

Legislative Report
August 2018

The legislature continues to campaign to either retain the majority or attain the majority. Republicans control the House, Senate and the Office of the Governor. Democrats held a slim 20-18 majority in the Senate until 1983 when then Senate Minority Leader, John Engler, R-Mt. Pleasant orchestrated the recall election of Senator Phil Mastin, D-Macomb County and Senator Dave Serokin, D-Macomb County for their support of an income tax hike proposed by then Governor Jim Blanchard.

Democrats have not held the majority in the Senate since 1983. In the House, 55 Republicans and 55 Democrats shared power for some four years with two Speakers of the House. Rep. Curtis Hertel, D-Detroit served as the Democratic Speaker and Rep. Paul Hildegonds, R-Grand Rapids served as the Republican Speaker and alternated serving as speaker of the House on a monthly basis. It was a time when politics were fair and good policy was enacted for the people of Michigan. Today, we have to traverse complex politics and settle for less policy driven issues. This election cycle we lose a minimum 48 House members and 20 Senate members to term limits.

The Senate races to watch include the 24th Senate race being vacated by Senator Rick Jones, R- Grand Ledge with Rep. Tom Barrett, R-Pottersville running against Rep. Brett Roberts, R-Charlotte. Political pundits slated Rep. Barrett to have an edge over Rep. Roberts, but that was before Rep. Barrett took a critical vote against big "energy" who have dumped tons of money into the Rep. Roberts campaign making the race neck and neck. The general election will also be dicey as the GOP winner will have to go up against well known democratic public relations consultant Kelley Rossman who appears to have an unlimited amount of money, has received support from some well known Republicans and Democrats are working hard to get this seat back. The 35th Senate seat currently held by Senator Darwin Booher, R-Ewart is also up for grabs as former Rep. Bruce Rendon, R-Lake City, former Rep. Ray Franz, R-Onekama and Rep. Curt VanderWall, R-Ludington are vying for the seat. Although based on current data the fight here seems to be between Rendon and WanderWall. As Senator Tom Casperson, R-Escanaba is vacating the 38th Senate seat it appears a battle is brewing between businessman Mike Carey and former Rep. Ed McBroom, R-Vulcan on the Republican side. McBroom has the name recognition while Carey seems to have some money. The Republican winner will face well known and well liked Rep. Scott Dianda, D-Calumet in the general election. The candidates in the 38th have been able to keep the campaign "clean"--hats off to them.

As of this writing, Democratic candidate for governor Gretchen Whitmer is up by 27 points over her nearest rival and Republican candidate Bill Schuette is ahead of his closest opponent by 18 points. War hero John James is neck and neck with businessman Sandy Pensler for the GOP bid against US Democratic Senator Debbie Stabenow.