

CAPITOL NEWS UPDATE

WEEK OF MAY 29, 2017

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CALLEY PEDDLES PART-TIME LEGISLATURE ON MACKINAC

Instead of using the spotlight to announce his run for governor at the Detroit Regional Chamber Policy Conference on Mackinac Island this week, Lt. Governor Brian Calley proclaimed plans to push a part-time legislature. He also proposed making the governor's office subject to FOIA requests, and banning legislators from becoming lobbyists right after they leave office. Calley kicked off his mystery campaign about 30 days before with a speech, a new website with a clock counting down to May 30, and advertising.

The Board of State Canvassers is expected to decide next week whether or not it will approve the petition, allowing Clean Michigan Committee, the ballot committee supporting the measure, to begin collecting signatures.

According to Calley, a part-time Legislature would mean millions in savings if the legislator's salaries were cut in half. He also said it would be up to the Legislature to decide what appropriate staffing levels would be in a proposed part-time Legislature.

PENSION TENSION: STALEMATE ON TEACHER PENSIONS

Top legislative Republicans have reached an agreement on budget targets without the input of Gov. Rick Snyder, as the tug-of-war over the teacher pension system for new public school employees continues.

The budget agreement includes a consensus between Senate Majority Leader Arlan Meekhof (R-West Olive) and Speaker of the House Tom Leonard (R-Dewitt) to move all new hires to 401k plans, which is in opposition to Snyder's recommendations to make some changes to the current hybrid system that uses some pension and some 401k plans without closing it outright.

Gov. Snyder has said that closing the system outright would be more expensive in the long run than keeping the fully funded hybrid plan, while Senate majority leader Arlan Meekhof (R-West Olive) has argued that ending the hybrid plan will cut liability to the state.

Both parties have voiced concern that the issue could make it impossible to finish the budget before the end of June, which could create uncertainty for K-12 schools, universities, community colleges and local governments whose fiscal years begin July 1.

ASSIGNED AUTO CLAIMS INSURANCE BILLS MOVE TO FULL HOUSE

The House Insurance Committee this week approved several bills aimed at reducing the number of lawsuits and fraudulent claims to the Michigan Automobile Insurance Placement Facility (MAIPF) program.

The MAIPF program still allows people injured in auto accidents but not covered by insurance, to make claims for benefits.

The legislation would require persons injured in a traffic crash where the motorist has no insurance, to provide proof of that injury, cooperate with the entity reviewing whether the injury occurred and notify that entity of the potential claim within one year of the crash.

The committee adopted amendments for two of the bills, requiring persons to submit reasonable proof of the injury instead of satisfactory proof.

MM&A Briefs

Leonard could run for Attorney General in 2018

House Speaker Tom Leonard (R-Dewitt) said this week on Mackinac Island that he has had several people ask him to look into running for attorney general in 2018, and that it is “certainly not something I’m going to take off the table at this point.” The last sitting speaker to run for office was former House Speaker Andy Dillon who ran for governor in 2010.

Update on special election to replace the late Rep. John Kivela

As the June 6 deadline to file approaches, two more Democrats have filed paperwork and joined the race to run in the special election to succeed the late Rep. John Kivela. The Democratic primary will be Aug. 8 – with the winner of the Democratic-leaning district favored to win the Nov. 7 general election.

The current Democrats who have filed include:

Tom Curry of Trenary, who turned in 200 nominating signatures this week; Kevin Harrington of Marquette, who created a candidate committee; Marquette City Commissioner Sara Cambensy; Marquette County Commissioner Joe Derocha of Champion; and Jeremy Hosking of Negaunee, U.S. Sen. Debbie Stabenow's Upper Peninsula manager.

DTMB Director leaving

The director of the Michigan Department of Technology, Management and Budget, David Behen, is leaving his post June 16 to work in the private sector. The interim director will be Chief Deputy Director Brom Stibitz.

Calendar of Important Events

June 6 Rep. Tommy Brann (R-Wyoming) Fundraiser
 Location: 7:30 a.m., Michigan Municipal League, Lansing

Rep. Scott Dianda (D-Calumet) Fundraiser
Location: 11:30 a.m., Michigan Beer & Wine Wholesalers, Lansing

Senate Minority Leader Jim Ananich (D-Flint) Fundraiser
Location: 11:30 a.m., Karoub Associates, Lansing

June 7 Rep. Henry Yanez (D-Sterling Heights) Fundraiser
Location: 7:30 a.m., Glazed & Confused, Lansing

House Speaker Tom Leonard (R-Dewitt) PAC fundraiser
Location: 8 a.m., Michigan Beer and Wine Wholesalers, Lansing

Rep. Brett Roberts (R-Eaton Twp.) Fundraiser
Location: 11:30 a.m., Karoub Associates, Lansing

Rep. Brant Iden (R-Oshtemo Twp.) Fundraiser
Location: 12 p.m., Michigan Restaurants Association, Lansing

Sen. David Knezek (D-Dearborn Heights) Fundraiser
Location: 4:30 p.m., Tavern & Tap, Lansing

June 8 Rep. Sheldon Neeley (D-Flint) Fundraiser
Location: 10:30 a.m., Michigan Municipal League, Lansing

Sen. Ken Horn (R-Frankenmuth) Fundraiser
Location: 5 p.m., Sullivan's Black Forest, Frankenmuth

June 13 Rep. Jim Lilly (R-Park Twp.) Fundraiser
Location: 8:30 a.m., Michigan Beer & Wine Wholesalers, Lansing

Sen. Mike Kowall (R-White Lake) Fundraiser
Location: 5 p.m., Tin Can Bar, Lansing

House Democratic Fund Ingham Fundraiser
Location: 5:30 p.m., El Azteco, East Lansing

June 14 Rep. Steve Marino (R-Harrison Twp.) Fundraiser
Location: 7:30 a.m., Michigan Health & Hospital Association, Lansing

Rep. Jim Runestad (R-White Lake) Fundraiser
Location: 8 a.m., Michigan Municipal League, Lansing

Home Sharing: Michigan's Next Property Rights Battle by Mackinac Center for Public Policy
Location: 11:30 a.m., Michigan II & III, Radisson Lansing Hotel Lansing

Rep. Daniela Garcia (R-Holland) Fundraiser
Location: 11:30 a.m., Michigan Health & Hospital Association, Lansing

Rep. Sylvia Santana (D-Detroit) Fundraiser
Location: 11:30 a.m., Michigan Beer & Wine Wholesalers, Lansing

Rep. Winnie Brinks (D-Grand Rapids) Fundraiser
Location: 12 p.m., Karoub Associates, Lansing

Rep. Kristy Pagan (D-Canton Twp.) Fundraiser
Location: 4:30 p.m., Waterfront Bar & Grill, Lansing

June 15 Retirement Reception for Elections Director Christopher Thomas
Location: 5 p.m., Lincoln Room, Kellogg Hotel and Conference Center, East Lansing

June 16 Rep. Jason Sheppard (R-Temperance) Fishing Fundraiser
Location: 11:30 a.m., Toledo Beach Marina, LaSalle