

CAPITOL NEWS UPDATE

WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 4, 2017

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MEEKHOF OPPOSED TO DUGGAN'S POTENTIAL NO-FAULT PLAN

Senate Majority Leader Arlan Meekhof has said that Detroit Mayor Mike Duggan's still-developing proposal for changing the state's no-fault insurance system will be "dead, dead, dead" on arrival if it includes any mandatory rate rollbacks.

Meekhof said that any type of mandatory rate rollbacks would be price-fixing, and against the free-market. He later made a point to emphasize that he does favor rolling back auto insurance rates, but wants these rates to come as a result of the market and not from government mandates.

Duggan replied to Meekhof by saying he is working to build a coalition for a bipartisan package with major guaranteed rate rollbacks, and that he will approach the House first.

"Sen. Meekhof has been a longtime champion of cutting car insurance rates, and it's my hope that by the time we get to the Senate, we can reach agreement on a plan that has his support," Duggan said. A spokesperson for House Speaker Tom Leonard (R-DeWitt) said that rate relief is the Speaker's top priority.

Instead of Duggan's plan, Meekof is hoping to bring back the plan the Senate approved last year which capped benefits in assigned claims cases involving uninsured motorists or pedestrians, created a fraud authority, and limited paid attendant care hours for family member of auto accident victims. The House did not vote on the plan.

Michigan's drivers pay among the highest premiums in the country.

CANADIAN GOVERNMENT GIVES APPROVAL FOR NEW AMBASSADOR BRIDGE, WITH QUALIFICATIONS

An unexpected approval by the Canadian government has cleared the way for the Ambassador Bridge Company to build a second span linking Detroit and Windsor, with construction possibly beginning as early as next spring.

According to the president of the Detroit International Bridge Company, the new bridge would replace the current Ambassador Bridge, which would either be demolished, or only used if required.

For years, the Canadian government has sparred with Ambassador Bridge owner Manuel (Matty) Moroun over issues regarding permission to build a new bridge. At the same time, however, it now

seems the federal Transport Canada agency has also been working through any issues in the Moroun's permit.

The six-lane bridge will be built immediately west of the current Ambassador Bridge, and could be completed by 2022.

It's reported that construction of the new Gordie Howe Bridge— which will connect the Detroit's Delray neighborhood with Windsor—will also continue.

Governor Rick Snyder confirmed that there would still be two bridges in the end, instead of a twin span for the Ambassador Bridge. He also said that both U.S. and Canadian requirements must be met before construction on the new Ambassador bridge begins.

The terms and conditions of the agreement with Canada require that the current Ambassador Bridge be demolished no later than five years after the new bridge is complete.

Government officials on both sides have been working for the past 20 years to agree on a plan and build the new Gordie Howe Bridge, arguing that the bridge would provide more efficient transportation because it would make truck traffic smoother with fewer traffic lights between the bridge's landing and the freeway in Canada.

The Moroun family has worked throughout this time to block the Gordie Howe Bridge, and has lost almost all court fights it has engaged in regarding the bridges.

SNYDER NAMES NEW DTMB DIRECTOR WITH FEDERAL EXPERIENCE

Governor Rick Snyder has named David DeVries, a former U.S. Office of Personnel Management chief information officer, as the new director of the Michigan Department of Technology, Management, and Budget.

DeVries, who replaces former DTMB Director David Behen who resigned in June to go to La-Z-Boy, Inc., has also served as deputy CIO for the U.S. Department of Defense and the U.S. Army special assistant to the commanding general.

Snyder highlighted DeVries' experience in modernizing IT infrastructure and cyber security at the federal level.

MM&A Briefs

Small fire closes Capitol Building

The state Capitol was unexpectedly closed this Friday due to an electrical closet fire on the first floor. About 30 people were evacuated from the building, including one who was treated for smoke inhalation. The cause of the fire and extent of the damage is still being investigated.

Guzman joins race for SOS

A former co-chair of President Donald Trump's Michigan campaign has entered the race for the next Secretary of State. MSU Professor Joseph Guzman, of Okemos, will battle Sen. Mike Kowall (R-White Lake Twp.) and Stan Grot to win the Republican nomination at the party's convention in 2018.

Sen. Green continues to wait for USDA nomination

Sen. Mike Green (R-Mayville) might be in line for a new position with the USDA, but multiple delays in the process mean he has been waiting months to learn more about his potential appointment as the new Michigan state director for the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Officials have reported that congressional action on appointments for the state USDA positions could come this fall.

