



# 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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**DETROIT PLAINTIFFS IN REDISTRICTING CASE OBJECT TO ICRC REMEDY MAP** – The Detroit plaintiffs who won the lawsuit, *Agee v. Benson*, against the Michigan *Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission (ICRC)* filed an objection in the case over the remedy map submitted to the courts by the *ICRC* stating the proposed changes to *House Districts* continue to violate the *U.S. Constitution* by prejudicing black voters and favoring incumbents in a racially gerrymandered map.

**The bigger picture:** The three-judge panel that ordered the *ICRC* to redraw seven *House Districts* currently is reviewing the remedy map submitted by the *ICRC*. However, the plaintiffs who initially sued the *ICRC* and won, claim that the submitted map, the Motown Sound FC E1, continues to violate the Equal Protection Clause of Detroiters 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment rights.

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

**SENATE PASSES DYSLEXIA SCREENING BILLS WITH BIPARTISAN SUPPORT** – This week the *Senate* passed legislation that would create a requirement for early screening and intervention for dyslexia in public schools by the 2027-28 school year.

**Why it matters:** In a bipartisan effort, the *Senate* passed *Senate Bills 567* and *568* this week, legislation aimed at improving literacy in the state of Michigan. A *Republican* amendment to move the implementation date forward failed, but ultimately did not impact *Republican Senators* supporting the legislation.

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

**FOIA EXPANSION BILLS MOVE TO SENATE FLOOR** – After passing numerous *Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)* bills in 2023, the *Senate Oversight Committee* continued the legislative push to further expand *FOIA* by passing bills that would include the *Legislature* and *Governor's* office this week.

**The bigger picture:** In 2023, the *Legislature* passed the bare minimum financial disclosure requirements constitutionally required by adoption of *Proposal 2022-1*. Michigan voters adopted the ballot proposal which included changes to Michigan's term limits, as well as increased financial disclosure requirements. After passing bills in 2023, key advocates in the *Legislature* emphasized additional *FOIA* expansion would be pursued in 2024. *Senate Bills 669* and *670* fulfill that promise, and together would allow residents and journalists to file requests for information from the *Legislature* and *Governor* to increase transparency and understanding in governance.

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

## ELECTIONS

- **Former President Donald Trump** endorsed **former U.S. Representative Mike Rogers** in the **Republican U.S. Senate** primary on Monday. **Mr. Rogers** is the presumed frontrunner in a crowded **Republican** field, which includes **former U.S. Representatives Justin Amash** and **Peter Meijer**, as well as numerous business executives in Michigan.

### **ODDS AND ENDS**

- The **Senate Fiscal Agency (SFA)** reported that February collections for 2024 were down \$152.1 million from the **January Consensus Revenue Estimating Conference (CREC)**. Additionally, collections to the state’s major taxes and net lottery revenue in 2024 are 23.8 percent less than February 2023. **SFA** stated the cause of the decline was that individual income tax refunds and **Michigan Business Tax** refunds that were higher than expected, more than offset higher than expected collections from individual income tax withholdings, the insurance tax and **Corporate Income Tax**.
- The **Senate** passed legislation that would update and standardize child safety seat requirements to meet federal guidelines. **House Bills 4511** and **4512** passed the **Senate** 21-17 and are now headed to **Governor Gretchen Whitmer**.
- The **House** passed legislation that would allow for more flexibility in school construction by allowing both an architect or professional engineer who is licensed in Michigan, as well as an architect or professional engineer working with a “design builder” to work on a school building. **House Bill 4603** passed 95-11.
- The **Senate Education Committee** took testimony only on a bill that would require school districts to provide kindergarten for children who are at least five years old. The goal is to improve educational outcomes in the state. **Senate Bill 285** sponsor, **Senator Dayna Polehanki (D-Livonia)**, informed committee members that 17 other states already require some form of mandatory kindergarten. The committee heard positive testimony from numerous stakeholders on the bill.
- The **House Regulatory Reform Committee** took testimony on legislation that would require retailers to accept containers for deposits from 9 a.m. to 11 p.m., or during their business hours if less than that. The committee debated **House Bill 5421** with some committee members expressing concerns for small stores who need to sort cans/bottles by hand vs. using a machine.
- The **House Elections Committee** heard testimony on a bill that would not allow anyone convicted of an election-related crime/offense of serving on a board of canvassers. **House Bill 5551** heard testimony in favor of the bill, with no further action taken.
- **Representative Matt Maddock (R-Milford)** sued **House Speaker Joe Tate (D-Detroit)**, the **House of Representatives**, and the **House Business Office** over the right to print taxpayer-funded constituent newsletters that were critical of **Governor Gretchen Whitmer** and legislators. Specifically, **Representative Maddock** filed a complaint Tuesday in the **U.S. District Court for the Western District of Michigan** seeking a preliminary injunction to prevent **House** rules from being enforced against him. The **House** printing rules bar newsletters if they are exceedingly partisan, critical of the institution and its members, meant to impugn the motives of legislators or other individuals or contain “accusations of intentional misrepresentation.”
- **Governor Gretchen Whitmer** signed four bills into law this week. **Governor Whitmer** signed **House Bills 4522** and **4524**, which together create the family treatment court and expand eligibility for drug treatment courts. The **Governor** also signed **House Bills 4185** and **4190**, which expand the criteria for determining if an employer has repeatedly violated the **Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Act** regarding asbestos, as well as implement civil fines if certain conditions were not met.

- The *Senate Health Policy Committee* reported legislation this week that would add Michigan to the list of states that operate under a state-based health care exchange. *Senate Bills 633-638* had substitutes adopted in the committee and were all sent to the *Senate* floor.

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