



This Week in Lansing

MHSA • Muchmore Harrington Smalley & Associates, LLC

Highlights of the Latest Major Legislative, Administrative and Regulatory Activity in the State Capitol

Volume MMXXIV – Issue 16

April 19, 2024

FORMER SPEAKER LEE CHATFIELD CHARGED WITH 13 FELONIES BY AG NESSEL – This week *Attorney General (AG) Dana Nessel* charged *former House Speaker Lee Chatfield* with 13 felonies that focus on illegal usage of his nonprofit, PACs, and official government resources.

The bigger picture: An investigation into *Mr. Chatfield* began in 2022 when the *Michigan State Police* received a complaint from *Mr. Chatfield's* sister-in-law, *Rebekah Chatfield*, who said she had been sexually abused by *Mr. Chatfield* since she was 15 years old. Further investigation into financial wrongdoing stemmed from the 2022 complaint which ended with *Mr. Chatfield* and his wife, *Stephanie Chatfield*, receiving felony charges that carry hefty fines and lengthy prison sentences.

To read more, please click [here](#).

TWO VACANT HOUSE SEATS FILLED IN SPECIAL ELECTIONS – After six months of operating at a 54-54 split, *House Democrats* have reclaimed their 56-54 majority after two special general elections were held on Tuesday.

Why it matters: When current *Mayor's Lori Stone* and *Kevin Coleman* resigned from the *House* in 2023, *House Democrats* were left with a 54-54 split, greatly impacting the flow of legislation considered on the floor. However, this week's special general election saw *Macomb County Commissioner Mai Xiong* win the special election for the *13th House District*, and *Westland City Council Member Peter Herzberg* win the special election for the *25th House District*, bringing *House Democrats* back to “full strength.”

To read more, please click [here](#).

LEGISLATURE BEGINS MOVING BUDGET BILLS OUT OF SUBCOMMITTEES – This week the *House* and *Senate* saw numerous *Appropriation Subcommittees* reporting their respective departmental budgets to the full *Appropriations Committees*.

The bigger picture: Moving the appropriations process forward, *House* and *Senate Appropriation Subcommittees* took the next step in the budget process by moving departmental budgets to their respective full *Appropriations Committees*. It is still early in the *Fiscal Year 2024-25* budget process, but the action this week signifies an important step in moving the budget process forward.

To read more, please click [here](#).

ODDS AND ENDS

- The *Senate* passed legislation this week that would make kindergarten mandatory for 5-year-olds in Michigan. *Senate Bill 285* was passed 21-15, with *Senator Ruth Johnson (R-Groveland Township)* joining *Democrats* in voting yes. If signed into law the bill would take effect in the 2025-26 school year.
- The *Senate* also passed legislation that would propose a 15 mile-per-hour speed limit on Mackinac Island's eight-mile M-185 route. *Senate Bill 682* passed by a margin of 31-5 to put a speed limit on the

- only **Department of Transportation** highway on the island that does not allow motor vehicles or have a posted speed limit.
- The federal judge panel that ordered the **Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission (ICRC)** to redraw several **House** and **Senate Districts** is not requiring a special master to redraw the **Senate Districts** while the **ICRC** creates their own remedy map. The court will approve a remedy map by July 26th, with the **ICRC** required to submit their remedy map by June 27th. If at that point a remedy map is not provided, a special master will be activated to draw a remedy map of their own.
 - The **House Local Government and Municipal Finance Committee** took testimony only on a bill package that would regulate short-term rentals by levying assessments and subjecting these rentals to the same taxes that are levied on hotel rooms. **House Bills 5437-5446** were subject to debate and are expected to have further discussions next week.
 - The **Michigan Department of Corrections (MDOC)** announced this week that the state’s recidivism rate was 22.7 percent, the second lowest in state history. Over 6,100 inmates who were paroled in 2020 did not commit additional offenses and stayed out of prison.
 - The **Senate Committee on Health Policy** reported legislation this week that requires defibrillators in schools and standardized AED training for athletic coaches in high schools. **House Bills 5527** and **5528** were reported unanimously.
 - The **House Ethics and Oversight Committee** took testimony only on legislation this week that would further increase Michigan’s transparency laws. **House Bills 5583** and **5586** received lengthy testimony in the committee this week from **Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson** and **Attorney General Dana Nessel**. The bills are a part of a larger bill package dubbed the “BRITE Act.”
 - The **House Insurance and Financial Services Committee** took testimony on two bills that would amend the **Deferred Presentment Service Transaction Act** to put a 36 percent annual cap on interest rates for payday loans. **House Bill 5290** and **Senate Bill 632** heard testimony from those in support and opposition, with no further action being taken.
 - The **House** passed legislation this week that would extend the current funding system for trial courts since the sunset on the funding system is set to expire soon. **House Bills 5392** and **5534** passed 99-6 and 58-47, respectively. The **Senate Civil Rights, Judiciary and Public Safety Committee** reported similar legislation from committee to the **Senate** floor (**Senate Bills 814** and **815**).
 - The **House Health Policy Committee** reported a bill package that would allow pharmacists to prescribe hormonal birth control in an effort to expand access to birth control and contraceptives while decreasing the amount of visits a patient might need to make to a pharmacy, according to proponents of the bills. **House Bills 5435, 5336** and **5013** were reported with multiple organizations putting in cards of support.

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