



Hello and welcome to the latest edition of my e-newsletter.

Hope you all are enjoying the mild winter we have had so far this year. I know I sure have in my commute from the 23rd district up to Lansing every week. But as we all know any day in Michigan can be a snow day! That's why it is important to stay safe on the roads, especially when traveling long distances. The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) offers a travel advisory service that can be accessed on their website [on their website](#).

## Happy 175th Birthday to our great state!

On January 26th, Michigan celebrated 175 years of statehood, a milestone that the Michigan House celebrated with a special tribute. It's almost hard to believe that the Michigan we know and love has come to being in only about eight generations of residents. Michigan was born beautiful, but it is the people that preceded us that made our state a home to be proud of. I hope you take a moment to reflect on those that came before to pave the way for our cities and culture.



Rep. Somerville giving a legislative update to the Trenton Rotary members at their weekly luncheon on January 23rd.

## District Office Hours

If you have an issue to discuss or would just like to come by and say hello, I will be conducting two office hours. In the meantime or if you can't make it to see me in person, please feel free to contact my office via email or phone. My Lansing office phone number is (517) 373-0855 or email [patsomerville@house.mi.gov](mailto:patsomerville@house.mi.gov)

### **Monday, Feb. 13th**

**Woodhaven Community Center - Senior Wing**

**23101 Hall Road**

**Woodhaven**

**6pm to 7pm**

**&**

### **Monday, March 19th**

**Huron Township Hall**

**22950 Huron River Drive**

**Huron Township**

**6pm to 7pm**

## The 2012 State of the State

On Wednesday, Jan. 18, Gov. Rick Snyder gave his second State of the State address. As one might expect, the underlying focus of the governor's speech was not that much different from last year's: economic recovery and growth. Like the governor, I believe that job creation is at the heart of all future prosperity in our state.

The governor partnered with the Legislature on many key reforms, including revisions to the tax code, government spending and regulations. I am confident that Gov. Snyder will continue to reach out to my colleagues and to do the work necessary to bring Michigan back. Our ideas might sometimes be different, but our shared goals are a better, more accountable government that welcomes and encourages success.

We are already beginning to see Michigan's economy stirring. As job providers begin to feel more confident, the gears of our economy gradually begin to turn more and more. Unemployment is on the decline, even before many of our tax reforms have begun to take full effect. Making tough decisions last year have placed us on a stable, direct path to future growth.

The governor has offered several proposals which I will give serious consideration to, including transportation funding and job talent pools. As always, I am here to serve my constituents and I invite your feedback as these ideas develop. There is still much to do to help the state, and I look forward to another year of smart thinking, cooperation and responsible governing.

## Putting an end to campaign loopholes

This month, the House passed legislation to preserve the integrity of our elections. As you may know, it is illegal to campaign within 100 feet of a polling place. Some office holders, however,

have an unfair advantage under Michigan law, because there are no statues to prevent them from posting their names in a polling place or from printing their names on ballot related materials.

Some officials have chosen to exploit this loophole by posting placards and pictures welcoming voters to polling places or having their names printed in large type on absentee ballot-related materials, granting them more name recognition and exposure to voters.

I believe it is important to keep elections fair, and voted in favor of House Bills 4653 and 4656, which would stop these elected officials from displaying or printing of the names of state or local government officials in a polling place or on ballot-related materials.

## Ending sales tax exemptions for prisoners

Currently, there are only two groups of taxpayers that don't pay a sales tax: nonprofit organizations and prisoners. I recently supported House Bill 4658 to end a special sales tax exemption for prisoners. It makes little sense to continue allowing prisoners to pay less for products or services that the rest of us pay a full tax on. Further, it's only fair that prisoners share at least an equal burden with the taxpayers whose dollars support their incarceration.

The House Fiscal Agency estimates revenue collection from these prisoners to be at least half a million dollars each year, and perhaps much more. That's half a million dollars that can go toward services for law-abiding citizens.

### Contact Information

If you have any questions or concerns, please let me know. You can email me at <mailto:patsomerville@house.mi.gov> or call me at Phone: (517) 373-0855 or Toll Free: (866) 725-2929 or mail

S-787 House Office Building  
P.O. Box 30014  
Lansing, MI 48909

Please visit my website for more

<http://www.reppatsomerville.com/>

I also have a facebook page that I frequently update. Just search for Representative Pat Somerville.