

CAPITOL NEWS UPDATE

WEEK OF MAY 16, 2022



McAlvey Merchant
& ASSOCIATES

GLEICHER GRANTS PLANNED PARENTHOOD'S REQUEST FOR INJUNCTION BARRING ENFORCEMENT OF ABORTION BAN

On Tuesday, Court of Claims Judge Elizabeth Gleicher granted Planned Parenthood of Michigan's request for a preliminary injunction barring the enforcement of the state's abortion ban, which has been on the books but not enforced since 1973, but would go into full effect if *Roe v. Wade* is overturned.

The comes as anti-abortion groups including the Michigan Catholic Conference and Right to Life of Michigan have called for her recusal after Gleicher disclosed annual contributions to Planned Parenthood of Michigan and previous work as a volunteer attorney for the American Civil Liberties Union in 1996-97 in the *Mahaffey v. Attorney General* case on abortion.

The ruling is not the final decision in the case.

SENATE NARROWLY APPROVES TERM LIMIT PROPOSAL – HEADS TO BALLOT

Voters will get to decide on changes to the state's term limits law, and changes to financial disclosure requirements for elected officials on the November ballot after the proposal, HJR R, was approved by the House and the Senate last week.

The joint resolution passed the Senate 26-6, with the required two-thirds majority.

If passed by voters in the fall, the resolution would change the tenure that lawmakers can serve from 14 years to 12 years, with the option of serving all 12 years in one chamber.

The language of the joint resolution is similar to a proposed constitutional amendment supported by Voters for Transparency.

The language for the financial disclosures rule, however, was changed in the resolution compared to the proposal. The resolution removed language stating the financial disclosure rules must be at least as strict as those for Congress and removed language referring to a requirement to disclose "purchases, sales or exchanges of a security or real property."

MULTIPLE CANDIDATES REMOVED FROM BALLOT BY SECRETARY OF STATE

According to a press release issued by the Secretary of State this week, 15 candidates were disqualified from the Aug. 2 primary ballot for having outstanding campaign finance reports or unpaid fines. Most were disqualified due to signing false statements that said they were in compliance with the campaign finance requirements.

- Sen. Betty Jean Alexander (D-Detroit) was disqualified from the August ballot. Alexander, the minority vice chair of the Senate Local Government Committee, was planning to run against current Rep. Mary Cavanagh (D-Redford) in the Democratic primary for a newly drawn 6th state Senate District.
- Melissa Carone, Republican election critic, was first disqualified from running for the House in Macomb County before she jumped over to run for the Senate.
- Jon Rocha, a U.S. Marine Corps veteran endorsed by former President Donald Trump, was disqualified from running for the 78th state House district in Kent County.
- Detroit Democrat Alberta Talabi in the Democratic primary for the 3rd state Senate District.
- Lawanda Turner, a Democrat from Saint Clair Shores, for the 11th state House District.
- Chase Turner, a Republican from Brighton was disqualified from in the 49th state House District.
- Vernon Molnar, a Pontiac Democrat who was in a Democratic primary for the 7th state Senate District.
- Chris Martin, Vice President of the East Lansing School Board, who was supposed to be on the ballot for 54B District Court Judge in East Lansing.
- Eddie Kabacinski, a Republican Warren City Council member who was disqualified from running for the 14th state House District.
- Judge Kahlilia Davis, an Incumbent of the 36th District Court.
- Ronald Cole, a Detroit Republican who was running as the only Republican for the 7th state House district.
- Howard Weathington for the 3rd state Senate District.
- Steven Thomas, a Republican from Dryden, was disqualified from running for the 31st state Senate district
- Michael Shallal, for the 57th state House District was disqualified due to missing information.
- Faiz Aslam was disqualified to run for the 6th U.S. Congressional district due to missing information.

In addition, Rep. Cynthia Johnson (D-Detroit), was disqualified from running for the Democratic nomination in the heavily Democratic 1st House District. Johnson was disqualified for filing for office without resolving all unpaid campaign finance reports and fees. According to a letter sent by the state Bureau of Election to the Wayne County Clerk's Office, Johnson owed \$1800 in fees for late reports when she first filed to run. Johnson then withdrew, paid \$825 and filed to run again.

