

# MSHO UPDATES FROM THE CAPITAL

May 30 - June 12, 2026

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HAMILTON  
*Advocacy & Public Affairs*

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Friday, June 19th, 2026**

Juneteenth (Office Closed)

**Wednesday, July 1st, 2026**

Legislature's Statutory Deadline to Present a Final Budget to the Governor

## COURT OF APPEALS VACATES CONVICTION IN WHITMER KIDNAPPING PLOT CASE

The Michigan Court of Appeals recently vacated the convictions of Joseph Morrison. Morrison was a member of the Wolverine Watchmen militia group and was convicted in 2022 for providing material support for an act of terrorism, gang membership felonies, and felony firearm charges in connection with the 2020 plot to kidnap Gov. Gretchen Whitmer.

The three-judge panel was unanimous in their decision that ruled kidnapping does not qualify as a violent felony under the statute that was used to support Morrison's terrorism conviction. His terrorism conviction was used as the underlying offense for the gang membership and felony firearm convictions, meaning they also had to be vacated. The court sent the case to Jackson County Circuit Court for a new trial, finding that jurors on the original trial may have relied on kidnapping as the underlying violent felony when reaching their verdict.

The decision came under heavy criticism among Michigan's elected Democratic lawmakers. Attorney General Dana Nessel announced that her office intends to appeal the ruling.

## RX KIDS DIRECTOR TESTIFIES IN FRONT OF HOUSE OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

The House Oversight Committee heard testimony on Michigan's Rx Kids program, which provides direct cash assistance to pregnant women and new mothers in participating eligible Michigan communities.

Under the program, participants receive a one-time prenatal payment of \$1,500 and monthly payments of \$500 for the first six or more months following the birth of a child. The program receives funding through Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) dollars, the Healthy Michigan Fund, and private philanthropic contributions.

Throughout her testimony, Rx Kids Director Dr. Mona Hanna outlined the program's identity verification, residency and pregnancy documentation requirements, fraud detection measures, and birth certificate verification that occur before funds are issued. She also testified that roughly 85% of the program's funding goes directly to the participants, and the remaining 15% is used for operating and administrative costs. Dr. Hanna cited research that shows the program has led to improvements in prenatal care utilization, reductions in premature births, low-birth-weight births, and neonatal intensive care admissions among participants.

Republican members of the committee raised questions around the sustainability, oversight, and funding of the program as well as the long-term goals and eligibility requirements. Another point of concern House Republicans addressed was the lack of safeguards to ensure funds are strictly used for child and family-related expenses.

Hanna responded that the program is designed as an unrestricted cash assistance model and does not monitor individual purchases, instead placing the trust in the recipient. She also stated that taxpayer funds are not used to provide benefits to undocumented immigrants, but that private philanthropic dollars may be allocated for these families.

Discussions surrounding the program and its funding are expected to continue.

## **LEGISLATURE'S NEWEST MEMBER, SENATOR CHEDRICK GREENE, ISSUED COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS**

Newly-elected Senator Chedrick Greene (D-Saginaw) has recently been given his committee assignments, following the special election in Senate district 35. He was placed on the Senate Labor Committee, Regulatory Affairs Committee, Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, and the Veterans and Emergency Services Committee.

His assignments come after a Senate Resolution was adopted to expand the Senate's Labor, Regulatory Affairs, and Veterans and Emergency Services Committees by one to allow Sen. Greene a seat. He replaced Senator Sean McCann (D-Kalamazoo) on the Senate Transportation and Infrastructure Committee.

## **MICHIGAN OVERDOSE RATE CONTINUES TO FALL**

The overdose rate among Michigan residents has now been declining for four consecutive years. A recent press release from the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) shows that in 2025 there were less than 1,800 reported overdose deaths, a decrease from 3,096 reported overdose deaths in 2021, leading to a 47% decline in the overdose death rate per 100,000 citizens.

MDHHS Director Elizabeth Hertel credited Michigan's declining overdose death rate to continued investments in prevention, treatment, recovery, and harm reduction efforts. The department also highlighted the work of the Michigan Opioids Task Force, established in 2019. The press release reported that more than 1.8 million naloxone kits have been distributed statewide since 2020, leading to nearly 34,000 reported overdose reversals.

The department noted efforts are still needed to address how urban counties and black residents are continuing to experience disproportionately high overdose death rates.

Michigan is set to receive nearly \$2 billion dollars over the next 14 years to continue efforts as part of national opioid settlements.

## NEW MICHIGAN VACCINE COALITION FORMED

More than a dozen organizations, foundations, and associations including the Michigan Coalition on Maternal and Child Health have joined together to form Michigan for Vaccines, a coalition focused on vaccine education, awareness, and policy advocacy.

Coalition members said the effort comes amid declining immunization rates and growing opposition to vaccines, combined with federal policy changes on vaccine recommendations. Advocates pointed to recent increases in vaccine-preventable diseases, including measles and whooping cough, as a clear reason for establishing the the statewide coalition.

See their official [press release](#) for more information and a full list of coalition members.