

CAPITOL NEWS UPDATE

WEEK OF NOVEMBER 5, 2012

Individual Attention. Precision Strategy. Proven Results.



AT&T PLANS \$14 BILLION INVESTMENT

AT&T has announced it plans to invest \$14 billion nationally over the next three years to significantly expand and enhance wireless and wireline IP broadband networks to support growing customer demand for high-speed Internet access and new mobile, app and cloud services.

The investment plan, dubbed Project Velocity IP (VIP), is designed to provide 21st Century communications infrastructure for the United States and bring high-speed Internet connectivity – 4G LTE mobile and wireline IP broadband – to millions more Americans, according to Randall Stephenson, AT&T chairman and chief executive officer.

With business customers, AT&T says it expects Project VIP will strengthen its ability to pursue multiple new billion-dollar business opportunities in four key growth areas: strategic network services, cloud, security and mobility solutions.

In all, AT&T said its capital spending will be about \$22 billion for each of the next three years.

LASHER MAKES A MOVE

Geralyn Lasher, Gov. Snyder's Director of Communications, is making a move within the administration.

Beginning Dec.1, Lasher will become Senior Deputy Director for External Relations and Communications at the Michigan Department of Community Health (DCH).

According to DCH Director Jim Haveman, Lasher will lead coalition efforts for the department and help carry out Gov. Snyder's vision for health and wellness in the state, including efforts to create the nonprofit entity as part of the BCBSM regulatory overhaul.

BOLGER ELECTED SPEAKER FOR ANOTHER TERM

After staving off a tough challenge in Tuesday's election, the House Republican caucus on Thursday unanimously voted to keep Bolger as the chamber's top official for another two years.

Two other members of the GOP leadership team were also retained – House Majority Floor Leader Jim Stamas (R-Midland) and Speaker Pro Tem John Walsh (R-Livonia).

In addition, Rep. Al Pscholka (R-Stevensville) was elected Caucus Chair; Associate Speakers pro tempore will be Reps. Kevin Cotter (R-Mt Pleasant) and Margaret O'Brien (R-Portage); Assistant Majority Floor Leaders will be Reps. Lisa Posthumus Lyons (R-Alto) and Mike Shirkey (R-Clarklake); Chief Deputy Whip will be Rep. Andrea LaFontaine (R-Columbus Twp.); and the Majority Caucus Vice Chair will be Rep.-elect Tom Leonard (R-DeWitt Twp.).

GREIMEL TO LEAD HOUSE DEM CAUCUS

Rep. Tim Greimel (D-Pontiac) – in office for just over eight months – has been selected House Minority Leader for the 2013-14 term.

A late entrant into the leadership race, Greimel made a deal with Rep. Rudy Hobbs (D-Lathrup Village) to help secure the necessary votes.

The 39-year old Greimel is a labor attorney and former Oakland County Commissioner. He joined the House in February after winning a special election to replace former Rep. Tim Melton who left office to take an education job in California.

Hobbs was elected as the Minority Floor Leader.

RTW FOR GOVERNMENT WORKERS?

Senate Majority Leader Randy Richardville says although Right to Work (RTW) has never been his bag, he is now weighing a version of it just for government workers.

Although nothing is set, Richardville said he, House Speaker Jase Bolger (R-Marshall) and Gov. Rick Snyder have been discussing for months a version of RTW for state, local and public school employees.

His comments were made to MIRS one day after voters Tuesday soundly defeat Proposal 2 that would have enshrined collective bargaining in the state constitution, protecting collective bargaining rights from state and local laws.

Richardville said talks will continue through Thanksgiving with the possibility the issue could be taken up in Lamme Duck or after Jan. 1 with the new legislative term.

Under Richardville's version, workers in private sector unions would be excluded. He also would look to excluding police officers and firefighters.

HOUSE DEMS 5,000 VOTES SHORT OF TAKEOVER

Election Day voter results reveal House Democrats were short less than 5,000 votes over five races from pulling off their dream scenario to win back the majority

And they were less 3,000 votes over four races from attaining a 55-55 split.

As it was the Democrats picked up five seats in the House to cut the Republican majority margin from 64-46 to 59-51 in the next legislative session.

ELECTION UPDATE

DEMS SWEEP EDUCATION POSTS

Color the State Board of Education and Michigan's three research university's governing bodies blue as Democrat nominees were victorious in Tuesday's election.