"Some of the candidates paid fines after signing their affidavit of identity, or subsequently paid their fines, then withdrew their affidavits of identity and filed new affidavits of identity," according to the Secretary of State. "Regardless of steps the candidates took after submitting affidavits of identity with false statements, the Department is prohibited by the Michigan Election Law from certifying the candidates' names to the ballots."

LEGISLATURE PASSES \$2.5 BILLION TAX CUT

The Republican-led Michigan Senate passed nearly \$2.7 billion in tax cuts this week including a cut to the personal income tax rate, and expanding the state's Earned Income Tax Credit.

The proposal would cost more than \$7 million over four financial years, and would use more than \$2.44 billion from the General Fund by the Fiscal Year (FY) of 2025, and \$244.5 million from the School Aid Fund.

Highlights of the legislation include:

- Expanding Michigan's Earned Income Tax Credit from 6% to 20%. (This was also a key component of Gov. Whitmer's State of the State address.)
- Increasing personal tax exemptions by \$1,800, to \$6,700 per taxpayer and dependent, up from \$4,900.
- Reducing the personal income tax rate from 4.25% to 4% in the 2023 tax year.
- Creating a \$500 child tax credit this year, with additional \$500 credits in future years.
- Increasing the personal income tax exemption for seniors. After reaching 67 years old, the first \$21,800 would be allowed to be exempt for single filers, and the first \$43,600 for joint filers. This would begin at the start of 2023 and both would increase with inflation.
- Expanding the property tax credit to disabled veterans or and their surviving spouses, or the surviving spouse of a veteran killed in action, allowing them to claim a credit against their income tax in an amount equal to 100% of the property tax levied on their homestead deductible for Federal income tax purposes.

Both chambers approved the plan on the same day it was introduced, with the Senate voting along party lines 22-14, and the House approving it by 69-34 with Democrat support.

Gov. Gretchen Whitmer, citing the need for more immediate relief to families, called for direct \$500 relief checks instead.

"The good news is that Michigan is expected to have additional revenue heading into Fiscal Year 2023. Our forthcoming budget season has the potential to be one of the most productive we have ever had," Whitmer said.

MM&A BRIEFS

MICHIGAN REPORTS \$181.6 MILLION IN LOSSES DUE TO CYBER CRIMES IN 2021

After reporting that Michigan had \$181.6 million in victim losses due to cybercrimes like phishing and others, the Michigan Department of Technology, Management & Budget has published that the state ranks eighth in the nation for the highest victim losses.

The state is also promoting the use of the Michigan Secure mobile app, which has been available since 2021. The app warns users if the Wi-Fi they are attempting to connect to could potentially be compromised. It also confirms if links sent to users are safe or possible phishing ventures.

HOUSE UNANIMOUSLY PASSES \$6.8 SUPPLEMENTAL FOR OXFORD HIGH SCHOOL

Members of the state House unanimously passed a \$6.8 million supplemental on Thursday which will go to help students, faculty and staff of Oxford High School, following the tragedy of last year's school shooting.

House Bill 6012 removes language from the School Aid budget specifically for the school to ensure that the school will not owe money back to the state at the end of the school year for missing certain requirements, along with additional funding that will help pay for things like hiring mental health professionals and repairs to the school.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- May 23** **Rep. Bryan Posthumus (R-Cannon Twp.) Evening Reception**
Location: 5:30 p.m., Grand Rapid - Location TBA
- May 24** **Rep. Angela Witwer (D-Delta Twp.) Happy Hour Fundraiser**
Location: 4:30 p.m., Michigan Beer and Wine Wholesalers Association, 332 Townsend St., Lansing
- Rep. Regina Weiss (D-Oak Park) for Michigan Reception
Location: 4:30 p.m., Kelly's Downtown, 220 South Washington Sq., Lansing
- May 25** **Rep. Sara Cambensy (D-Marquette) Final Croissant Breakfast**
Location: 8 a.m., Governors Room, 121 West Allegan St., Lansing
- May 26** **Rep. Beth Griffin (R-Mattawan) Breakfast Reception**
Location: 7:30 a.m., Michigan Beer and Wine Wholesalers Association, 332 Townsend St., Lansing
- June 2** **Michigan House Democrats - Bloody Mary Brunch**
Location: 8:30 a.m., Millie's On Main, 7294 Main St., Mackinac