

# THE JACOBS CAPITOL REPORT

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## **BUDGET PROBLEMS = TOUGH CHOICES**

### Possible Cuts to Corrections, Per-Pupil Funding

Some legislators are hinting that the Department of Corrections' (DOC) \$1.85 billion budget may be ripe for cuts during the next two fiscal years.

Details have not been released, but restructuring may involve revamped sentencing guidelines, and perhaps the controversial early release of some prisoners.

Even if these DOC reforms become reality, the state needs to cut much more before finding its budget balanced.

Also on the front of the chopping block is per-pupil spending. It appears that the state can't afford last year's \$210 per-pupil increase in funding and, in fact, will likely cut \$224 per-pupil to help balance the \$438.3 million School Aid Fund (SAF) deficit. According to the latest U.S. Census Bureau data, Michigan ranks fourth among states in revenue raised for K-12 education. At \$9,292 per pupil, the state's per-pupil spending also ranked near the top.

Currently, 83 percent of the per-pupil funding goes toward paying for personnel costs. Michigan uses 59 percent of per pupil dollars to pay for salaries and wages and 24 percent to pay for employee benefits.

Some legislators have suggested that the state let school districts explore health insurance options other than the current system, MESSA, as a way to save per pupil costs. It's a controversial measure that didn't have widespread support before the new budget numbers were released. Given the new reality, Michiganders should expect anything and everything to be on the table for negotiation.

According to the House Fiscal Agency (HFA), only four areas of the state budget account for 86 percent of the General Fund: community health (31.9 percent, \$2.9 billion), higher education (21.2 percent, \$1.95 billion), corrections (20.2 percent, \$1.858 billion) and human services (13 percent, \$1.2 billion).

Michigan's prisons are overcrowded; incarceration rates are at an all-time high. According to the Associated Press, the state is currently ranked 11th in the nation for state incarceration levels. Michigan's incarceration rate is much higher than any other Great Lakes state and is on par with those of the Deep South.

"If we had incarceration rates similar to other states we would be talking about a \$500 million a year in savings," said DOC Spokesman Russ Marlan.

### **BISHOP: S.B.T. REPLACEMENT WILL NOT BE "REVENUE NEUTRAL"** **GOP Looks to Cut Business Taxes in Middle of Budget Storm**

The upcoming GOP proposal to replace Michigan's Single Business Tax (SBT) will likely include an overall tax cut, said Senate Majority Leader Mike Bishop (R-Rochester), noting that a revenue neutral proposal would only "replace a tax with a tax" and not help the state attract business.

Governor Jennifer Granholm has already issued a revenue neutral SBT proposal; however, that plan might be off the table given the financial crisis that has since arisen.

Granholm spokesperson Liz Boyd said that there was little new in Mr. Bishop's SBT comments.

Senate Republicans will issue their SBT proposal in the next several weeks. Several competing plans have been talked about from both sides of the aisle, and more are likely on the way.

The SBT expires on December 31.

### **FLU SHOTS STILL AVAILABLE** **MDCH: It's Not Too Late!**

There is still time for Michigan citizens to receive a flu vaccine, as influenza activity levels are only beginning to increase across the state. Dr. Gregory Holzman, State Chief Medical Executive, is encouraging all Michigan citizens to seek a vaccine if they have not already done so.

"Health care providers around the state have ample supplies of vaccine this season, so absolutely everyone should receive a flu shot," Holzman said. "Receiving a vaccine is the single best way to prevent against getting the flu, and by our latest estimate, tens of thousands of doses are still available."

Holzman said it takes two weeks for the vaccine to reach its maximum

effectiveness once it is administered, meaning individuals who get a vaccine today would still be protected during the heart of Michigan's flu season.

Sporadic flu cases are often seen in Michigan during November and activity often begins to increase thereafter. Activity typically peaks in late January through February, but can sometimes peak earlier or later, depending on the strain of flu and severity of the season.

MDCH has several systems in place to detect influenza including a network of clinicians and hospital emergency departments throughout the state that report persons with flu-like illness, laboratories that report positive test results for influenza, and school-based absenteeism reports.

The flu is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses. It can cause mild to severe illness, and at times can lead to death.

Every year in the United States, on average:

- 5% to 20% of the population get the flu;
  - More than 200,000 people are hospitalized from flu complications, and;
  - Roughly 36,000 people die from flu.
  - Some people, such as older people, young children, and people with certain health conditions, are at high risk for serious flu complications.
- So far this year, state officials estimate that nearly 2.4 million doses of flu vaccine have been shipped to Michigan.

In Oakland County, flu shots are currently at three Health Division offices (Pontiac, Southfield, Walled Lake).

Oakland County Health Division locations:

- Pontiac (Click for map, file size 160k) -1200 N. Telegraph, Bldg 36E. North of Elizabeth Lake Rd
- Southfield (Click for map, file size 424k)-27725 Greenfield (between 11 & 12 mile at Catalpa).
- Walled Lake (Click for map, file size 285k)-1010 E. West Maple Rd. (at Pontiac Trail).

## HOURS

Noon-8:00 p.m.- Monday ONLY.

8:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m.-Tuesday-Friday.

PAYMENT-All Clinics

Flu shots are \$7.00. They accept only Cash, Medicaid or Medicare. NO checks or charge cards. You do not need to be a resident of Oakland

County to get one.

#### WHAT TO BRING-All Clinics

- \$7.00 exact change preferred.
- Photo identification with current address.
- Insurance cards.
- Flu Consent Form (file size 92k)-download and complete before you arrive to the clinic to save you time!
- Wear a short sleeve shirt or roll your left shirt sleeve to expose the top of your left arm.
- Wheelchairs and translators if needed.

Flu vaccine is not recommended for people who are allergic to eggs or flu vaccine; had a serious reaction to flu vaccine in the past; previously developed Guillain-Barre syndrome within six weeks of getting a flu shot; or have a fever.

Flu Shot Hotline: 1-800-434-3358

#### **WIT, WISDOM, ETC . . .**

##### Quotables

“Tact is the ability to describe others as they see themselves.”

-Abraham Lincoln

“A fool’s paradise is a wise man’s hell.”

-Thomas Fuller

Quote of the Week: Martin Luther King, Jr.

“Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter.”

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State Senator Gilda Jacobs represents the 14th Senate District, which

includes Beverly Hills, Bingham Farms, Farmington, Farmington Hills, Ferndale, Franklin, Hazel Park, Huntington Woods, Lathrup Village, Oak Park, Pleasant Ridge, Royal Oak Township, Southfield, and Southfield Township. She is the Minority Vice Chair of the Families & Human Services Committee and the Campaign & Election Oversight Committee. She also serves on the Finance, Economic Development & Regulatory Reform, and Health Policy Committees.

Constituents of the 14th District may contact Senator Jacobs at [sengjacobs@senate.michigan.gov](mailto:sengjacobs@senate.michigan.gov) or toll-free at 1-888-937-4453.

This newsletter is produced in single-space form in order to save paper and transmission costs.