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When You Visit Michigan's Capitol

Michigan State University Extension Service

Elizabeth Moore, Extension Specialist, Family Living Education and Natural Resources/Public Policy

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WHEN YOU VISIT MICHIGAN'S CAPITOL



WHO IS IN THE LEGISLATURE?

- For the 1983-86 session, there are 38 Senators, elected for four-year terms — 20 Democrats, and 18 Republicans.
- One hundred and ten members are serving in the House of Representatives. They are elected for two-year terms — 64 Democrats, 46 Republicans for the 1983-84 session.
- There are two women in the Senate and 14 women members of the House (1983-84).
- Michigan is one of approximately six states that has a full-time legislature.
- Since Democrats presently control both Houses of the legislature, Democrats chair all legislative committees and have the majority membership on each committee.
- In 1983, Michigan's legislators will receive salaries of: \$31,000 plus expenses of \$6,200.
- In the House, legislators have secretarial staff but no aides unless they chair a committee. Senators have at least one aide in addition to secretarial support.

When You Come To Lansing

PARKING — Space near the Capitol is extremely limited. The most convenient, although hardly inexpensive, are the two ramps, one and two blocks south on Capitol Avenue.

CAPITOL TOURS — Regular tours by experienced guides help visitors learn about the history and architecture of the building as well as gaining an overview of the legislative process. For more information, inquire at the desk near the front entrance on the first floor. For large groups, arrangements should be made in advance by calling 517/373-0996. (No fee for Capitol tours.)

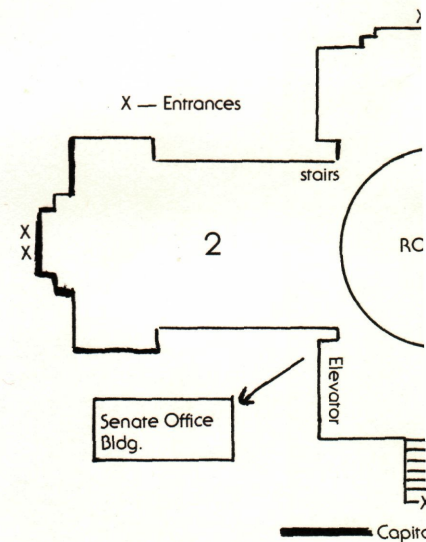
VISITING YOUR LEGISLATOR — Whether you are coming to the Capitol for a brief vacation visit or to find out about a specific issue or to lobby for a cause, it's important to plan to make some direct contacts with both your Senator and your Representative.

- If you are simply visiting the Capitol, it is still important to stop in your legislator's office (whether or not the legislature is in session). Without an advance appointment, you cannot expect to have a lengthy discussion with the Senator or Representative on a particular issue. However, this type of short visit does let your legislator know that you are interested and it also gives you an important opportunity to meet the office staff. These are the people that can be of special help whenever you need assistance and information. Also, you might want to inquire about the types of information available to you (guides to lobbying etc.).
- If you have a specific issue to discuss, make an advance appointment with your legislator by calling his/her Lansing office.

FINDING LEGISLATIVE OFFICES — Finding offices within the Capitol can be a challenge — with the half floors, offices within offices, and the labyrinth hallways. The guards in the basement rotunda or the guides at the front desk on the main floor will be quite willing to direct you. Most Democratic Representatives are in the Roosevelt Building, a half block north of the Capitol. Many of the Senate offices are in the Farnum Building which is at the southeast corner of the Capitol grounds.

Remember that Michigan's Capitol
No admission or spec

Finding Your Way



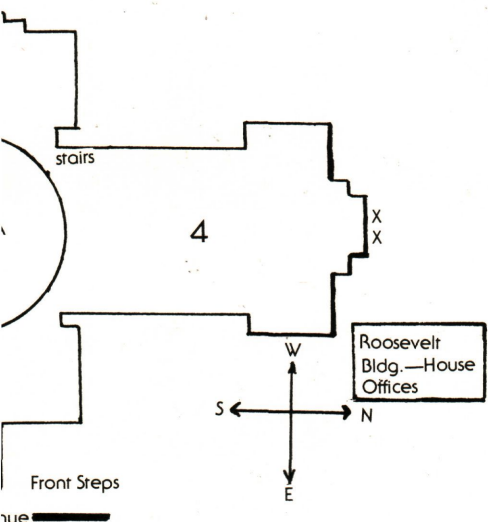
SECTIONS

	1	2
GROUND FLOOR	Rotunda with exhibits highlighting various aspects of Michigan's history	Concessions and Restrooms Senator's Office
FIRST FLOOR	Main information desk — pamphlets on Michigan	Senator's Office
SECOND FLOOR	Governor's office	Senate Chamber and Senate Document Room
THIRD FLOOR	Senate Appropriations (Old Supreme Court)	Senate Gallery Senate Office (behind gallery)
FOURTH FLOOR	House and Senate Committee Rooms	

LEGISLATIVE SCHEDULE — When the legislature goes into general session at 10:00 a.m. Monday evening (8:00 p.m.) and Tuesday morning (8:00 a.m.). House committee meetings are held on Tuesday. Senate committees meet 8-10:00 a.m., and

belongs to Michigan's Citizens —
 passes are required.

