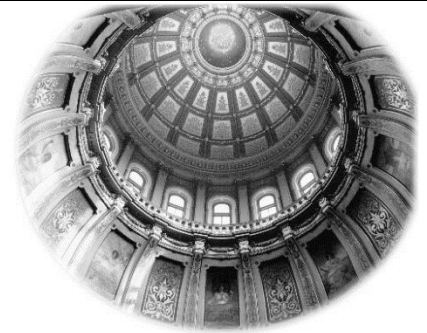


CAPITOL NEWS UPDATE

WEEK OF NOVEMBER 11, 2019

Integrity. Individual Attention. Precision Strategy. Proven Results



FIRST OF MANY NO-FAULT CHANGES - MCCA LOWERS FEE

Michigan Drivers who elect the unlimited coverage benefit option available under Michigan's new No-Fault insurance law, will see a 55% reduction in their Michigan Catastrophic Claims Association annual fee in 2020, according to an MCCA announcement this week.

The new fee will be \$100, instead of the \$220 previously charged, and is the first of several new changes that will begin being implemented in 2020 following the legislature's passage of the new No-Fault legislation in June 2019.

The reduced fees are a direct result of savings created by the cost controls for medical treatment and other changes made to Michigan's no-fault insurance law. The changes are also estimated to erase the MCCA's deficit of approximately \$2 billion and reduce the annual MCCA assessment by approximately \$1 billion.

Drivers who choose to maintain unlimited lifetime personal injury protection (PIP) benefits will be charged the \$100 per vehicle assessment. Those who choose a lower limit will not be charged the assessment as long as the MCCA is not in a deficit.

GOVERNOR AND LEGISLATURE REMAIN IN TUG-OF-WAR OVER BUDGET

With the legislative year winding down, there is still hope that both chambers and all branches of government will be able to reach a budget deal, even with many compromises being passed over by one side or the other.

Earlier this session, Governor Whitmer implemented a rarely used Administrative Board budget-transfer process, along with vetoing nearly \$1 billion in budget recommendations including cuts to education, rural health care, and talent development, to force the Republican-led legislature to negotiate. Whitmer was looking for a budget provision that included raising revenue for road improvements.

Adamant that any negotiations include a provision to either remove or limit the board transfer powers going forward, the Republicans almost came to an agreement after Whitmer agreed to boilerplate language about the Administrative Board. The language would have allowed the Legislature to prevent administrative board transfers in certain budgets if lawmakers included negotiated boilerplate provisions going forward for future supplementals. House Republicans were supportive of the compromise but Senate Majority Leader Mike Shirkey denied the fix, leaving legislators, pundits, and residents alike awaiting a different compromise.

HOUSE LEGISLATION SEEKS TO REFORM CRIMINAL EXPUNGEMENT PROCESS IN MICHIGAN

The State House has set the stage for Michigan to become one of a few states that allow for automatic expungement – or wiping clean certain convictions for those who stay out of trouble.

The seven-bill package includes allowing for up to four misdemeanors to be expunged after seven years and up to two felonies after 10 years as long as the crimes are not assault crimes, serious misdemeanors, crimes of dishonesty, or punishable by more than 10 years imprisonment. In addition, one of the bills would allow low-level traffic offenses to be eligible for expungement bills while another bill in the package would treat all non-violent offenses committed in “one bad night, or day” as a single felony for expungement purposes.

Currently, a person who is seeking expungement would need to ask the court to have their records sealed, pay a \$50 fee, and go through many steps, including a hearing. Proponents say the changes could help improve access to jobs and housing.

SENATE PASSES BILL TO REPEAL BAN ON DEER BAITING

The Michigan Senate passed a bill this week that would repeal a ban on baiting deer and elk. House Bill 4687 passed without any debate 21-14, with an amendment by the Senate to include limiting the size of the feed that hunters can use to nothing bigger than a sugar beet. The bill won't become law this hunting season because it will need final concurrence in the House. The Natural Resources Commission made the ruling ban in 2018 as a way to stop the spread of chronic wasting disease in Michigan's deer herd.

Governor Whitmer opposes the bill and is not expected to sign when it is sent to her.

MM&A Briefs

Elections Director Williams Announces Retirement

Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson issued a statement this week announcing that Michigan's Elections Director, Sally Williams, has decided to retire effective Dec. 31, 2019.

Williams has spent 34 years at the Department of State and has decided to retire after only two years as the Elections Director. A civil service post, the Director presides over the Bureau of Elections staff.

Cynthia Neeley Files to Succeed Her Husband in the House

Cynthia Neeley of Flint has filed to run for the 34th House District seat where she will run to replace her husband, now-Flint Mayor Sheldon Neeley in a special election.

Sheldon Neeley resigned his seat to be sworn in as mayor of Flint. Governor Whitmer called a special election to replace Neeley shortly after.

Cynthia Neeley will potentially face Charis Lee, a Democrat and two Flint City Council Members including Monica Galloway and Santino Guerra. Republican Adam Ford has also created a committee. The special primary election will be held on Jan. 7, 2020 with the special general election on March 10, 2020.

Calendar of Important Events

Nov. 17 Rep. Isaac Robinson (D) Fundraiser

Location: 14919 Meyers, Detroit, 4 p.m.

Nov. 22 Sen. Sean McCann (D) Fundraiser

Location: The Park Club, 219 West South St., Kalamazoo, 5:30 p.m.