



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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PUBLIC HEALTH COMMISSION ISSUES REPORT – All state departments should consider public health when implementing policies, including issuing public health impact statements, according to the final report from the state’s *Public Health Advisory Commission* released on Tuesday of this week. Created by executive order from *Governor Rick Snyder* in 2016, the *Commission* also noted the state itself should begin a full review of where public health funding disparities and health needs have not been met, particularly by looking at public health funding allocations for each fiscal year.

The 24 *Commission* members also noted in the report that both state and local health departments need to work together in considering and embracing “awareness of environmental justice and its impact on vulnerable populations.” Though the report lists its recommendations as to how the state could make the issue of public health one of priority, those within the *Commission* could not come to an agreement as to a reorganization model or program to follow through with and carry out those recommendations and maintain a priority status. The *Commission* was given three separate models to discuss: the creation of a separate public health department; the creation of an independent and autonomous agency within the *Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)* specifically for public health; and the creation of a state health officer position with *DHHS* who would have the authority to declare health emergencies, issue quarantines and to issue orders.

Though no decision was made as to which of the three models should be implemented, the *Commission* did note that when a director for public health is chosen for Michigan, that individual must have in depth background experience in public health, act as chief strategist for executing ideas for public health services and must also serve on the governor’s cabinet. The report also noted that in certain cases, local governments would be allocated incentives to consolidate services in the hopes of greater collaboration between local health departments. Local governments should also develop local public health response team as well as work with the state to leverage buying power, something the report noted would be crucial to the overall state public health system. *Governor Snyder*, upon receiving the report noted that above all else in the state, public health concerns need to be addressed.

PILOT INFRASTRUCTURE ASSET MANAGEMENT SYSTEM CREATED – Under *Executive Directive 2017-1* signed by *Governor Rick Snyder* on Monday of this week, prosperity regions in southeast and west Michigan will participate in a pilot program tasked with developing regional infrastructure assets management systems.

As originally recommended by *Mr. Snyder’s 21st Century Infrastructure Commission*, the pilot programs will create and implement a database of infrastructure elements and measurements for those elements in the aforementioned regions. However, though the database would focus mainly on areas

participating in the pilot program, it would also have to be designed so that its use could be available statewide following the initial implementation. The pilots are to focus on elements of transportation and water systems (including storm water), but will also include aspects from the areas of energy and broadband in discussions of infrastructure management.

Outside of the actual database, the pilot programs will also determine best practices and incentives to be used in encouraging public and private oversight agencies' participation in the overall infrastructure management process. Costs for the database system as well as oversight and training will also be determined within the pilot process, as well as the determination of information safety and distribution. Overall, the pilot programs will stretch across 55 percent of the state's urban, suburban and rural populations, according to the *Directive*, to address each population's infrastructure and monetary issues in relation to the program.

Commenting on the *Directive* and the *Commission's* proposed pilots, *Mr. Snyder* stated, "Modern infrastructure is critical in ensuring Michigan is on a solid path toward our future. This collaborative regional pilot is key to improving our statewide infrastructure and will help make Michigan a national leader in infrastructure asset management and planning." Recommendations based on the results of the pilot programs are to be submitted by April of 2018.

GOVERNOR SNYDER REVIEWS FINAL ESSA PLAN – As of Monday of this week, *Governor Rick Snyder* began reviewing the state's finalized plan for compliance with the new federal *Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)*, with submittal of the plan expected at the end of the month. Following changes to the law having been made mid-March, *Mr. Snyder* is allowed 30 days to review the plan before *Superintendent of Public Instruction Brian Whiston* is to submit it to the *U.S. Department of Education*. The plan outlines the following:

- The definition of the purpose of school accountability as a means of providing districts with director support, rather than with labels or sanctions
- A detailed response for each school based on their individual academic needs, with those schools most in need of assistance to be provided with the most intensive support and interventions (when/if necessary)
- The focus of school to not only be on the academic areas for overall, well-rounded child education (arts, physical education, etc.), but also on topics such as health and safety, food and nutrition, school climate and culture, social emotional learning, early childhood, and post-secondary transition phases
- An increase in flexibility for districts and schools for interventions or actions taken, so each local district can "diagnose their needs across the whole child spectrum, identify evidence-based practices, and implement a plan tailored to their needs"
- The use of an accountability system to rate each school
- The focus of districts to move beyond the initially required "highly qualified" label for teachers and instead focus on assisting and supporting their teachers throughout their careers
- Testing and assessment systems formulated to not only measure proficiency based on *Common Core* standards, but also "within-year student growth"

Once *Mr. Snyder's* review is complete, the *U.S. Secretary of Education* will have 120 days to review and approve the plan as well, a process that will include a peer review for specific sections of the plan.

GREAT LAKES RESTORATION INITIATIVE: WILL FUNDING BE CUT? – Under *President Donald Trump's* proposed budget, the *Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI)* would no longer receive federal funding, with those monies instead to be used for the building of a border wall

between the U.S. and *Mexico*, something officials say could have catastrophic results on the *Great Lakes* and surrounding areas. Noting that Michigan could see negative impacts both economically and environmentally if the funding is eliminated, *U.S. Representative Dan Kildee* (D-Flint) noted the because the *Great Lakes* are the largest source of fresh water in the world, they need to be a national priority and should be protected via the *GLRI* as established in 2010.

