



UPDATES FROM THE CAPITOL

December 10-23, 2024

UPCOMING EVENTS

Tuesday, December 24th, 2024

Christmas Eve (Office Closed)

Wednesday, December 25th, 2024

Christmas Day, First Day of Hanukkah (Office Closed)

Thursday, December 26th, 2024

First Day of Kwanzaa (Office Closed)

Tuesday, December 31st, 2024

New Year's Eve (Office Closed)

Wednesday, January 1st, 2025

New Year's Day (Office Closed)

Friday, January 10th, 2025

January Consensus Revenue Estimating Conference

RECORD SETTING 29-HOUR SENATE SESSION PASSES 90+ BILLS

The Michigan Senate broke records during lame duck with a 29-hour session that ran from 10 a.m. Thursday to 3:01 p.m. Friday, passing over 90 bills before adjourning. Senate Democrats prioritized salvaging as much legislation as possible after House Democrats were unable to maintain a quorum due to a missing Democratic member and a Republican walkout. While most bills were passed in their original form and are now headed to the Governor's desk, some were amended and sent back to the House, where they are unlikely to advance unless the House reconvenes earlier than December 31.

Key Bills Passed by the Senate:

- Requirement for Michigan schools to supply information to parents on firearm storage rules each year
- Allowing pharmacists to prescribe contraceptives and to require coverage of pharmacist-prescribed birth control methods
- Maternal Health bills designed to address the state's high maternal mortality rates
- Lifting medical benefit plan caps to raise the amount public employers can contribute towards staff healthcare plans
- Prohibiting law enforcement from selling firearms obtained in gun buyback programs and requiring firearms obtained through buyback programs to be destroyed
- School Safety and Mental Health bill package intended to standardize school safety requirements

MICHIGAN HOUSE FACES UNCERTAINTY AROUND UNPRECEDENTED SINE DIE

As a final twist in this year's unconventional lame duck season, the Michigan House of Representatives may violate Article IV, Section 13 of the state Constitution, which requires both chambers to set a concurrent resolution for sine die adjournment at noon. On December 19, the House adjourned without a quorum, leaving the sine die resolution (HCR 16) unresolved and referred to committee. This unprecedented situation has raised questions about the session's official end date and the effective date of legislation without immediate effect.

This news follows a "Call to the House" during session in which Rep. Karen Whitsett (D-Detroit) and all 54 House Republicans failed to return to the chamber. Session was abruptly adjourned until December 31 with only 54 members present on the floor, leaving legal experts scratching their heads about the possible implications. Since the Constitution ties the effective date of some bills to the end of session, lawmakers question whether the implementation of these bills could be delayed until April 1, 90 days after sine die.

MICHIGAN'S NOVEMBER REVENUE EXCEEDS PROJECTIONS

A recent report by the Senate Fiscal Agency (SFA) showed that Michigan's state revenue from major taxes and net lottery earnings reached \$2.9 billion in November, marking a 10.5% increase compared to one year ago. Partially credited for the increase was the \$147 million above anticipated projections for collections, including \$31.8 million above forecast for the General Fund and \$103 million exceeding expectations for the School Aid Fund. Additional funds were allocated to entities such as the Local Community Stabilization Authority and gaming-related programs.

Income tax revenue led the growth, totaling \$1.1 billion for November, an 11.4% increase from last year and \$6.2 million higher than projected. Use tax collections also saw a significant 7.4% increase, reaching \$234.7 million. However, not all areas experienced growth; sales tax receipts dipped 1.5% year-over-year to \$843.5 million, with motor vehicle sales tax collections hitting their lowest level since June 2024.

CURTIS HERTEL RUNNING FOR MICHIGAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY CHAIR WITH GOVERNOR'S SUPPORT

Former Senator Curtis Hertel has announced his candidacy for Michigan Democratic Party chair with Governor Gretchen Whitmer's endorsement. Hertel, who recently lost a tight congressional race to Republican Tom Barrett, emphasized his commitment to strengthening the party. Hertel has also received vocal support from several Democratic leaders, including U.S. Rep. Haley Stevens and Oakland County Executive Dave Coulter.

The Michigan Democratic Party will elect its next chair at their February convention, following the decision by current chair Lavora Barnes not to seek re-election. Hertel's experience, including his track record of supporting bipartisan legislation and his hand in securing the state's 2022 Democratic trifecta are strong points to consider.

Detroit-based activist Al "BJ" Williams is also vying for the position.