

CAPITOL NEWS UPDATE

WEEK OF OCTOBER 15, 2018

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SPARKS FLY DURING FIRST WHITMER, SCHUETTE TELEVISED DEBATE

The campaign for Michigan's governor is heating up with the first of two televised debates between Democrat gubernatorial candidate Gretchen Whitmer and Republican candidate Bill Schuette showcasing a contentious race. The debate, held at WOOD studios in Grand Rapids, aired Oct. 12.

With healthcare and roads as leading topics in the debate, both parties accused each other of making "ridiculous," "nonsense," and "not true" statements.

Whitmer, who is leading Schuette by 8 to 12 percentage points, according to a Detroit Free Press poll, painted Schuette as a camera-hungry conservative who in his efforts as attorney general has fought to have the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and its protection of coverage for pre-existing conditions thrown out in court. Whitmer hammered the issue during the debate, mentioning nine lawsuits Schuette either filed as attorney general, or joined to overturn the act.

Schuette has said that while he opposed the ACA, he supports requiring coverage for pre-existing conditions in any new health care law.

In his statements, Schuette portrayed Whitmer as an unaccomplished extreme liberal who wants to raise taxes, using his time to point out over and over that Whitmer sponsored only three public acts during her 14 years in the Legislature, while arguing that Whitmer would bring back former Governor Jennifer Granholm's policies.

The debate also included discussion of some of the candidates' basic policy proposals on hot button issues such as auto insurance, education, taxes, and particularly roads.

Along with Schuette's proposal to audit the Department of Transportation, seek more federal funds, look for money in the rest of the state budget and assure warranties on road work, he also accused Whitmer of looking for a 20-cent per gallon gasoline tax increase.

Whitmer is proposing a \$3 billion plan (\$2 billion from state funds with \$1 billion in matching funds from the federal government) to fix the roads. She has not given specifics on raising the money, other than saying that if the Legislature won't go for it, she would go to voters for a bond initiative.

The second debate will be on Oct. 24 at WDIV studios in Detroit from 8 to 9 p.m.

GAP TIGHTENS BETWEEN STABENOW AND JAMES

A recent poll by Mitchell Research and Communications has Republican U.S. Senate candidate John James within nine points of leading candidate U.S. Sen. Debbie Stabenow (D-Delta Twp.). The

polling showed Stabenow up 51 to James' 42 percent. Previous polls, according to Mitchell, had James down 18 percent.

The Stabenow campaign also announced it will spend \$3.2 million in TV ad time this month after raising \$1.8 million between July 1 and Sept. 30.

BISHOP/SLOTKIN RACE BREAKS SPENDING RECORD

The race for the 8th Congressional District seat between U.S. Rep. Mike Bishop (R-Rochester) and Elissa Slotkin (D-Holly) is the most expensive U.S. House race in Michigan history.

Fueled by individual donations and outside spending, federal disclosures show that the combined fundraising for the race includes nearly \$7.6 million from outsiders and \$9 million raised by the candidates.

Previously, the record for a U.S. House race was \$14.15 million – the total candidates' receipts and outside money in the race between Democrat Mark Schauer and Republican Rep. Tim Walberg in 2010.

SENATE FISCAL AGENCY ESTIMATES LEGALIZED MARIJUANA COULD BRING \$262M IN NEW TAX REVENUE

Legalizing recreational marijuana could mean \$262 million in revenue by 2023, according to a report by the Senate Fiscal Agency release last week. The nonpartisan agency's projections are based on per capita sales data from state that adopted similar laws.

If Proposal 1 is passed by voters in November, the analysis said the future projected revenue could be:

- \$77 million in FY 2019-20
- \$157.4 million in FY 2020-21
- \$241.4 million in FY 2021-22
- \$262 million in FY 2022-23

The report said that if passed, the proposal would also cost the Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs \$2.5 million for an additional 27 full-time employees and other costs related to information technology and additional facility space. Other departments such as the Department of State Police and the Department of Treasury would also see additional costs.

MICHIGAN APPEALS COURT SUPPORTS STATE FUNDING FOR PRIVATE SCHOOL MANDATES

The Michigan Court of Appeals ruled this week that state lawmakers can provide funding to reimburse private schools to cover the cost of mandates such as fire drills, inspections, and other state requirements.

In a 2-1 decision, Judges William Murphy and Anica Letica ruled that state funding to reimburse private schools for complying with the "actual costs incurred in complying with state health, safety, and welfare laws," is not inherently unconstitutional. Judge Elizabeth Gleicher was in dissent.

The decision overturns a ruling in April by Court of Claims Judge Cynthia Diane Stephens, and orders the case to be returned to the Court of Claims for reconsideration. The ruling deals with a controversy following the Legislature's allocation of about \$5 million over two years to private and

parochial schools to reimburse the schools for the costs of meeting state health and safety requirements.

IMMIGRATION DETENTION CENTER PROPOSED ON SITE OF IONIA PRISON

Immigration Centers of America, a for-profit federal detention company, has proposed buying the former Deerfield Correctional Facility in Ionia to construct a 600-bed immigration detention facility.

The proposal would need approval by the Michigan Land Bank Fast Track Authority and a request for proposal for a detention facility from the Department of Homeland Security. =

The facility, which could employ around 269 people, would only be used as a holding place for Immigration and Customs Enforcement detainees who are in the country illegally and awaiting deportation proceedings, usually staying in the facility for an average of 50 days.

MM&A BRIEFS

Longtime legislator Bennane dies at 73

Michael Bennane, a longtime state lawmaker from Detroit, died of heart failure on Sept. 30. Bennane served for 20 years in the Michigan Legislature as a state representative for Michigan's 1st District and then for the 14th District where he pushed for legislation on urban development and health policy. Following his time in the Legislature, Bennane practiced law and served as an administrative law judge for the city of Detroit.

First case of Chronic Wasting Disease found in U.P.

A deer killed in Dickson County this week tested positive for chronic wasting disease, the first case of the fatal nervous system disease confirmed in the Upper Peninsula, according to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. The 4-year-old doe was shot on a farm about four miles from the Michigan-Wisconsin border.

The DNR has taken steps to address the situation by establishing a chronic wasting disease core area in a 10-mile radius around the area and a chronic wasting disease management zone covering the central U.P.

Calendar of Important Events

- Oct. 23 Rep. Vanessa Guerra (D-Saginaw) Fundraiser
 Location: 5 p.m., Bourbon & Company, Saginaw
- Rep. Jim Ellison (D-Royal Oak) Fundraiser
 Location: 5:30 p.m., Lockhart's BBQ, Royal Oak
- Oct. 24 Sen. Wayne Schmidt (R-Traverse City) Fundraiser
 Location: 7:30 a.m., Hagerty Center at the Great Lakes Campus of Northern
 Michigan University, Traverse City
- Oct. 25 House Minority Leader Sam Singh (D-East Lansing) Fundraiser
 Location: 5 p.m., Reno's East, East Lansing

- Oct. 25 State PAC campaign finance statements due
- Oct. 26 Pre-general election campaign finance reports due
- Oct. 29 Rep. Lana Theis (R-Brighton) Fundraiser
Location: 6:30 p.m., Hidden Lake Marketing Center, South Lyon
- Nov. 6 General Election