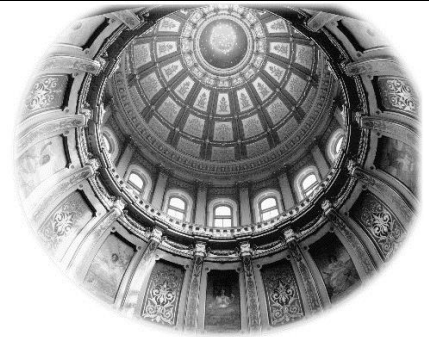


CAPITOL NEWS UPDATE

WEEK OF September 19, 2016

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REP PETALLIA REMEMBERED FOR HIS SERVICE AND DEDICATION

State Rep. Peter Petalia, R-Presque Isle, was killed in a motorcycle crash on Monday, Sept. 12 when a truck turned left in front of him on M-33 in Montmorency County. The 61-year old, third-term lawmaker, was a well-known motorcycle advocate and served as chairman of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. In 2011, Pettalia was instrumental in repealing the state's mandatory motorcycle helmet law. Pettalia was wearing a helmet at the time of the accident.

A Presque Isle resident since 1977, Pettalia is survived by his wife, Karen, two grown children and two grandchildren. Prior to being elected to his first term in the Michigan House in November 2010, Pettalia served as Presque Isle Township supervisor for 16 years and as a volunteer firefighter for East Grand Lake Fire Department for 15 years. He and a partner also operated an auto repair business for 33 years and he operated a seasonal cabin rental business on Grand Lake, in Northeast Michigan.

Pettalia sat on the House Financial Services, Energy Policy, and Tourism and Outdoor Recreation committees and was the House Republicans' Majority Caucus chair.

Rep. Ben Glardon (R-Owosso) will now replace Pettalia as chair of the House Transportation Committee. Rep. Jeff Farrington (R-Utica) will serve as the committee's vice chair. And Rep. Gary Howell (R-North Branch) will fill the remaining vacancy on the committee.

On the Financial Services committee, Rep Mike Callton (R-Nashville) will now serve as vice-chair, and Rep. Ken Goike (R-Ray Twp.) will fill the vacancy. In addition, Rep. Ray Franz (R-Onekama) will replace Pettalia on the Energy Committee and Rep. Joel Johnson (R-Clare) will take up the vacancy on the committee on Tourism and Outdoor Recreation.

Also, Rep. Eric Leutheuser (R-Hillsdale) was elected by the House Republican Caucus to succeed Pettalia as Caucus Chair.

3rd GRADE READING BILL LANDS ON GOVERNOR'S DESK

Third graders who fail the state's reading test will not be able to advance to fourth grade, under a bill that the House and Senate sent to Gov. Rick Snyder's desk this week.

The House passed the final version, 60-47 and the Senate passed it 25-10 after both agreed to a compromise that creates a series of exceptions, including allowing a parent to appeal to the district's superintendent.

Other exceptions include allowing a "smart promotion" for students who score well on the state's math assessment and do well in other subjects, and allowing students who were not enrolled in their school for two years prior to be allowed to pass if the prior school did not offer the student reading interventions. The agreement also includes intervention for English language learners.

If signed, the law would affect students in the 2019-2020 school year, which means today's kindergartners will be the first set of students affected by the change.

"Our state is currently 41st in the nation in fourth-grade literacy," said House Education Committee Chair Amanda Price (R-Park Twp.). "We desperately need to improve our literacy outcomes for Michigan students."

BILLS WILL HELP MICHIGAN RACE TO THE FRONT OF THE AUTOMATED VEHICLE TECHNOLOGY

A House committee this week passed an autonomous vehicle package that may soon pave the way for autonomous cars to be tested and driven as a consumer product on Michigan roads.

The bill package, which includes SB 995-98, moved out of the House Communications and Technology Committee after the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration issued federal policy for safe testing and deployment of automated vehicles.

Google, Ford, General Motors, Lyft and Uber have all signed off on the legislation, which allows anyone to work with traditional car companies on an automated vehicle product or network.

Other ways the bills will help Michigan drive future automated vehicle technology include allowing the Willow Run airport to be repurposed and redeveloped as a testing facility for AVs; creating an 11-member Michigan Council on Future Mobility within the Michigan Department of Transportation; and making an AV manufacturer immune from civil liability for damages if a crash was due to unauthorized alternations made to a vehicle.

