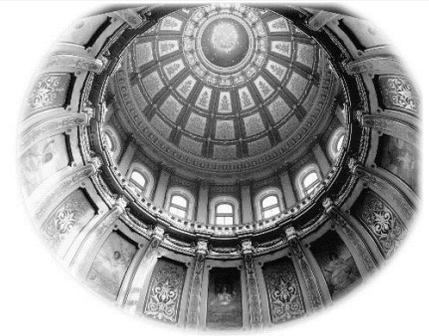


# CAPITOL NEWS UPDATE

WEEK OF June 27, 2016

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## MEMORIAL SERVICE PLANNED FOR REP. PLawecki

A memorial service has been scheduled for the late Rep. Julie Plawecki (D-Dearborn Heights) who died last weekend of an apparent heart attack while hiking with her daughters in Oregon.

The service for the 54-year old first term legislator will be held Saturday morning, July 2, at 10 a.m. at Church of the Divine Child in Dearborn. Visitations were held on Thursday and Friday at the John N. Santeiu & Son Funeral Home in Inkster.

Plawecki was running unopposed in the August Democratic primary. The process of replacing her on the ballot has begun. The 13<sup>th</sup> Congressional District Democratic Party will be meeting July 7, during which three delegates will be picked to select a replacement.

## SNYDER SIGNS THE LAST OF FY 2017 BUDGET

On Wednesday, Gov. Rick Snyder completed signing the FY 2017 budget (HB 5294) into law marking the sixth straight year the state budget has been completed in June.

Including federal funding, the budget totals \$54.9 billion and includes additional funding to assist Flint with its recovery, bringing the total funding for Flint's recovery to \$234 million.

The budget also expands the Healthy Kids Dental program to fully cover all eligible children in all of the state's 83 counties with an investment of \$25 million. It also adds \$5.3 million to the Skilled Trades Training Fund for a total of \$30.9 million.

An additional \$7 million was added to train 65 new state police troopers.

County revenue sharing and incentive programs will receive \$217.3 million, a 1 percent increase above the funding allowed under statutory provisions for eligible counties. Funding is maintained at \$243 million for eligible cities, villages and townships that meet accountability and transparency requirements. And a total of \$5 million is continued for financially distressed cities, villages and townships.

A rundown of the budget can be found at: [www.michigan.gov/snyder](http://www.michigan.gov/snyder).

## SCHOOL BUS BILL IS SIGNED, 'LEGAL ISSUES' STILL A PROBLEM

Gov. Rick Snyder has signed the \$16.1 billion "School Bus" bill, even though he acknowledged there are "legal issues" that need to be resolved with the \$2.5 million going toward nonpublic schools to help with the cost of state mandates.

The \$2.5 million for nonpublic schools received some attention as the legislation (SB 0801) – now Public Act 249 of 2016 – made its way through the appropriation process.

In fact, the public education lobby may not wait for the Governor to weigh in on the legality of giving state taxpayer money to religious schools.

Don Wotruba, executive director of the Michigan Association of School Boards (MASB) told a coalition of groups he will likely file a legal challenge to block the state aid, maintaining it “clearly violates” the 1970 voter-approved ban on state aid to religious schools.

As for the majority of the funding, \$14.1 billion goes toward K-12, \$395 million toward community colleges and \$1.5 billion toward higher education for FY 2017.

### **DPS BILLS ARE SIGNED**

In the quiet of his office, without pomp or fanfare, Gov. Rick Snyder last week signed into law the controversial legislation that allows Detroit Public School (DPS) Transition Manager Steven Rhodes to proceed in turning the financially troubled school district around.

The DPS package turns the district into an entity that manages the school’s roughly \$500 million debt and transfers the district’s students, teachers, administrators and staff to a new Detroit Community Schools.

It pays off \$465 million in DPS’ remaining debt over 10 years and steers \$150 million to the new public school district. The package dissolves the Education Achievement Authority (EAA) and returns the district to a new elected school board.

### **DPS BOARD REJECTS LOANS**

For the second time this week the DPS School Board rejected \$385 million in loans requested by DPS Emergency Manager Steven Rhodes designed to help bailout the indebted school district while putting in place a new, debt-free school district.

According to DPS School Board President Lamar Lemmons III, the loans were rejected over concerns about “a lack of transparency” on the fees connected with the loans as well as the legislative-passed DPS bailout plan.

However, Lemmons said the body is not likely to succeed in challenging the loan requests but board members want to try.

