

MLA Advocacy - April 27, 2017



Why More Tax Capture Bills?

For more than two decades MLA has been fighting for libraries' relief from tax capture. Since 2013, it has been one of the pressing issues for MLA advocacy efforts and for the past 17 months we have been working tirelessly on developing and passing legislation to address this problem. In January, Governor Rick Snyder signed into law SB 619-624 now PA 505-510 providing for specially dedicated library millages to be exempt from a number of tax captures.

This achievement not only ensures millions of future tax dollars will go to libraries, but it is recognition by the legislature and administration that libraries are unique and important. Our special millages were the only ones given consideration (only the fourth historically) for an exemption in a year that saw a multitude of TIFA bills introduced. This is an incredible recognition by the Michigan legislature of the importance of libraries in this state.

We are now working to pass SB 305-310. They are technical bills meant to spell out the definition of obligation. The intent of the original bills was to allow libraries to opt out of tax captures if the tax capture does not have a bond or long term debt. We are simply trying to clarify that language. The bills also tighten up some language that could help avoid possible questions over what constitutes a change in some of the tax captures.

Good public policy solves public problems effectively and efficiently. However, it is a process and goes something like this:

1.

Problem identification: This is where we define the trouble or situation that needs to be addressed.

2.

Forming a solution: This is the identification of policy options. What should we do to remedy the

situation? Or, in this case, what should the legislation spell out?

3.

Policy Implementation: Defined as what happens after a law is passed, it refers to all that needs to be done to carry out what the legislature and governor have decided upon.

4.

Evaluation: Policy evaluation is the process for assessing the design, implementation and outcomes of public policies. As the final stage of the policy process, it evaluates the policy's content, implementation, goal attainment and other effects. It frequently triggers identification of problems and a new round of agenda setting and policy making and that's where we are now.

The new package SB 305-310 is slated for the Senate Finance Committee within the next couple weeks. We anticipate it will reach the Senate floor soon after that. It is important that both our Senators and Representatives know that libraries support these bills. You will see more advocacy alerts in the days to come. Please respond and contact your legislators when the MLA call to action arrives.

Thank you for your advocacy efforts. The legislation which supports taxpayer accountability, tax capture transparency and ensures dedicated library millages go to support the voters' choice became law because of the dedication of librarians, library supporters and our champions in the legislature.

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