

CAPITOL NEWS UPDATE

WEEK OF JANUARY 7, 2019

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WHITMER SIGNS EXECUTIVE DIRECTIVES

During her first nine days in office, Gov. Gretchen Whitmer signed ten executive directives, ranging from directing state employees to report threats to public health to guaranteeing equal pay for male and female state workers. Six of the edicts are focused on transparency within state government.

The directives establish guidelines or rules and procedures for state departments and employees, but unlike executive orders, they are not filed with the Secretary of State.

The recently-signed executive directives include: directing state employees to report any imminent threat to public health; requiring state departments to report any irregularity or discrepancy involving public money or public property; establishing standards of ethical conduct for department directors appointees of the governor and executive branch employees; prohibiting the use of state funds, personnel, office space etc. for political contributions; banning department directors and agency heads from using private email use for state business and state email for non-state activity; requiring directs and heads to address budget implications for their actions; directing any legislative proposals by state departments go before the budget director and Governor's Director of Legislative Affairs; requiring the Department of Technology, Management and Budget to work with other state departments and others to help reduce barriers to businesses; barring LGBT discrimination by state services or contractors; and ensuring equal pay for female state workers by banning the state from asking for, or searching for, job applicant's previous salaries.

SNYDER VETOES 41 LAME DUCK BILLS BEFORE LEAVING OFFICE

Former Gov. Rick Snyder vetoed 41 bills out of almost 400 bills sent to his desk during the lame-duck session, including the controversial bills that would have limited the new administration's authority and given the Republican-led Legislature authority to intervene in state legal cases

Snyder also vetoed a Senate bill which would have barred state agencies from requiring nonprofits to disclose their donors. He did, however, sign into law a bill that bans state agencies from creating new regulations that are stricter than federal laws.

GORDON NAMED DHHS DIRECTOR

Gov. Whitmer named Robert Gordon as Director of the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services. Gordon has previously served in the Obama administration as acting deputy director at the U.S. Office of Management and Budget; and as acting assistant secretary for Planning, Evaluation, and Policy Development at the U.S. Department of Education. He is currently Senior Vice President

of Finance and Global Strategy for The College Board- the nonprofit organization that runs the SAT. Gordon holds a bachelor's degree from Harvard University, and a law degree from Yale University.

SENATE TO MAKE NO-FAULT REFORMS TOP PRIORITY IN NEW YEAR

Senate Majority Leader Mike Shirkey (R-Clarklake) said this week that auto insurance reform would be his top priority for 2019, and is expected to use his first Senate bill to address the issue.

Shirkey said he expects the new legislation to be comprehensive and include some pieces of the previous plan—a version proposed by former Senate Majority Leader Arlan Meekhof (R-West Olive) that passed the Senate in November 2017 but not the House. The plan included creating a three-tier system of medical coverage for drivers, creating a fraud authority, capping medical expenses for uninsured persons, and capping attendant care.

Shirkey takes his position as the Republican Senate majority is reduced to 22 to 16, and a new era of divided state government begins.

CHATFIELD MAKES BIPARTISAN MOVE – FIRST HOUSE BILL GOES AFTER CIVIL FORFEITURES

House Speaker Lee Chatfield (R-Levering) has made his first move by announcing a plan to renew a bipartisan effort to reform the state's civil asset forfeiture laws.

Chatfield promised to work with Democratic Attorney General Dana Nessel to make changes that would require a conviction in most cases before police can permanently confiscate property from residents. Currently, Michigan law allows police to take property from suspected criminals—whether or not charges are filed. The new legislation would require a conviction before police could confiscate property worth less than \$50,000 and it would also make the standard of evidence more stringent before police would be allowed to permanently confiscate property worth more than that.

A similar plan was approved in the House last year.

MM&A Briefs

Calley to lobby for small business

Former Lt. Governor Brian Calley has become President of the Small Business Association of Michigan, where he will be in charge of the organization's legislative lobbying and communications efforts. Longtime SBAM President and CEO Rob Fowler, will remain as CEO.

Rossman-McKinney, Keenan join Nessel

Attorney General Dana Nessel has named Kelly Rossman-McKinney as director of communications and Kelly Keenan as deputy attorney general. Rossman-McKinney, a longtime public relations professional worked on Nessel's transition team after losing in her race for the 24th Senate District. Keenan was legal counsel for former Governor Jennifer Granholm.

Calendar of Important Events

Feb. 5 State of the State Address – Gov. Gretchen Whitmer
Location: 7 p.m., Capitol Building, Lansing