



Federal Budget Nears Completion; Key Funding Increases Preserved

Congressional leaders in the House and Senate announced a bipartisan budget agreement to fund the Labor– Health and Human Services (HHS) budget for Fiscal Year (FY) 2019, which begins on October 1st.

In a win for aging advocates, Older Americans Act (OAA) Programs were primarily level-funded at FY 2018 amounts, maintaining key funding increases to OAA programs such as Title III-B Supportive Services, which funds in-home personal care and chore services. The FY 2019 budget proposal would continue to increase funding for nutrition services, recommending small increases for Congregate (1%) and Home Delivered (2%) Meal programs.

At the time of this writing the budget package had been passed by the Senate, but the House had not yet voted on the measure. It is expected that the budget will be signed into law by the President before the deadline of September 30th. If this occurs, it would be the first time in more than a decade that Congress will finalize discretionary aging program funding by the start of the fiscal year.

Your Ballot Preview: Michigan Statewide Ballot Proposals

In the November 8th general election, Michigan voters across the state will be asked to vote on three ballot proposals (see the full text of these proposals on page 2). Michigan State University Extension has compiled nonpartisan resources that provide background for voters wanting to learn more about the three ballot proposals. These resources can be viewed at www.canr.msu.edu/michigan-ballot-proposal-forum.

The three ballot proposals are:

- **Legalization of Marijuana (Proposal 18-1):** This proposed legislation, called the Michigan Regulation and Taxation of Marijuana Act, would amend state law to allow recreational marijuana use by people 21 and older and set laws regulating marijuana cultivation, sale and taxation.
- **Voting Rights (Proposal 18-2):** This proposed constitutional amendment would add several voting rights to the Michigan Constitution including the right to vote a straight ticket, no-reason absentee voting, and automatic voter registration for driver's license or state ID applicants.
- **Independent Redistricting Commission (Proposal 18-3):** The proposed constitutional amendment would create a 13-member independent citizens redistricting commission. Starting in 2021, the commission would be responsible for redrawing district maps instead of the state legislature, which does it now.

The Area Agency on Aging 1-B (AAA 1-B) is a nonprofit agency serving the needs of older adults in Livingston, Macomb, Monroe, Oakland, St. Clair, and Washtenaw counties.

Contact Katie Wendel, (248) 798-0599 or by e-mail at kwendel@aaa1b.com to join the Senior Advocacy Network or receive copies of AAA 1-B reports referenced in The Advocate.

Your Ballot Preview: Michigan Statewide Ballot Proposals

Statewide Ballot Proposal 18-1

A proposed initiated law to authorize and legalize possession, use and cultivation of marijuana products by individuals who are at least 21 years of age and older, and commercial sales of marijuana through state-licensed retailers

This proposal would:

- ◆ Allow individuals 21 and older to purchase, possess and use marijuana and marijuana-infused edibles, and grow up to 12 marijuana plants for personal consumption.
- ◆ Impose a 10-ounce limit for marijuana kept at residences and require amounts over 2.5 ounces be secured in locked containers.
- ◆ Create a state licensing system for marijuana businesses and allow municipalities to ban or restrict them.
- ◆ Permit retail sales of marijuana and edibles subject to a 10% tax, dedicated to implementation costs, clinical trials, schools, roads and municipalities where marijuana businesses are located.
- ◆ Change several current violations from crimes to civil infractions.

Should this proposal be adopted? Yes [] No []

Statewide Ballot Proposal 18-2

A proposed constitutional amendment to establish a commission of citizens with exclusive authority to adopt district boundaries for the Michigan Senate, Michigan House of Representatives and U.S. Congress, every 10 years

This proposed constitutional amendment would:

- ◆ Create a commission of 13 registered voters randomly selected by the Secretary of State:
 - 4 each who self-identify as affiliated with the 2 major political parties;and
 - 5 who self-identify as unaffiliated with major political parties.
- ◆ Prohibit partisan officeholders and candidates, their employees, certain relatives and lobbyists from serving as commissioners.
- ◆ Establish new redistricting criteria including geographically compact and contiguous districts of equal population, reflecting Michigan's diverse population and communities of interest. Districts shall not provide disproportionate advantage to political parties or candidates.
- ◆ Require an appropriation of funds for commission operations and commissioner compensation.

Should this proposal be adopted? Yes [] No []

Statewide Ballot Proposal 18-3

A proposal to authorize automatic and Election Day voter registration, no-reason absentee voting, and straight ticket voting; and add current legal requirements for military and overseas voting and post-election audits to the Michigan Constitution

This proposed constitutional amendment would allow a United States citizen who is qualified to vote in Michigan to:

- ◆ Become automatically registered to vote when applying for, updating or renewing a driver's license or state-issued personal identification card unless the person declines.
- ◆ Simultaneously register to vote with proof of residency and obtain a ballot during the 2-week period prior to an election, up to and including Election Day.
- ◆ Obtain an absent voter ballot without providing a reason.
- ◆ Cast a straight-ticket vote for all candidates of a particular political party when voting in a partisan general election

Should this proposal be adopted? Yes [] No []