NEW EPIC-MRA POLL SHOWS CLINTON, TRUMP ALMOST TIED IN MICHIGAN

A recently released EPIC-MRA survey shows that the presidential race in Michigan is heating up and is now within the margin of error. Democrat Hillary Clinton's 8-to-10 percentage-point lead in recent weeks has shrunk to 3 points, which is within the 4-point margin of error of the survey.

The survey shows Clinton at 38 percent, Republican Donald Trump at 35 percent, Libertarian candidate Gary Johnson at 10 percent and Green Party standard-bearer Jill Stein at 4 percent.

One of the most noteworthy changes in this survey from EPIC-MRA's poll from July 30 and Aug. 3 is that voters are supporting Clinton or Trump because they like the candidate as opposed to voting for Clinton or Trump as a protest vote for the other.

The most recent survey shows that 60 percent of those who would vote for Trump say they like Trump while 31 percent said they are voting him because they don't like Clinton. For Clinton, 59 percent of her voters are voting for her because of who she is and 34 percent because they don't like Trump.

MM&A BRIEFS

Snyder signs marijuana bills. Governor Snyder signed into law this week a five-tier regulatory structure for the growing, testing, processing and transporting of medical marijuana, and a law which legalizes medical marijuana in non-smoke-able forms.

"This new law will help Michiganders of all ages and with varying medical conditions access safe products to relieve their suffering," Snyder said in a statement. "We can finally implement a solid framework that gives patients a safe source from which to purchase and utilize medical marijuana."

House, Senate pass bill for families of fallen first responders without benefits. The House and Senate passed a bill that would provide health benefits for the family of first responders who died in the line of duty in case the family had access to no other benefits. The effective date of the bill was amended so that the benefits would apply to the family of Detroit police officer Sgt. Kenneth Steil who was killed in the line of duty on Sept. 12.

Sponsored by Sen. Wayne Schmidt (R-Traverse City), the bill covers the families of law enforcement officers, corrections officers, firefighters, rescue squad members and ambulance crew members who lost their lives as a result of their duties on the job.

DHHS employee pleads no-contest, takes plea deal. One of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) employees charged as a part of the Attorney General's investigation into the Flint water crisis, has pleaded no contest to 1-year, \$1,000 misdemeanor, but will see no jail time as part of the deal.

Corrinne Miller, who was the Director of the Bureau of Disease Control, Prevention and Epidemiology at DHHS, in exchange for pleading guilty to Willful Neglect of Duty by a Public Officer, will instead serve 12 months' probation on a delayed sentence. Her other two counts, felonies related to misconduct in office, were dismissed.

Calendar of Important Events

- Sept. 25 101st House District Candidate Dan Scripps Evening Reception
Location: 2 p.m., Home of Julia Chambers, Fountain
- Sept. 26 Sen. Wayne Schmidt (R-Traverse City) 3rd 2016 Breakfast Club Series
Guest Speakers: Sen. Mike Kowall
Location: 7:30 a.m., Cambria Suites, Traverse City
- Sept. 26 2016 West Michigan Policy Forum
Guest Speakers: Newt Gingrich, Bill Richardson, Star Parker
Location: 8 a.m., Amway Grand Plaza Hotel & JW Marriott, Grand Rapids
- Sept. 26 Sen. Wayne Schmidt (R-Traverse City) 2nd 2016 Lunch Club Series
Guest Speakers: Sen. Mike Kowall
Location: 11:30 a.m., The Side Door Saloon, Petoskey
- Sept. 26 Rep. Triston Cole (R-Mancelona) Forestry Town Hall
Location: 6 p.m., Alpine Center, Gaylord
- Sept. 28 96th House District Candidate Brian Elder Fall Tailgate Reception
Location: 5:30 p.m., 1304 S. Wenona St., Bay City
- Oct. 1 66th House District Candidate Annie Brown Evening Reception
Guest Speakers: Gretchen Whitmer
Location: 1 p.m., Home of Keith and Anne Moffat, South Haven
- Oct. 5 Columbus Day Celebration (Sponsored by Rep. Anthony Forlini, R-Harrison Twp.)
Location: 11:00 a.m., Capitol Building, Lansing