



This Week in Lansing

MHSA • Muchmore Harrington Smalley & Associates, LLC

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

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APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEES BEGIN MOVING BUDGETS TO THE FLOOR – The budget process in Lansing continues to move forward as both the *House* and *Senate Appropriation Committees* moved numerous departmental budgets to the floor this week.

The bigger picture: The *Fiscal Year 2023-24* budget process in Lansing took the next step this week with the full *Appropriation Committees* moving budget bills to their respective floors and the last of the subcommittees reporting out their budgets (with the exception of the *House Labor and Economic Opportunity Subcommittee* which will be reporting out next week). *Republicans* voted no or abstained from voting on each budget.

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

FORMER HOUSE SPEAKER RICK JOHNSON PLEADS GUILTY TO ACCEPTING BRIBES – *Former Speaker Rick Johnson* has pleaded guilty to accepting bribes during his tenure as chair of the *Marihuana Licensing Board* in one of the largest public corruption scandals in the last three decades.

The bigger picture: *Former Speaker Johnson* is one of four individuals to reach a plea agreement with federal investigators over a bribery scheme to give certain businesses medical marijuana industry licenses. *Mr. Johnson* is now one of the highest-ranking current or former legislators to be convicted of corruption.

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

SENATE GOP ANNOUNCES POLICY PLAN – Late last week *Senate Republicans* announced the *Roadmap for a Better Michigan*, a plan that aims to improve the lives of every Michigander, keep the economy strong, and avoid a second “Lost Decade,” according to *Senate Republicans*.

Why it matters: *Senate Republicans* no longer have a legislative majority for the first time in over forty years. On Friday last week they announced their plan which includes recommendations to help Michiganders struggling with inflation, improve schools and roads, and reduce crime, among other priorities.

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

ELECTIONS

- *Senate Republicans* reported raising \$1.42 million in the first quarter. The *Senate GOP* spent \$814,502, which leaves them with just over \$647,000 in cash on hand. Of the money spent, over \$700,000 was for loan repayments.

- *Senate Democrats* reported raising \$1.03 million since the beginning of the year. The *Senate Democrats* spent \$1.09 million during the first quarter, which leaves them with \$68,010 in cash on hand. Notably, \$1 million was spent on repayment of a loan taken out right before the 2022 election.
- *House Democrats* raised \$1.23 million in the first quarter of 2023. After spending \$139,000, *House Democrats* have \$1.27 million in cash on hand.
- *House Republicans* raised \$1.26 million in the first quarter of 2023. After spending \$40,000, *House Republicans* have \$1.35 million in cash on hand.
- This week **Zack Burns**, a *Democrat* from Ann Arbor, announced he is entering the *U.S. Senate* race. **Mr. Burns**, whose campaign website says “he is an advocate, a lawyer, a scientist, and a fighter” is the third *Democrat* to enter the race. Other candidates on the *Democratic* side include *Congresswoman Elissa Slotkin (D-Lansing)* and *Nasser Beydoun*.

ODDS AND ENDS

- *President Joe Biden* announced he is seeking re-election in 2024. As a part of his re-election campaign, *Governor Gretchen Whitmer* was named one of the six national co-chairs on the campaign.
- *Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy (EGLE) Director Dan Eichinger* announced he is leaving *EGLE* effective immediately. *Aaron Keatley* is serving as acting director until a new permanent director is named by *Governor Gretchen Whitmer*.
- *Michigan Public Service Commission Commissioner Tremaine Phillips* resigned this week, citing his family’s personal and professional priorities. *Commissioner Phillips* term runs through July 2025, and *Governor Gretchen Whitmer* is in the process of filling the vacancy.
- The *Senate* passed a bill this week along party lines that would allow college graduate student research assistants to be classified as public employees and join unions. *Senate Bill 185* received pushback from *Republican* members who attempted to include multiple amendments, but all failed.
- *Governor Gretchen Whitmer* signed legislation that would exempt delivery and installation from sales and use taxes, while also adding two members to the *Michigan Strategic Fund* board who will be appointed by the minority legislative caucuses. *House Bills 4039, 4253, and 4219* were part of a deal between the *Governor* and *Republican* leadership earlier this year on a supplemental funding bill.
- The *Senate* passed legislation on Thursday that would maintain the expanded *Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)* but add immediate effect to *Public Act 4*. *Senate Bill 144* was passed by the *Senate* by a margin of 27-10. According to the *Senate Fiscal Agency (SFA)*, if the bill is passed, it could spread out payment of benefits over two *Fiscal Years* instead of all being paid in *FY 2023-2024*.
- During a roll call vote on Tuesday all *Republican House* members voted against a resolution to recognize April 25th as Library and Librarian Worker Day. Spokesperson for the *House Republicans Jerry Ward* told reporters that the resolution made libraries a political issue.
- The *Senate Education Committee* reported a bill this week that would repeal the A-F grading system for ranking public schools. *House Bill 4166* was reported by the committee along party lines, 5-2.

MHSA

Muchmore Harrington Smalley & Associates, LLC

Sandra Jones
sjones@mhsa.com

Adrian Cazal
acazal@mhsa.com

Bret Marr
bmarr@mhsa.com

Evelyn Zois Sweeney
esweeney@mhsa.com

Malcolm Kletke
mkletke@mhsa.com

Mandy Bolter
mbolter@mhsa.com

Patrick Harrington
pharrington@mhsa.com

Jon Smalley
jsmalley@mhsa.com

124 West Allegan St., Suite 1900 | Lansing, MI 48933 | Phone: 517-484-8800 | Fax: 517-484-4442 | Email: rsmith@mhsa.com
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