

## **KAROUB REPORT**

### **AUGUST 2021**

#### **2020 MICHIGAN CENSUS UPDATE**

Long awaited data from the 2020 census was finally released this month. The data shows that Michigan's population has grown by two percent in the last decade, but not enough to prevent the loss of a U.S. Congressional seat. Michigan's population rose from 9,883,640 in 2010 to 10,077,331 in 2020, however, Michigan will lose one of our Congressional representatives going down to 13 from the current number of 14. Michigan is now the 10<sup>th</sup> largest state by population in the United States. According to the Census Bureau, Michigan would have needed another 5,692 people counted in the census to avoid losing a congressional seat.

#### **INDEPENDENT CITIZENS REDISTRICTING COMMISSION BEGINS DRAWING DISTRICTS**

Now that the census data has been released, the newly created Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission has begun the work of drawing electoral boundaries for the U.S. House, State Senate, and State House districts. The commission still has a lot of work ahead of them as they've only just begun drawing State House and State Senate districts in some areas of the state based on the census data. The commission will continue working throughout the rest of the year to hone the districts based on communities of interests and population requirements while considering the public comments received as they travel throughout the state. Stay tuned for more information.

#### **BUDGET UPDATE**

Labor Day is right around the corner and the Legislature will return to Lansing after the holiday to complete their work on the state budget. Although details for each state department have yet to be released, rumors are that the Governor's Budget Office, State Senate, and State House have reached a targeted agreement on the Fiscal Year 2022 budget. For now, the agreement does not include the estimated \$10 billion in federal emergency aid or any unexpected tax revenue coming to Michigan. The School Aid Fund (SAF) budget was approved just before the statutory July 1<sup>st</sup> deadline. The plan now seems to be for the Legislature to pass the FY 2022 budget and send it on to the Governor for her signature prior to the end of the fiscal year on September 30<sup>th</sup>. As a precaution, the State Budget Director did ask state department heads for contingency plans should the state government shutdown (*see article below*).

### **FORMER CONGRESSMAN PAUL MITCHELL PASSES AWAY AFTER FIGHT WITH CANCER**

Former U.S. Representative Paul Mitchell passed away earlier this month after a battle with cancer. He was remembered fondly by his former colleagues as an honorable man who always stood up for his beliefs and fought hard for the people of Michigan. The former corporate executive served two terms in Congress from 2017-2020 and spent his final weeks in Congress as an Independent after criticizing former President Trump. There will be no public funeral. Former Representative Mitchell is survived by his wife Sherry, six children, and six grandchildren.

### **WHITMER PROPOSES \$2.1 BILLION FOR JOB TRAINING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Governor Gretchen Whitmer outlined a proposal to spend \$2.1 billion of federal COVID aid money to support more small businesses, fund education/job training, and build 2,000 new housing units. The Governor is interested in investing relief funds into existing programs instead of creating new programs from scratch. Her proposal would include investing \$722 million in Michigan; \$651 million for more small business jobs; and lastly, \$800 million for investment in communities, spending \$100 million to rehabilitate properties, and more funding to redevelop brownfield properties in addition to 2,000 new housing units. There is an additional \$50 million for apprentice programs, \$39 million to help released prisoners find employment and she proposes to beef up her 60-by-30 post-secondary program, which includes the Michigan Reconnect program. A new STEM internship program would get \$11 million plus \$40 million to expand the EV infrastructure system in Michigan. The proposed funding would also need to be approved by the Legislature.

### **HOUSE CONSIDERS BAN ON VACCINE AND MASK MANDATES FROM EMPLOYERS**

The House Workforce, Trades, & Talent committee returned to Lansing during the summer break to debate a bill that would prohibit employers from terminating an employee who refuses to get vaccinated or wear a mask. House Bill 4471, introduced by Representative Sue Allor (R-Wolverine), would create the Informed Consent in the Workplace Act to prohibit discrimination against an employee or volunteer who declines or has yet to receive certain vaccinations, including COVID-19. An employer also could not require the employee/volunteer to wear a mask in the workplace or disclose that the employee/volunteer has declined or not received a vaccination. The committee had some lively testimony with committee Chair Representative Beth Griffin (R-Paw Paw) pausing several times to remind the audience to maintain decorum. There was no vote taken on the bill, but testimony is expected to continue when the House returns after Labor Day.

### **COULD A STATE GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN BE LOOMING?**

The State Budget Director sent out a letter last week to State Department Directors urging them to begin contingency planning for a state government shutdown in the event the state does not have a signed budget by September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2021. Budget Director Dave Massaron is working to determine what department heads would need to shut down and what they would need to stay open should the state not have the ability to spend money on October 1<sup>st</sup>. In previous state government shutdowns, the State Police were authorized to stay on the job while positions like conservation officers and road work crews were sidelined.

### **MDHHS MASK MANDATE POWERS AFFIRMED BY COURTS**

The Federal Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals has upheld that the Michigan Department of Health & Human Services does have the authority to issue mask mandates to control the COVID-19 pandemic. The case was brought by Resurrection School in Lansing and parents with children attending who did not require their students to wear mask. The court determined that MDHHS has the authority to impose mask mandates on all elementary schools. Attorney General Dana Nessel said the appeals court's ruling "affirms our continued stance" that MDHHS could impose a mask mandate to help control the spread of COVID-19 as children returned to school. Although the Administration has continued to state they have no plans of mandating masks and the decision should be left up to the local communities, this ruling does affirm that MDHHS has the authority to impose a mask mandate should they feel the need. An attorney for Resurrection School said they plan to file a petition for an en banc hearing, which would be before the full court. The main reasoning behind the decision was that the mask ban applied equally to all elementary schools and was not specifically targeting religious schools.

### **COULD SPEED CAMERAS BE COMING TO A COMMUNITY NEAR YOU?**

Under legislation introduced this month by Representative Sarah Anthony (D-Lansing), a state, county, or city could install cameras along streets and intersections to crack down on speeding motorists. House Bill 5284 was introduced to crack down on drag racing down major streets and prevent speeding in residential neighborhoods and provide another avenue for overworked and understaffed law enforcement agencies. The cameras would catch vehicles exceeding the posted speed limit, take a picture of the vehicle's license plate and send a picture with a ticket to the registered owner; a sign would need to be posted to indicate that a camera is being used for law enforcement. The bill is co-sponsored by former Livingston County Sheriff and current State Rep. Bob Bezotte (R-Howell) and six other Democratic Reps.

**STAFF CHANGES AROUND LANSING**

- State Budget Director Dave Massaron will be leaving after the Fiscal Year 2022 budget is completed to join Wayne State University as their Chief Financial Officer and Senior Vice President.
- House Republican General Counsel Hassan Beydoun is leaving to become Detroit Mayor Mike Duggan's Senior Advisor. Beydoun had served the House Republicans since 2013.
- Craig Ryan, former Chief of Staff to Senate Majority Leader Mike Shirkey, will return to the Legislature to be Chief Operating Officer for House Speaker Jason Wentworth.
- Aaron Van Langevelde, the former State Canvasser, and senior deputy legal counsel for the House Republican caucus, is being promoted to general counsel to replace Beydoun.