MAGE
Michigan Association of Governmental Employees
OPEIU Local 2002

THE QUARTERLY REPORT October 2026

Message from the President

October officially begins our Coordinated Compensation Process. MAGE has been working cooperatively with the Office of the State Employer to come to an agreement on the recommended raise for NERE's in October 2027. The meeting with the Employment Relations Board will take place at the end of October where we will defend our recommendation. Please keep an eye on the news area of the MAGE webpage for updates.

The MAGE Board of Directors provided approval to award 8 of the MAGE $1,000 Scholarships/Student Debt Reduction awards. The winners of this year's awards are, Kiara Odneal, Alissa Ware, Summer Aldred, Luke Nogueira, Cayden Barrus, Talan Pietrykowski, Tricia Richardson, and LaSonya Thomas. I would like to share my most sincere congratulations to all our winners. If you missed the application period for the 2026 scholarship opportunities, keep an eye on the MAGE Website in January and then again in June when the application periods re-open.

Please remember that open enrollment will be opening soon! BOE will take place from October 12 through October 30. Keep an eye on your emails and the Employee Benefits webpage for more information. https://www.michigan.gov/mdcs/employeebenefits. It is important to review any benefit changes to ensure you are making the best decision for you and your families! The employee benefits page linked above has multiple resources to help you make your decision.

Bills have passed through the house regarding adding Corrections employees to the State Police pension program. We hope that it will pass through the Senate and the Governor will provide her signature. If this bill passes and proves to provide relief in the recruitment and retention of employees for Corrections, we hope that it will help our justification for recommending a return to a defined benefit for all State employees.

Labor Relations Team in Action

Our Labor team has continued to see a steady caseload as the summer has come to an end. The team has been helping members through grievances, disciplinaries and hearings. Over the summer they have been able to come to agreeable settlement agreements for members which allowed these members to avoid the stress of the hearing process. We were also able to participate in a few more lunch/informational meetings with members/potential members.

Labor Relations Tip: 401K Plan Withdrawals

In just the past couple of weeks, MAGE has received multiple calls regarding investigations into 401k hardship withdrawals. Due to this increase, we wanted to take a moment to remind you that if you must make a hardship withdrawal you ensure all information on the request forms is accurate. It is also important to review the hardship requirements before applying. Active members in good standing who have received an investigation regarding this issue are advised to contact the MAGE Office.

Benefit Spotlight

Don't forget! MAGE members have access to numerous benefits! This quarter we want highlight the identity theft protection benefit available to members! Members and family residing in the household have access to IDIQ identity theft protection. You can sign up immediately at www.OPEIUidProtect.com. The complementary plan includes:

- 100% US Based identity theft restoration assistance.
- Lost wallet assistance
- Dark web and internet monitoring
- IQ center with educational materials
- Checking account report
- Opt-Out IQ for junk mail/do not call registry

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE HIGHLIGHTS (Provided by MAGE Lobbyist Todd Tennis)

Whitmer Vetoes Vital Legislation

Just over eighteen months ago, during the infamous lame duck portion of the 2023-4 legislative session, the House and Senate passed dozens of bills in the waning hours that Democrats had control of both chambers. The 2024 election had determined that Republicans would take the majority in the Michigan House starting on January 1, 2025, so any partisan legislation had to be passed and sent to the Governor before the session adjourned for the year. When the Legislature adjourned just before Christmas, the House and Senate clerks had just under two weeks to enroll and present that multitude of bills to the Governor for her approval.

Among that multitude were four separate legislative packages consisting of nine separate bills. Those packages included a reform of the so-called "80/20" law that hampered the ability of public sector unions to collectively bargain for health care benefits; a package that would allow certain state workers to opt into the State Police retirement plan (seen as an improvement over the plans offered to other state workers); a set of bills protecting low-income families from having benefits confiscated by bill collectors; and bills to allow Detroit-area museums to seek a millage to improve their funding levels.

For reasons that were never adequately explained, when the clock ticked over into the new year and the leadership in the House switched from Democrats to Republicans, those nine bills had yet to be presented to the Governor for her signature. Suspicions arose immediately that this was not an administrative accident, and some even saw Governor Whitmer's hand in the failure to present the bills. While she had not publicly announced opposition to any of those bills, it was obvious during efforts to pass them through the House and Senate that the Governor's office had concerns about the bills impacting public workers.

Despite the bills failing to be presented before the end of 2024, it was expected that the new Speaker of the House – Representative Matt Hall – would follow the constitution and forward the bills to the Governor. He did not. Instead, he held off so that his legal team could review the issue to determine if in fact he was required to forward the bills at all. After several weeks, it became clear that the Speaker had no intention of submitting the bills to the Governor. The Michigan Senate, led by Senate Majority Leader Winnie Brinks, then initiated litigation in order to force the Speaker's hand.

That set off one of the stranger legal actions in Michigan history. The case first went to the Michigan Court of Claims, where Judge Sima Patel ruled in favor of the Senate, stating that the Speaker was required by the Michigan Constitution to send the bills to the Governor. Surprisingly, though, Judge Patel held off on issuing a court order to compel the Speaker to act. The lawsuit was then appealed to the Michigan Court of Appeals. Their ruling was even more specific. The three-judge panel agreed with Judge Patel on the case, but also instructed her to issue a court order to force the Speaker to send the bills to the Governor.

The Michigan House appealed that ruling to the Michigan Supreme Court, which began taking oral arguments on the question of whether or not to hear the case just over two months ago. On Thursday, July 9, the Michigan Supreme Court issued a statement that they refused to hear the appeal, thereby upholding the rulings of the lower courts. This was a massive win for the Michigan Senate and for the numerous public sector unions that had supported the litigation.

On July, 10, however, elation at the court ruling turned to horror when the Governor announced that she had vetoed all of the nine bills. She explained her action by arguing that the 18 months that had elapsed between passage of the legislation and presentment to her made them administratively impossible to implement. She claimed that the effective dates contained in the bills had long since passed, and would result in costs to the state that were unaccounted for in the budget.

Visit the MAGE website for the full legislative report.

- Would you like a MAGE informational meeting to be held at your office or in your local area? If you would like to set up a lunch meeting for members and potential members to speak with MAGE Labor Representatives, call the MAGE Office today! 1-800-477-6243.

- Do you have specific questions/concerns you would like to see addressed in our next Quarterly Report? Email us at Info@mage.org.