Democratic Party official and teacher Lupe Ramos-Montigny and Michelle Fecteau, an official within the American Federation of Teachers, defeated Republican candidates Todd Courser and Meanie Kurdys giving the Democrats a 6-2 margin on the state Board of Education.

Civil Rights Commissioner Mark Bernstein and Grosse Pointe dermatologist Shauna Ryder Diggs were elected to the University of Michigan Board of Regents defeating Ypsilanti physician Robert Steele and former U-M Regent Dan Horning keeping a 6-2 majority for the Democrats.

On the Michigan State Board of Trustees, Chair Joel Ferguson won re-election and will be joined by former MSU football player Brian Mosallam, a Democrat bumping the Democrat majority to 6-2 on the board. Republican trustee Melanie Foster and Jeff Sakawa were the losers.

Northville attorney Sandra Hughes O'Brien and former Granholm staffer Kim Trent defeated Republican candidates Michael Busuito, a Troy plastic surgeon and Novi banker Satish Jasti keeping the Democrats in control of the Wayne State University board at 6-2.

DEM WINS SHORT TERM IN 11TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Although former schoolteacher Kerry Bentivolio (R-Milford) was elected for a two-year term beginning in January to fill the seat in the 11th Congressional District left vacant by former U.S. Rep. Thad McCotter (R-Livonia), it was Democrat David Curson, a UAW representative who beat Bentivolio for the right to represent the old 11th Congressional District to fill out the remainder of McCotter's current term.

BREWER SAYS HE WILL RUN AGAIN

Michigan Democratic Party (MDP) Chair Mark Brewer says he will seek re-election at the state party convention in February 2013. He has served as head of the party since 1995.

M & M BRIEFS

Snyder moving ahead on NITC project. With voters soundly rejecting Proposal 6 that would have amended the state constitution to require a public vote for any international bridge or tunnel project, Gov. Rick Snyder said this week he is moving ahead on the NITC project – suggesting there could be procedural movement within two to six months. Snyder said he wants to move forward on the permitting process which requires approval from the federal administration.

MSHDA bills signed into law. Gov. Rick Snyder has put his pen to legislation (HBs 5617, 5618 and 5620) aimed to keep momentum in the recovering housing market. The measures would increase the limit for borrowers in the Property Improvement Program (PIP), include the entire state in the eligible area for MSHDA's pass-through program, and align the income limits for the Mortgage Credit Certificate (MCC) program with the PIP. The bills are now Public Acts 344, 345 and 346 of 2012.

Indigent defense bill moves to the Senate. The House, on a 71-36 vote, has passed legislation (HB 5804) that would overhaul Michigan's system for providing legal defense for indigent clients by creating a new commission to set and enforce minimum standards for local indigent defense services.

Senate bill limits NRC powers. Without any help from Democrat members, the Senate on Thursday passed legislation (SB 1280) that turns the Natural Resources Commission (NRC) into more of an advisory body by giving more power to a gubernatorial-appointed director of the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). NRC commissioners

would also be limited to two four-year terms. Another bill (SB 1276), which also passed the Senate, takes away the DNR's duties to protect biological diversity and promote forest restoration.

Horse racing bill headed to the Senate. Legislation (HB 5546) aimed at helping save the horse racing industry in Michigan cleared the House Thursday on a 91-46 vote and is moving to the Senate. The measure provides a laundry list of reforms, among them allowing horse tracks to use machines for betting on recorded, existing horse races. The measure also imposes a 5 percent fee on new revenue raised on the tracks.

Fewer doe tags this hunting season. The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) will soon issue an emergency order that cuts in half the number of antlerless permits available for much of the Lower Peninsula due to a disease that has resulted in the death of more 12,600 deer in 30 counties. The order will only affect people who have not already purchased their tags. Firearm deer season runs Nov. 15-30.

CALENDAR OF IMPORTANT EVENTS

- Nov. 9/26 House and Senate on Holiday Break
- Nov. 27 House and Senate return to session
- Nov. 9 Rep. Joe Haveman (R-Holland) Breakfast Speaker Series
Location: 7:30 a.m., Alpen Rose Restaurant, Holland
- Nov. 12 Veterans' Day – State offices are closed
- Nov. 22/23 Thanksgiving Holiday – State offices are closed
- Nov. 26 Post-Election Campaign Statement close of books for Nov. 6 election
- Dec. 6 Post-Election Campaign Statement due for Nov. 6 Election