### **EXECUTIVE ORDER CREATES COMMISSION TO COMBAT PRESCRIPTION DRUG, OPIOID USE**

Gov. Rick Snyder has signed an executive order creating the 17-member Michigan Prescription Drug and Opioid Abuse Commission that will sit in the Executive Office as an advisory board.

The commission will make recommendations to the Governor for actions involving licensing, law enforcement, substance abuse treatment and prevention, education, professional associations and pharmaceutical manufacturers.

No appointments to the commission have yet been made.

### **AG FILES CHARGES IN FLINT WATER CRISIS**

Civil charges have been filed by Attorney General Bill Schuette and his team of investigators against two engineering corporations in connection with the Flint water crisis.

The AG’s office is seeking damages from Veolia North America and Lockwood, Andrews & Newman (LAN) in Genesee County Circuit Court.

The two firms were originally tasked with managing the transition to Flint River water (Veolia) and correcting issues in Flint’s water treatment plant (LAN). They will face allegations of professional negligence and public nuisance.

Schuette said the companies “failed miserably in their job, basically botched it, didn’t stop the water in Flint from being poisoned – they made it worse...”

## POLITICS AND POLLS

**Plawecki suspends Supreme Court campaign.** Democrat Mark Plawecki, chief judge of the 20<sup>th</sup> District Court in Dearborn Heights, has suspended his campaign in early June, after announcing in March he would seek one of the two open Michigan Supreme Court justice seats this year. The decision was made just a few weeks before the untimely death of his wife, Rep. Julie Plawecki (D-Dearborn Heights) who died suddenly while hiking with her daughter in Oregon.

## M M & A BRIEFS

**Veteran's ombudsman bill signed into law.** Legislation (SB 0809) establishing a veterans' ombudsman and creating the Office of the Michigan Veterans Facility Ombudsman has been signed into law by Gov. Rick Snyder. The measure comes in the wake of the Grand Rapids Home for Veterans audit that documented understaffing and problems investigating abuse complaints of abuse.

**MSC rules on reserve police officers.** The Michigan Supreme Court has ruled that resisting and obstructing a reserve police officer is the same as resisting and obstructing a full-time police officer. The ruling overturns both previous lower court rulings. The Supreme Court wrote "The Court of Appeals incorrectly concluded that a reserve police officer is not among the persons contemplated in...the statute prohibiting an individual from resisting or obstructing the persons specified in the statute." The Court remanded the matter to the Court of Appeals for further determinations.

**EPA: Filtered water safe for all to drink in Flint.** The U.S. Environmental Agency (EPA) has declared that filtered water in Flint is safe for everyone –all populations including pregnant women and children. The agency found that filters distributed in Flint "are effective in consistently reducing the lead in tap water, in most cases to undetectable levels, and in all cases to levels that would not result in a significant increase in overall lead exposure." Meanwhile, canvassing is continuing in Flint, visiting some 2.300 households that have not been confirmed to receive a filter.

**Bill expanding disaster fund is signed into law.** Gov. Rick Snyder has into law legislation (SB 0914) that will allow the state's disaster and emergency fund to hold \$10 million, rather than \$4.5 million as is now the case. The state has had to go to the Disaster and Emergency Contingency Fund for the Flint water crisis and severe storm clean-ups. The bill is now Public Act (PA) 220 of 2016.

## CALENDAR OF IMPORTANT EVENTS

- July 4 INDEPENDENCE DAY (State offices are closed)
- July 4 Declaration of Independence Reading  
Location: 10 a.m., Capitol Building, Lansing
- July 7 Rep. Brian Banks (D-Detroit) Evening Reception  
Location: 5:30p.m., Bootleggers, Grosse Pointe Park
- July 9 Save the Flags Capitol Event  
Location: 10 a.m., Capitol Building, Lansing
- July 10 Rep. Stephanie Chang (D-Detroit) Lafayette Park Event  
Location: Home of Penny Baller, Detroit
- July 12 Sen. Peter MacGregor (R-Rockford) Golf Outing  
Location: 9 a.m., Scott Lake Country Club, Comstock Park
- July 13 Tentative House and Senate Sessions
- July 13 Rep. Stephanie Chang (D-Detroit) Event  
Location: 5:30 p.m., Southwest Detroit Community Event, Detroit

July 17 Rep. Chris Greig (D-Farmington) 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Chillin and Grillin Cookout  
Location: 2 p.m., the Greig Residence, Farmington Hills

July 28 Sen. Dave Hildenbrand (R-Lowell) 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Golf Outing  
Location: 8:30 a.m., Deer Run Golf Club, Lowell