The *GLRI* was formed to combat toxic sites/pollution, restore wetlands, promote near shore habitats and fight invasive species; services that if were defunded, according to *Mr. Kildee*, would affect not only Michigan but locations such as the *Chesapeake Bay* and *Puget Sound* (*Maryland/Virginia* and *Washington* areas respectively). *Mr. Kildee*, along with 23 *Republican U.S. Representatives* and 40 *Democratic U.S. Representatives*, noted this is a bipartisan issue and is calling for the full funding for the *GLRI* to remain. Industries such as tourism, industrial development, sport fishing, charter boat and environmental protection (among others) would be affected if the proposed cut took place, as funding would go from the current \$300 million per year to \$10 million per year, a roughly 97 percent cut.

ODDS & ENDS

- *Representative Hank Vaupel* (R-Handy Twp) noted that following spring break recess, the *House Health Policy Committee* (of which he is *Chair*) will hold a hearing on the heavily discussed opioid legislation introduced last month (*House Bills 4406-4408*)
- Following a death in *Niles*, Michigan last weekend due to carbon dioxide poisoning, *Senator Steve Bieda* (D-Warren) told the media on Wednesday of this week he plans to re-examine the state's carbon dioxide detector requirements for hotels and motels (the death occurred in a *Quality Inn*)
- According to the *Michigan Department of Treasury*, as announced late last week, human tissue samples not intended for patient treatment but instead for research use are subject to the state's sales and use tax
- *House Bills 4425* and *4426* (as sponsored by *Representative Tom Barrett* (R-Charlotte)) along with *Senate Bills 299* and *300* (as sponsored by *Senator Patrick Colbeck* (R-Canton)) call for the restoration of parental rights in regard to vaccination requirements
- *Consumers Energy* announced that as of last week Friday, it had filed a request with the *Michigan Public Service Commission* to increase its electric rates by 4.2 percent overall, totaling a \$173 million increase
- One child from northern Michigan and one from western Michigan passed away during the 2016-2017 flu season due to an influenza-related illness, according to the *Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)* in its statement on the flu vaccine and its results
- Through the "*10 Cents a Meal For School Kids & Farms*" pilot program 48,000 students were served with 49 different types of Michigan-grown fruits, vegetables and legumes throughout 16 school districts that received grants through the program
- The *Michigan Energy Office* has issued a *Request for Information* (due today) for ideas to promote energy waste reduction programs within the state for the upcoming grant year that begins October 2017 and continues through August 2018
- *Representatives Scott Dianda* (D-Calumet) and *John Kivela* (D-Marquette) have both announced they will be running for the *38th District Senate* seat in 2018 (currently held by *Senator Tom Casperson* (R-Escanaba) who will be term-limited out) for the *Democrats*, with former *Representative Ed McBroom* announcing his bid to keep the seat *Republican*
- The *Michigan Liquor Control Commission* announced on Tuesday of this week it has rescinded its requests to eliminate the "half-mile rule", a regulation that prohibits retailers selling liquor from obtaining a permit to do so unless their location is at least on half-mile from a retailer with a similar permit
- According to a study completed and released by *TRIP*, a transportation organization based in

Washington, D.C., stated that the current funding plan for the state's roads will not be enough to cover the necessary repairs and other projects as the roads will only continue to get worse the longer the projects take to complete

- The *Michigan Association of United Ways* stated in a report released on Tuesday of this week that 62 percent of jobs in Michigan pay less than \$20 an hour while household budgets have increased by 18 percent, 4 percent above the national rate of inflation
- *House Speaker Tom Leonard* (R-DeWitt) announced *Representatives Steve Marino* (R-Harrison Twp) and *Jim Runestad* (R-White Lake) have been named to serve on standing committees of the *National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL)*; *Mr. Marino* to the *Budgets and Revenue Committee* and *Mr. Runestad* to the *Law, Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee*
- Officials with the *Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT)* announced early this week that weight limits currently placed on most roads throughout the state began to be removed beginning Wednesday of this week
- *Representative Tom Cochran* (D-Mason) announced last week introduction of *House Bill 4461*, legislation that would allow physicians to prescribe lethal medication to terminally ill patients who have the mental capacity to ask for it, giving those with terminal illnesses and sound mind the option to end their lives with dignity when they see fit
- The *Michigan Department of Education (MDE)* announced on Wednesday of this week the approval of three consolidation grants: \$451,000 to the *Detroit Public Schools Community District*; \$2.5 million to *Marshall Public Schools*; and \$49,000 to *Innocademy in Zeeland*
- So far in 2017, 220 people have passed away in traffic crashes, 15 more than this time of year in 2016
- *Representative Andy Schor* (D-Lansing) is currently polling 27 points ahead over *Lansing Councilmember Judi Brown Clarke* in the 2018 Lansing Mayoral race
- According to a report released by the *Environment Michigan Research & Policy Center, Detroit* recorded 161 days in 2015 with unhealthy levels of air pollution (soot) and *Sault Ste. Marie* recorded 50 days
- *Senator Hoon-Yung Hopgood* (D-Taylor) has introduced *Senate Bills 285 and 286*, which call for the allowance of increased patient contact hours in nursing homes and would also set standards for *Certified Nurse Aide (CNA)* registration and training
- According to a recently released report from *Americans for Prosperity*, the proposed border adjustment tax currently being discussed in *Washington, D.C.* could harm Michigan's industrial economy more than any other state
- The *Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)* announced the launch of an online child support calculator for public use, as currently used by *DHHS* staff and court officials www.michigan.gov/michildsupport

PLEASE NOTE – The offices of *MHSA* will be closed beginning at 3:00 p.m. today and will reopen for normal business hours on Monday, April 10. We wish you all a safe and happy weekend!

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