

Spread The Sunshine

MPA annually presents the Peter Pettalia Memorial Sunshine Award to those in public service who consistently exhibit support for transparency in every level of government.

We also spend a week celebrating transparency in government in the middle of March every year. Sunshine Week is the annual nationwide celebration of access to public information and what it means for you and your community.

The Business of Newspapering

Newspapers are an integral part of their communities and employ nearly 12,000 people across Michigan.

MPA closely monitors legislation that involves business taxes, employee wages and other issues that impact our member's bottom line.

MPA urges legislators to avoid taxation and regulations that will impose an undue burden on our members and their business.

If you have questions or wish to discuss any of these issues please feel free to contact MPA Public Affairs Manager Lisa McGraw 313-247-9859 or email lisa@michiganpress.org



2023-2024 Michigan Legislative Agenda



Photo by Margaret O'Brien

The principles used to develop this legislative agenda flow from the understanding that a free and robust press is vital to democracy and that transparency in government is necessary to instilling trust in Michigan's citizens.



Making Our Government More Accountable to the People

“ Information breeds confidence. Silence breeds fear.”

~ From The West Wing

FOIA Reforms

FOIA reform is a top priority. Enacting legislation that will subject the legislature and the Governor to the same laws as other public officials. MPA will be working with our partners to get this vital legislation enacted. We truly believe that improving transparency in these bodies will help lift Michigan out of the basement regarding public integrity.

In addition to the legislature and Governor being subject to FOIA, we recognize that other reforms need to take place. High costs, delays and prolonged appeals do nothing to restore the public's faith in government.

Forming an Open Government Commission

We will also be continuing our conversation with legislators about forming an Open-Government Commission that would be charged with handling FOIA/OMA appeals, education of elected officials and generally improve the transparency in our state.

Open Meetings

Open Meetings provide a forum for public input on issues facing governmental bodies. Whether in person or electronically, MPA recognizes this is a more complex era and that some discretion is necessary for the efficient working of government, but The Open Meetings Act must be examined and strengthened to ensure that openness, NOT SECRECY, is the principle under which our governments operate.

All government proceedings need to take place with transparency as a goal. Proper notice and the encouragement of public participation are key.

Public Notice

MPA will continue our efforts to make public notices accessible to the citizens of Michigan and maintain the tenants of good public notice:

- Permanence of record - newspapers provide a permanent legal record of the actions government officials at every level are taking.
- Archivability - newspapers and libraries across the state retain copies of these records in perpetuity.
- Independence - newspapers provide an independent source that serves as a watchdog of governmental activities.
- Accessibility-making sure notices are available to citizens where they are looking. Both in print and online.

Anti-SLAPP legislation

Short for strategic lawsuits against public participation, SLAPPs have become an all-too-common tool for intimidating and silencing criticism through expensive, baseless legal proceedings. Anti-SLAPP laws are meant to provide a remedy to SLAPP suits. Anti-SLAPP laws are intended to prevent people from using courts to intimidate people, those exercising their First Amendment rights on matters of public interest. Anti-SLAPP laws protect citizens. In terms of reporting, news organizations and individual journalists can use anti-SLAPP statutes to protect themselves from the financial threat of a groundless lawsuits brought by a subject of an enterprise or investigative story.

MPA will be working with legislators to establish an Anti-SLAPP law in Michigan during this legislative session.



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