In The Capitol



	House and Senate offices "Trailer" offices at back of this section	Representative's offices House Speaker's office
	Representative's and Senator's offices House Appropriations	Representative's offices
	Representative's offices House Documents Room Mezzanine: legislative offices	House Chambers
	Legislative offices	House Gallery House offices - (behind gallery)
(all sections)		

legislators are in session, they meet on
Monday through Thursday. The Senate
 and the House at 2:00 p.m.
 the morning and the Senate
 the afternoon.

How The Legislature Functions

BILL INTRODUCTION — During the 1981-82 session, approximately 3,200 bills were introduced, but only 541 became law.

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEES — There are 36 committees in the House and 15 in the Senate. Members of the Appropriations Committee serve only on that committee. All other legislators have three to five committee assignments.

VISITOR'S GALLERY — Any Capitol visitor can attend a House or Senate session by sitting in the gallery (third floor) of either House. Viewing the legislature in session on the House or Senate floor can, at times, be a discouraging sight . . . people are scurrying about, phones are ringing, others are intently reading, and still the session goes on. If you are fortunate enough to be in the gallery when a major issue is being debated, the scene normally appears more business-like. It is important to remember that most of the real discussion and negotiation on an issue takes place during committee hearings. Consult one of the references listed under "For More Information" to understand more about how a bill becomes law. In addition, a considerable amount of "floor time" is devoted to: the process (bill introduction, assignment to committees, 2nd and 3rd readings, etc.); resolutions honoring people, events and places; routine law changes that require little substantive debate (to address a particular problem in one location in the state or changes in laws to update or to resolve inconsistencies, etc.).

ATTEND A COMMITTEE MEETING — If you are visiting the Capitol when the legislature is in session, be sure to take the extra time to visit a legislative committee meeting. Check at the information desk in the basement or on the first floor for schedules and locations. **Anyone is welcome to visit a committee meeting.** Watching this process in action will greatly supplement your understanding of how the legislature operates. It is here that you will hear the real debate over the pros and cons of an issue. This is also where you can see and understand the role played by aides, executive staff and lobbyists. If you wish to address an issue under discussion, it is necessary to register at the beginning of the meeting with the committee clerk. Any testimony should be brief, well-prepared and well-researched.

Resources Available At The Capitol

Information on bills and on the legislative process is easily accessible to Michigan residents. Copies of proposed and new laws, and background analyses on issues are available for the asking. Ask your legislator, the bill sponsor or a committee clerk to help you obtain such information.

There are three important places to locate when you are looking for legislative resources. The **House and Senate Documents Rooms** (2nd floor - see map) contain the complete files of every bill that is introduced during the course of a legislative session. Be sure to note the mailboxes near House Documents belonging to individuals, agencies and organizations who subscribe to this service to obtain copies of all bills, journals, etc. The **Legislative Service Bureau** (located in the Farnum Office Building) is the agency that drafts all bills and analyses.

You can obtain copies, for no charge, of:

- **Current Status** — This booklet lists all bills introduced to that point in the session. The

Status is an extremely valuable tool in keeping track of the legislative process. Bills are cross-referenced in several ways and new laws are listed. It is available by mail (or in person) from House Documents, State Capitol, Lansing 48909.

- **Journals/Calendars** — When the legislature is in session, you can obtain copies of these two documents from the respective Documents Room. The Journal provides a chronicle of the action from the previous day's session. The calendar lists the committee hearings and the bills that are currently scheduled for debate.
- **Bills** — All of the bills introduced in a two-year session are on file in the appropriate Documents Room. You simply ask the clerk for the bill by number. Analyses of bills are also available from the Documents Room or the Legislative Service Bureau.

For More Information . . .

HOW CITIZENS CAN INFLUENCE LEGISLATION IN MICHIGAN — MSU Cooperative Extension Service (Michigan Sea Grant Program) - Peter Kakela. A bulletin that describes the legislative process and also discusses effective methods for citizens to influence decision-making. Order from your County Extension Office or the MSU Bulletin Office, P.O. Box 231, E. Lansing 48824. Extension Bulletin #E1553, Cost \$1.10.

LEGISLATIVE DIRECTORY 1983-84 — Michigan State Chamber of Commerce — This directory contains pictures and brief biographical information on all Michigan legislators, as well as maps and committee listings. Available from the Chamber, 501 S. Capitol Ave., Lansing 48933. Cost \$2.50.

LEGISLATIVE ACTION HANDBOOK — League of Women Voters of Michigan, 1983. Includes sections on legislative membership, how to write testimony, how to influence legislation in its development, a glossary of legislative terms. Available from the League of Women Voters, 202 Museum Drive, Lansing 48933. Cost including postage \$2.75.

THE STATE WE'RE IN — A factual, current (1982), publication designed to give a better understanding of Michigan state government. Cost is \$2.50 plus postage (10% discount for more than 10 copies). Available from League of Women Voters of Michigan, 202 Museum Drive, Lansing 48933.



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