

**THE JACOBS REPORT**  
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**MICHIGAN SENATE**  
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**FOURTEENTH DISTRICT**

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## **CAUCUSES SETTLE LEADERSHIP RACES**

Democrat Dillon to Lead House; It's GOP Bishop in the Senate

### House Capsule

For the first time in ten years, House Democrats chose the next Speaker of the House, electing first-term Rep. Andy Dillon (D-Redford Twp.) as the chamber's new leader.

Dillon, a centrist, has a legal and business background. He has been an underdog ever since he first filed to run in 2004 for the House. At the time, he was not endorsed by the local Democratic machine, nor was he supported by the party establishment in Lansing.

Still, he prevailed in the primary and won the general election with a very respectable 60 percent of the vote.

Dillon, considered a dark horse in this leadership race, beat out Rep. Andy Meisner (D-Ferndale) for the speaker title.

Speaker-elect Dillon lists his incoming priorities as replacing the Single Business Tax (SBT), pursuing legislation to end Michigan's ban on suing drug companies, crafting a statewide catastrophic health care plan and a statewide prescription drug plan.

He also pledged to take up the issue of allowing embryonic stem cell research, although he is personally opposed to it. The majority of the Democratic caucus does not share his view on this issue.

In a breath of fresh air, Dillon also said he plans on running the House with fairness and respect for all of the members. This is a clean departure from the abusive manner in which majority parties have treated minority parties in the House for years. Basically, Dillon pledges not to shut Republicans out of the process the way the Republicans have shut out Democrats in recent years.

To complement the election of Dillon, Rep. Steve Tobocman (D-Detroit) was

elected incoming House Majority Floor Leader. Tobocman is recognized by his peers as one of the chambers most forward thinking members.

The Democrats also elected Rep. Michael Sak (D-Grand Rapids) as Speaker Pro Tem.

In a surprise move, Republicans re-elected their leadership team of Craig DeRoche (R-Novi) and Chris Ward (R-Brighton). Recently, Ward had announced that he was not going to run for a leadership spot. His colleagues nominated him anyway, assuring a final two years of the leadership team that oversaw an election during which the GOP lost six House seats.

### Senate Capsule

Senator Mike Bishop (R-Rochester) was elected Senate Majority Leader for the 2007-2010 term by his Republican caucus peers.

Bishop edged out Sen. Wayne Kuipers (R-Holland), who had formed a last-minute alliance with Sen. Jason Allen (R-Traverse City).

Sen. Alan Cropsey (R-DeWitt), who had been backing Allen for leader, wrapped up the Senate Majority Floor Leader post over Bishop supporter Sen. Cameron Brown (R-Fawn River Twp.).

"The tribe has spoken," Bishop quipped after the vote was concluded, a reference to the popular CBS television show "Survivor."

The Republican-led Senate might be the party's best and only opportunity to negotiate with a Democratic-led House and a Democratic governor.

"We have a lot of challenges in Michigan and our caucus intends to be an integral part of the solution," Bishop said in an official statement. "We know we will have to negotiate with our colleagues on the other side of the aisle, the Governor and the House."

Despite a late push by Sen. Mike Prusi (D-Ishpeming), Senate Democrats elected Senator Mark Schauer (D-Battle Creek) to their top position. Bolstered by a solid block formed by the Detroit senators, Sen. Buzz Thomas was selected as Democratic Floor Leader.

Joining Schauer and Thomas on the Senate Democratic leadership team is Sen. Gilda Jacobs (D-Huntington Woods), who was elected caucus chair. Previously in the House, Jacobs had served as Michigan's first female floor leader.

"Now that the election is behind us, both parties need to focus on what we

can do to better the lives of our citizens," said Jacobs. "I'd like to see an agenda that's focused more on policy than politics."

## **ROAD CONSTRUCTION: DODGE THE LODGE**

### **MDOT Announces Closure of M-10**

After deliberating strategies to improve more than 14 miles of pavement and repair 50 bridges on M-10 (Lodge Freeway), the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) has decided on a full closure. Scheduled to begin in February 2007, the full closure will detour M-10 traffic between Lahser Road in Southfield and M-8 (Davison Freeway) in Detroit. During the closure, all M-10 traffic will be detoured to I-75.

"We examined every possible way to maintain traffic on this section of M-10," said Greg Johnson, Metro Region Engineer. "And every scenario came back with the same result: that only one lane of traffic could remain open in each direction. Not only would maintaining one lane result in major traffic congestion, it could have easily doubled the time needed to complete this project. Our decision to close this section of M-10 will limit this work to one construction season."

MDOT has announced a motorists' information campaign, "Dodge the Lodge Part II," patterned after the successful 2004 campaign when the M-10 bridges over I-94 were being rebuilt. Project information will be released this fall and will detail the work that involves an estimated \$140 million in improvements.

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

### **Quotables**

"Beware of the man who works hard to learn something, learns it, and finds himself no wiser than before."

-Kurt Vonnegut

"A little nonsense now and then is relished by the wisest men."

-Roald Dahl

### **Quote of the Week: Jennifer Granholm**

"It is the future of Michigan that we celebrate . . . . This vote represents a vote that was passed out of hope and not out of fear."

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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 Economic Development, Small Business & Regulatory Reform Committee. She also serves on the Government Operations 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.

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