

REMEMBERING JOHN MCNAMARA – MHSa is heartbroken by the passing of our friend, John McNamara (or as so many knew him “Johnny Mac”).

John passed away at 40 years old this week after a battle with cancer. John served as Vice President of Government Affairs at the Michigan Restaurant and Lodging Association (MRLA) for the last six years, and prior to that served in a variety of roles in Lansing. At MRLA, John was a fierce advocate on issues, and most impressively, helped navigate MRLA through the COVID-19 pandemic. John’s work in the Capitol helped keep the industry alive and later recover from two forced shutdowns. While John has a plethora of professional accomplishments, it is his friendship that we will remember most. John was a dear friend who brought life to every room he entered with his quick wit and humor. While he could lighten the room, John was also passionate and dedicated, especially when it came to cheering on MSU or playing a round of golf. But most of all, he was simply a good person.

Johnny was a guy we could always count on to help out or think something through. We’ll miss our time on the golf course with him, debates about what’s wrong or right with Michigan State Athletics or just hanging out to talk about life. His smile and laugh were infectious and we’re devastated that he was taken from us so early. Our prayers and condolences go out to his two brothers, and we can only hope that his beloved dog, Cassius, will remember their frequent walks in the morning fondly. All the best Johnny, sleep easy our good friend!

REPUBLICAN PARTY SELECTS SOS, AG CANDIDATES FOR 2026 ELECTION – The *Michigan Republican Party Endorsement Convention* took place last weekend, which resulted in delegates selecting *Doug Lloyd* for *Attorney General (AG)* and *Anthony Forlini* for *Secretary of State (SOS)* in the 2026 election.

The bigger picture: The *Republican Party Endorsement Convention* was held in Novi last weekend where *Republicans* nominated *Mr. Lloyd* and *Mr. Forlini* to be on the November ballot. In addition to selecting their *AG* and *SOS* candidates, the *Republican* gubernatorial candidates were present and campaigning. Notably, reporters highlighted delegates at the convention stated they are not ruling out *Perry Johnson* as a contender in the gubernatorial race, even with *U.S. Representative John James* seen as the *Republican* frontrunner throughout the race thus far.

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

HOUSE DEMS RELEASE PRIORITIES FOR NEXT YEAR – The *House Democrats* released their “Vision for a Brighter Michigan” plan which outlines what would be prioritized if *Democrats* win back majority in the *House* in the 2026 election.

The bigger picture: The proposed plan contains numerous areas of focus, including affordability, health care, education and workforce development, and housing. *House Democrats* are using “The Vision” as a way to show voters why they should win back the majority in November.

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

9 BILLS MOVE TO SUPREME COURT – The *Michigan Supreme Court (MSC)* is slated to hear oral arguments over the nine bills passed at the end of the 2023-24 term that *House Speaker Matt Hall (R-Richland Township)* declined to present to *Governor Gretchen Whitmer* at the beginning of 2025.

The bigger picture: The latest in the ongoing saga of nine bills passed at the end of the 2023-24 legislative session is set to take place in May before the *MSC*. Previously, the *Court of Appeals* and *Court of Claims* both ruled that the Michigan *Constitution* required the *House* to present the bills to *Governor Whitmer*. *House Republicans* filed an appeal to the *Supreme Court* at the end of last year, arguing that the *Senate* did not have standing to sue the *House* over the bills.

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

ELECTIONS

- **Robert Pena**, a *Democrat* from Lansing, announced he is running for the **28th Senate District**. The seat is currently held by **Senator Sam Singh (D-Lansing)** who announced he will not be running for a final term. **Mr. Pena** joins **Mark Polsdofer** in the *Democratic* primary.
- Lansing NAACP President **Harold A. Pope** is running for the **74th House District** seat. The seat is currently held by **Representative Kara Hope (D-Holt)** who is not seeking reelection. **Mr. Pope** said he has been considering the campaign for months, and decided the timing was right to run.
- Math teacher and business owner **Kim Thomas** has entered the *Democratic* gubernatorial primary with just three weeks to go before the filing deadline. **Ms. Thomas** said that she feels optimistic about the path to nomination considering the engagement she has seen thus far.

ODDS AND ENDS

- **Governor Whitmer** has requested an emergency declaration from **President Donald Trump** following multiple tornadoes in southwest Michigan last month. While the request goes through the *Federal Emergency Management Agency*, the final decision will fall on the **President**.
- **Representative Jerry Neyer (R-Shepherd)** and 24 other *House Republicans* are asking **Governor Whitmer** to implement the *U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's* emergency waiver allowing E15 fuel to be sold across Michigan to address the high fuel costs. E15 fuel contains a higher blend of ethanol and typically sell for 10 to 20 cents less than standard gasoline per gallon.