

November 2017

GOVERNOR SNYDER TAPS CHIEF LEGAL ADVISORY FOR SUPREME COURT

Elizabeth Clement, Governor Rick Snyder's chief legal advisor, will become the Governor's fifth appointment to the Michigan Supreme Court during his seven years in office.

Governor Snyder appointed Ms. Clement to replace Justice Joan Larsen who resigned following her

confirmation to the U.S. 6th Circuit Court of Appeals.

Before joining the Governor's staff, Ms. Clement worked in the Senate Majority Policy Office, served the Senate as legal counsel and as an attorney at Clement Law PLLC. She holds a bachelor's degree in political science and her juris doctor's degree from the Michigan State University College of Law.

GUNS IN "GUN FREE" ZONES?

A package of bills (SB 584 - 586) passed the Senate recently that would allow adults with a proper license to carry a concealed weapon through almost all "gun free zones."

However, the Senate's concealed pistol license bills do not allow local governments to opt out of the law. Governor Rick Snyder vetoed similar legislation (SB 59) in 2012.

Under the legislation, universities and colleges would have the power to adopt and enforce their own gun policies to prohibit school employees from carrying guns through collective bargaining as well as prohibiting students from carrying concealed guns on school property.

GENERAL FUND/SCHOOL AID FUND OVER PROJECTIONS

According to the House Fiscal Agency (HFA) the state's General Fund tax revenue is \$58.1 million over projections thus far for FY 2016-2017 and the School Aid Fund is \$136.5 million over for the same period.

Collections from major taxes totaled \$2.92 billion in October 2017 – \$74.2 million more than in October 2016. School Aid Fund revenue from Michigan major taxes is estimated to be \$1.87 billion in October 2017 – about \$20 million above the amount estimated at the May 2017 consensus revenue estimating conference.

MCRC: NO SEX DISCRIMINATION INTERPRETATION

For the second time, the Michigan Civil Rights Commission (MCRC) was unable to issue an interpretation of state law to include discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity as prohibited forms of sex discrimination.

The unanimous vote to table the issue came after the MCRC failed to pass a motion that would have had the Commission definitively decline to issue an interpretative statement, which was originally requested by Equality Michigan.

JANUARY TARGET DATE TO COMPLETE PREVAILING WAGE REPEAL REVIEW

The Board of State Canvassers (BSC) has set a tentative meeting date of January 10 for consideration of the Protecting Michigan Taxpayer's (PMT) prevailing wage repeal petition.

The Bureau of Elections says its review of the petition signatures is expected to be wrapped up around early January.

PMT said it submitted 380,000 signatures for its legislative initiative that would roll back the state's prevailing wage law.

DRIVER RESPONSIBILITY FEE PHASE OUT CLEARS THE HOUSE

The House has overwhelmingly passed legislation that would provide amnesty for Michigan drivers from their Driver Responsibility Fees (DRFs) beginning in October 2018.

The legislation also creates a workforce training option as an alternative for those who currently owe the fees that were tacked on for running up too many points on their driving record.

A similar Senate version frees drivers with an unpaid DRF of six or more years.

NO-FAULT GETS TOO MANY "NO" VOTES

House Speaker Tom Leonard (R-DeWitt) and Detroit Mayor Mike Duggan's proposal to reform the state's no-fault auto system fell 10 votes short in the House as most Democrats and Oakland County Republicans were in opposition.

A last minute substitute agreed to by Speaker Leonard, giving the hospitals several changes they requested while also creating a five-year sunset on the changes, was not enough to gain passage.

House Bill 5013 still allowed drivers the choice to pick levels of personal injury protection (PIP) outside of the current unlimited lifetime benefit.

After the defeat, Speaker Leonard and Mayor Duggan said they will wait for another chance...perhaps next year.

SNYDER SIGNS NO-SODA TAX BILL

Under legislation (HB 4999) signed into law by Governor Rick Snyder, local governments cannot impose their own taxes or fees on food and soda.

Known as the "anti-soda tax bill", it was viewed as a pre-emptive move to stop any local governments from implementing so-called soda taxes in Michigan.

The bill is now Public Act 133 of 2017.

CALLEY ACTIVATES STATE EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER

Lt. Governor Brian Calley has activated the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) to coordinate Michigan's response to the Hepatitis A outbreak.

In addition, the Community Health Emergency Coordination Center (CHECC) has been activated to direct the response and provide guidance to the multiple local public health jurisdictions in the prevention and investigation of the cases.

The House and Senate Appropriations Committees voted unanimously to move \$7.1 million into vaccination efforts and other community outreach program to address the Hepatitis A outbreak in southeast Michigan.

UPTON NOT ENTERING THE U.S. SENATE RACE

U.S. Representative Fred Upton (R-St Joseph) has announced he will not be a candidate for the 2018 GOP U.S. Senate nomination, but will likely run for re-election to the U.S. House of Representatives.