Calendar of Important Events

- Sept. 12 Rep. Tom Barrett (R-Pottersville) Fundraiser
Location: 8 a.m., Karoub Associates, Governors Room, Lansing
- Sen. Marty Knollenberg (R-Troy) fundraiser
Location: 11:30 a.m., Michigan Beer and Wine Wholesalers, Lansing
- Sept. 13 Rep. Julie Alexander (R-Hanover) Fundraiser
Location: 7:30 a.m., Karoub Associates, Governors Room, Lansing
- Rep. Kathy Crawford (R-Novi) Fundraiser
Location: 8 a.m., Grand Traverse Pie Company, Lansing
- Rep. Tim Greimel (D-Auburn Hills) Fundraiser
Location: 9 a.m., Michigan Health and Hospital Association, Lansing
- Institute for Public Policy and Social Research Panel On Early Childhood Education for At-Risk Children
Location: 11:30 a.m., Mackinac Room, House Office Building, Lansing
- Rep. Stephanie Chang (D-Detroit) Fundraiser
Location: 11:30 a.m., Karoub Associates, Governor's Room, Lansing
- Rep. Brian Elder (D-Bay City) Fundraiser
Location: 12 p.m., Kelley Cawthorne, Lansing
- Rep. Holly Hughes (R-White River Twp.) For Senate fundraiser
Location: 4 p.m., Karoub Associates, Governors Room, Lansing
- Sept. 14 Rep. Sue Allor (R-Wolverine) Fundraiser
Location: 7:30 a.m., Grand Traverse Pie Company, Lansing
- Sen. Curtis Hertel Jr. (D-East Lansing) Fundraiser
Location: 11:30 a.m., Karoub Associates, Governors Room, Lansing
- Sept. 15 Rep. Terry Sabo (D-Muskegon) Golf Fundraiser
Location: 12 p.m., Lincoln Golf Club, Muskegon
- Rep. Jason Wentworth (R-Clare) Fundraiser
Location: 6 p.m., The Wild Pumpkin, Beaverton

- Sept. 16 Rep. Triston Cole (R-Mancelona) Shooting Fundraiser
Location: 11 a.m., 3220 Muckle Road, Central Lake
- Sept. 19 Michigan United Conservation Clubs Great Lakes Day at the Capitol
Location: 10 a.m., Fourth Floor, Capitol
- Rep. Curt VanderWall (R-Ludington) Fundraiser
Location: 11:30 a.m., Michigan Municipal League, Lansing
- Rep. Frank Liberati (D-Allen Park) Fundraiser
Location: 11:30 a.m., Michigan Beer & Wine Wholesalers, Lansing
- Rep. Beth Griffin (R-Mattawan) Fundraiser
Location: 4:30 p.m., Michigan Beer & Wine Wholesalers, Lansing
- Rep. Gary Howell (R-North Branch) Fundraiser
Location: 5 p.m., The Exchange, Lansing
- Sept. 20 Rep. Bronna Kahle (R-Clinton) fundraiser
Location: 7:30 a.m., Michigan Municipal League, Lansing
- Rep. Mary Whiteford (R-Casco Twp.) Fundraiser
Location: 7:30 a.m., Glazed and Confused, Lansing
- Rep. Ben Frederick (R-Owosso) Fundraiser
Location: 8 a.m., Michigan Beer and Wine Wholesalers, Lansing
- Rep. Dan Lauwers (R-Brockway) Fundraiser
Location: 8 a.m., Karoub Associates, Governors Room, Lansing
- Rep. Jim Ellison (D-Royal Oak) Fundraiser
Location: 8 a.m., Michigan Health and Hospital Association, Lansing
- Rep. Henry Yanez (D-Sterling Heights) Fundraiser
Location: 11:30 a.m., Michigan Beer and Wine Wholesalers, Lansing
- Rep. Pam Hornberger (R-Chesterfield) Fundraiser
Location: 11:30 a.m., Glazed and Confused, Lansing
- Rep. Sylvia Santana (D-Detroit) Fundraiser
Location: 11:30 a.m., Kelley Cawthorne, Lansing
- Rep. Christine Greig (D-Farmington Hills) Fundraiser
Location: 4:30 p.m., Michigan Beer & Wine Wholesalers, Lansing
- Sept. 21 Sen. Jim Ananich (D-Flint) Fundraiser
Location: 8:30 a.m., Michigan Municipal League, Lansing
- Rep. Abdullah Hammoud (D-Dearborn) Fundraiser

Location: 10:30 a.m., Michigan Beer & Wine Wholesalers, Lansing

Sept. 22 Senate Majority Leader Arlan Meekhof (R) Fundraiser
Location: 7:30 a.m., The Pinnacle Center, Hudsonville

Sept. 22-24 Michigan Republican Party Mackinac Conference
Grand Hotel, Mackinac Island