayor Mike Duggan** testified in the **House Michigan Competitiveness Committee**, telling members any auto no-fault insurance reform must be statewide and that the **City of Detroit** should meet all necessary criteria to no longer require state oversight of its finances by next year
- The **MIThrive** package of bills (“brownfield bills” – **Senate Bills 111-115**) were voted out of the **House Tax Policy Committee**, sending them to the **House** floor for a vote
- **Representative Jim Runestad** (R-White Lake) and **Representative David LaGrand** (D-Grand Rapids) introduced legislation that would prevent legislators from entering the lobbying force for two years after leaving office
- **Governor Rick Snyder** announced the expansion of the **CareConnect360** (a care management tool and Internet portal to coordinate care and improve health for **Medicaid** beneficiaries) to include youths in foster care

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