



MALPH Legislative Priorities

February 2024

DISCUSSION DRAFT

Board of Directors Meeting – February 12, 2024

Protect MI Kids package – SBs 647 – 654

- **Last action:** Introduced in the Senate and referred to committee on Regulatory Affairs on November 9, 2024
 - Expect committee hearings in March
- **Sponsor(s):** Sens. John Cherry (D-27), Sam Singh (D-28), Stephanie Chang (D-3), Sue Shink (D-14), Paul Wojno (D-10), Mary Cavanaugh (D-6)
- **Summaries:**
 - SB 649 and SB 650 – ends the sale of flavored tobacco products, including flavored e-cigarettes and menthol-flavored cigarettes.
 - SB 651 and SB 652 – requires tobacco retailers to be licensed, just like liquor retailers, so the state can actually enforce the laws prohibiting the sale of tobacco to minors.
 - SB 648 – taxes e-cigarette and vaping products containing nicotine for the first time and increases tobacco taxes with proceeds used to reduce tobacco use among youth.
 - SB 647 – allows local counties and cities to enact tougher restrictions on tobacco sales within their own community.
 - SB 654 – repeals ineffective penalties that punish youth for tobacco purchase, use and possession

Statewide Septic Code – HBs 4479 + 4480; SBs 299 + 300

- **Last actions:**
 - HB 4479 and 4480 - introduced in the House and referred to committee on Natural Resources, Environment, Tourism, and Outdoor Recreation on May 27, 2024
 - SB 299 + 300 - introduced in the Senate and referred to committee on Energy and Environment
 - Committee hearings expected in March
- **Sponsor(s):** Rep. Phil Skaggs (D-80); Sen. Sam Singh (D-28)
- **Summary:** Establishes a statewide code for the regulation of onsite wastewater systems, including periodic inspections; creates a technical advisory committee and an onsite wastewater treatment system administration fund.



Lead Abatement package – HBs 4532, 5368, + 5369

- **Last action:** Introduced and referred to committee on Health Policy
 - Informational hearing week of January 15th; expected vote in committee week of February 5th
- **Sponsor(s):** Reps. Rachel Hood, Julie Rogers, Karen Whitsett
- **Summary:** would amend Part 54A (Lead Abatement) of the Public Health Code to revise the threshold considered an elevated blood lead level in children and to change requirements related to lead abatement and mitigation for certain buildings or activities, among other changes; some components are to codify EPA requirements into state law; children with elevated blood lead levels would be automatically referred to the Early On program.
 - [Legislative Analysis \(Jan. 18, 2024\) of Lead Abatement package](#)

Water Affordability package – SBs 0549 – 0554

- **Last action:** Introduced and referred to committee on Housing and Human Services on October 3, 2023
- **Sponsor(s):** Sens. Stephanie Chang, Rosemary Bayer, Jeff Irwin, Paul Wojno, Mary Cavanaugh
- **Summary:** would create a Low-Income Water Residential Affordability Program: people up to 200% of the FPL would not pay more than 3% of household income on a water bill; would create Low-Income Water Residential Affordability Fund; would prohibit a provider from shutting off water if certain requirements are met
 - [Senate Fiscal Analysis \(October 31, 2023\) of Water Affordability Program & Fund](#)

Health data utility and information exchange – HBs 5283 + 5284

- **Last action:** Introduced and referred to committee on Health Policy on October 26, 2023
- **Sponsor(s):** Reps. Julie Rogers & Curtis VanderWall
- **Summary:** HIT commission will create strategic plan for health data utility and designate, monitor, and review a health information exchange; provides funding formula for health information exchange



