



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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ICRC BEGINS REDRAWING HOUSE DISTRICTS IN THE DETROIT AREA – This week the *Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission (ICRC)* began redrawing seven Detroit-area *House Districts* as ordered by a federal judge panel.

The bigger picture: A three-judge panel ordered the *ICRC* to redraw *House Districts 1, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12* and *14* after the courts found the seven districts violated the Equal Protection Clause by drastically reducing the black voting age population in Detroit. Swaths of the city were combined with surrounding suburbs that are predominately white. The *ICRC* has until February 2nd to submit a replacement for the maps, otherwise a special master will be appointed to make revisions.

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

SML BRINKS MAKES CHANGES TO SENATE COMMITTEES – This week, *Senate Majority Leader Winnie Brinks (D-Grand Rapids)* restructured several *Senate Committees*, removing or reassigning several *Democratic* members to balance workload and better align committee assignments with member priorities.

The bigger picture: After 40 years in the minority, *Democrats* were eager to wield the committee gavel and set committee agendas, as was reflected by the heavy committee assignments per *Democrat Senator* last year. Capitol insiders were shocked to see some members in the double digits. After a very active 12 months, *Majority Leader Brinks* notified the *Senate* this week that *Democratic* membership on several committees and appropriations subcommittees was being restructured. The letter, penned to the *Secretary of the Senate* omitted explanation, but most insiders believe the changes were motivated by a desire to better balance workload and better align committee assignments with member priorities.

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

GOV WHITMER MOVES ADDITIONAL FUNCTIONS TO MILEAP – This week *Governor Gretchen Whitmer* signed an *Executive Order* that moves the *Office of Postsecondary Educational Attainment* and the *Indian Tuition Waiver* to the *Department of Lifelong Education, Advancement and Potential (MiLEAP)*.

Why it matters: *MiLEAP* was established by *Governor Whitmer* in July 2023 via executive order, but functionally, began officially operating in December 2023 with the announcement of *Michelle Richard* as Acting Director. *Governor Whitmer* issued an *Executive Order* this week, [Executive Order 2024-2](#), to move additional functions to *MiLEAP* to continue the effort of creating a single place in state government to lead the work of helping people succeed in Michigan.

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

ELECTIONS

- The ***Michigan Republican Party*** is planning a presidential delegate convention in Detroit to ensure Michigan's ***Republican*** state convention delegates will be fully awarded to a ***Republican*** presidential candidate. Under the hybrid plan, 16 delegates will be awarded to the ***Republican*** presidential nominee who wins the February 27th primary, with the remaining 39 delegates being awarded at the March 2nd convention. The hybrid system was a compromise between state and national ***Republicans*** after the ***Democratic-led Legislature*** moved the primary to February 27th.
- ***Glenn Wilson***, a ***Republican*** military veteran and business owner, announced his candidacy for the ***U.S. Senate*** on Tuesday. ***Mr. Wilson*** enters a crowded ***Republican*** field that is headlined by former ***U.S. Representative Mike Rogers***.

ODDS AND ENDS

- The ***Citizens Research Council (CRC)*** released a [report](#) that highlights as Michigan's population declines and gets older, the number of school age children is expected to drop by 6 percent between 2020 and 2050. The report indicated since the 2002-03 school year, total enrollment in public schools has fallen from 1,690,990 students to 1,383,889 students in 2022-23. The decline has been unevenly distributed across Michigan's 836 local school districts.
- A group of ***House Republicans*** asked ***House Speaker Joe Tate (D-Detroit)*** to direct the ***House Ethics and Oversight Committee*** to investigate the ***Unemployment Insurance Agency (UIA)*** after the recent audit found the agency distributed more than \$5.6 billion in fraudulent payments during the COVID-19 pandemic. ***Representative Cam Cavitt (R-Cheboygan)*** authored the letter that had 19 other ***House Republicans*** as co-signatories. ***Speaker Tate's*** office has not commented on the letter.
- The ***Board of State Canvassers*** has rejected petitions to recall ***Governor Gretchen Whitmer***, ***Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson*** and ***Attorney General Dana Nessel***. The board ruled the petitions were not factual and clear.

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