



KELLEY CAWTHORNE

Prepared for the Fire Service Clients of Kelley Cawthorne

Legislative Update for February 22nd through March 5th

Gov. Gretchen Whitmer came under fire this week after it was revealed that three former administration officials (former DHHS Director Robert Gordon, former DHHS Deputy Director Sarah Esty, and former UIA Director Steve Gray) had received payments as part of separation agreements following their resignations. Additionally, the agreements for Gordon and Gray included confidentiality clauses preventing either party from discussing the split and releasing the state from any potential legal claims. Legislative republicans blasted the agreements, vowing to hold hearings on the topic to find out more information.

The House of Representatives concurred in the Senate's plan for \$4.2 billion in COVID-19 supplemental appropriations this week. The majority of funds distribute some, but not all, available dollars given to the state by the federal government as a result of its last COVID-19 stimulus bill. The bills passed on 85-25 and 77-33 votes. The bills came under fire from some legislative democrats due to boilerplate language requiring disclosure of the use of any fetal tissue or stem cells in vaccine creation, as well as language linking hundreds of millions of dollars in spending to the governor's approval of a bill that would limit DHHS authority to issue pandemic orders.

On Thursday, March 4th, Department of Health and Human Services Director Elizabeth Hertel participated in a second round of questioning from the Senate Advice and Consent Committee. Many of the committee's questions centered on whether Director Hertel played any part in the separation agreement between Governor Whitmer and former DHHS Director Gordon. Director Hertel denied any involvement in the creation or execution of the confidentiality agreement and promised she would not enter into one herself in the future. Sen. Tom Barrett sent a letter to Senate Advice and Consent Committee Chair Sen. Aric Nesbitt calling for Director Hertel's appointment to be discharged. There are now seven Senate Republicans that have signed on to the letter.

House Bill 4224 and House Bill 4225, both aimed at exempting businesses from sales and use tax when purchasing personal protective equipment related to mitigating the coronavirus, passed overwhelmingly in the House on Wednesday. The exemptions would be retroactive and would go into effect beginning March 10, 2020 to December 31, 2021.

On February 20, 2021, Governor Whitmer signed an Executive Order 2021-3 declaring a state of energy emergency aimed at ensuring adequate propane distribution. The order exempts motor carriers and drivers transporting propane and heating oil from compliance with maximum weekly driving limits. The exemption applies to all highways in Michigan, including the national system of interstate and defense highways.



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Miscellaneous:

The House Insurance Committee passed HB 4171 and 4172 unanimously. These bills expand the cancer presumption laws to ensure that all fire fighters have access to the First Responders Presumed Coverage Fund. The legislation goes to the House floor for a vote.

Rep. Koleszar's legislation HB 4247 expanding tuition assistance grants was passed unanimously out of the House. It was referred to the Senate Appropriations committee.

Committees:

No committees are scheduled this week.

Bill Introductions:

- [HB 4281 of 2021](#) Cities: public services; population threshold for qualified city in the police and fire protection act; modify. Amends sec. 10 of 1951 PA 33 (MCL 41.810).
- [HB 4330 of 2021](#) Labor: health and safety; emergency safety standards; limit effectiveness to 30 days unless extended by resolution of the legislature. Amends secs. 21 & 24 of 1974 PA 154 (MCL 408.1021 & 408.1024) & adds sec. 25. TIE BAR WITH: HB 4329'21
- [HB 4373 of 2021](#) Appropriations: other; executive recommendation; provide for omnibus bill. Creates appropriation act.
- [HB 4382 of 2021](#) Fire: other; power source for certain smoke alarm devices; enact requirements. Creates new act.
- [HB 4410 of 2021](#) Appropriations: zero budget; omnibus budget appropriations; provide for fiscal year 2021-2022. Creates appropriation act.
- [HB 4413 of 2021](#) Labor: hours and wages; minimum wage rate; increase and index to inflation. Amends sec. 4 of 2018 PA 337 (MCL 408.934).
- [HB 4418 of 2021](#) Appropriations: zero budget; supplemental appropriations; provide for fiscal year 2020-2021. Creates appropriation act.
- [HB 4419 of 2021](#) Appropriations: zero budget; multi-department supplemental appropriations; provide for fiscal year 2021-2022. Creates appropriation act.



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- [HB 4424 of 2021](#) Labor: benefits; paid time-off for first responders affected by a public health emergency; provide for. Amends sec. 2 of 2018 PA 338 (MCL 408.962) & adds sec. 3a.
- [SB 0161 of 2021](#) Worker's compensation: benefits; infectious disease presumption for essential employees during a declared emergency; provide for. Amends sec. 405 of 1969 PA 317 (MCL 418.405).
- [SB 0162 of 2021](#) Labor: health and safety; penalties for Michigan occupational health and safety act violations; increase maximum amount. Amends sec. 35 of 1974 PA 154 (MCL 408.1035).
- [SB 0163 of 2021](#) Labor: fair employment practices; employer taking adverse employment action against an employee who raises concern over infection control; prohibit. Creates new act.
- [SB 0164 of 2021](#) Labor: fair employment practices; employer taking adverse employment action against an employee who is absent from work; prohibit during a declared emergency. Creates new act.
- [SB 0165 of 2021](#) Labor: notices; information regarding COVID-19 testing locations; require employers to provide. Creates new act.
- [SB 0187 of 2021](#) Appropriations: other; executive recommendation; provide for omnibus bill. Creates appropriation act.

Bill Activity:

PASSED, ENROLLED OR ADOPTED By the CHAMBER

NO ACTIVITY AT THIS TIME