Budget Priorities FY 25

Hearing & Vision Program – increase from \$5.15 million to \$8.6 million

- The current \$5.15M statewide allocation, distributed through Michigan’s 45 local health departments, has not been increased in over 25 years.
- An additional \$3.5M (bringing the total to \$8.6M) would be necessary to keep pace with inflation today to maintain service levels established in 1999.
- Approximately 1 million school-aged children are screened each year through this program.
- School-based vision screening of pre-school children is conducted by Local Health Department staff at least once between the ages of 3 and 5 years, and school-age children are screened in grades 1, 3, 5, 7 and 9, or in conjunction with driver training classes.
- School-based hearing screening is conducted at least once between the ages of 3 and 5 years, and every other year between the ages of 5 and 10 years.
- LHDs continue to cite significant barriers to hiring and maintaining staff due to limited funding.
- Children who do not pass the hearing or vision screening are referred to local providers for follow-up care. Each year, approximately 85,000 children are referred for further hearing and/or vision clinical care.
- Medicaid partially reimburses for these screens, but only for the 3–6-year-old population, which misses most of the screened age groups. While Medicaid reimbursement rates for H&V were increased from \$9.20 to \$9.79, this is still not up to the 2007 level of \$10 per screen.

Kindergarten Oral Health Assessment Program – increase from \$1.5 million to \$ 4.5 million

- This program, first established by PA 261 of 2020, provides dental assessments to children within six months of the child's first time in kindergarten or first grade.
- Approximately one-half of local health departments in Michigan received funding from MDHHS to implement the program in its original form.
- In December 2023, Governor Whitmer signed PA 316 of 2023 to remove the sunset date of January 1, 2024, and to authorize statewide expansion of the program.
- Beginning in the 2024-2025 school year, a parent, guardian, or person in loco parentis who applies to have a child registered for the first time in kindergarten or first grade must provide proof of a completed oral health assessment, or documentation of a religious exemption.
- Current funding is not sufficient to maintain the current program and to expand it statewide. MDHHS estimates that \$4.5 million is needed to fully fund a statewide program.

Tobacco use continues to be a critical public health issue in Michigan, killing 16,200 Michiganders each year according to the CDC. Michigan is behind other states in protecting kids and communities from the dangers of smoking and tobacco. In November of 2023, a comprehensive tobacco prevention legislative package (Senate Bills 647 – 654) was introduced in the Michigan Senate. This package aims to modernize Michigan’s tobacco laws and reduce the economic and human costs of tobacco use.

The Bill package has been sent to the Senate Committee on Regulatory Affairs.

The comprehensive tobacco prevention package includes:

- **SB 647 (Shink) to Repeal Preemption and Give Back Local Control** – This bill repeals a provision of the Tobacco Products Tax Act that preempts a local unit of government from adopting ordinances and regulations pertaining to the sale or licensure of tobacco products.
- **SB 648 (Chang) to Tax All Tobacco Products and Dedicate Funds to Tobacco Prevention** – This bill establishes a new tax on e-cigarettes (currently not taxed in MI), increases the tax on cigarettes and other tobacco products, establishing parity. This bill also ensures that tax revenues generated from the new and increased taxes will be dedicated to tobacco prevention and cessation programs, tax enforcement and enforcement of the smoke-free air law.
- **SB 649 and 650 (Cherry) to End the Sale of Flavored Tobacco Products** – These bills prohibit the sale of flavored nicotine or tobacco products, including flavored e-cigarettes and menthol-flavored cigarettes. They also stipulate the penalties for violations.
- **SB 651 and 652 (Singh) to Establish Tobacco Retail Licensure** – These bills require tobacco retailers to be licensed, just like liquor retailers.
- **SB 653 (Cavanagh) and 654 (Wojno) to Repeal Purchase, Use and Possession Penalties Punishing Youth** - These bills repeal provisions in the Youth Tobacco Act that impose civil and criminal penalties on minors for purchasing, using, or possessing tobacco products. They complement the proposed tobacco retail licensure program, placing responsibility and accountability on the adult sellers of tobacco products.

For complete summaries of the Bills, visit the Keep MI Kids Tobacco Free Alliance website at <https://www.keepmikidstobaccofree.com/learn-the-facts> and select the Bill summaries button. The website also includes additional information and resources.