

Fellow Michigander,

Over the past few years, the Legislature has continued to fight to make the lives of Michigan seniors better. My colleagues and I believe it is our responsibility to continue this fight and advocate for seniors in the years to come, too. Michigan's economy is growing healthier and so should our seniors.

Among the many reforms we've made to help seniors, we're particularly proud of improved regulations to protect against abuse and neglect, increased efforts to curb fraudulent activity and the creation of safer living environments.

I am honored to continue working with my colleagues in the House of Representatives in pursuing additional reforms to protect the lives of Michigan's senior citizens. Our parents, grandparents and other senior members in the community worked hard to provide for each and every one of us growing up and now it is our turn to provide for them. Inside you will read more about what is being done in Lansing to continue Michigan's comeback. It is a privilege to serve as your state representative. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.



Sincerely,

*Dave Pagel*

**DAVE PAGEL**

State Representative, District 78

(888) 373-0078 • DavePagel@house.mi.gov

[www.RepPagel.com](http://www.RepPagel.com)



## SENIOR RESOURCES

- State Representative Dave Pagel.....(888) 373-0078
- Aging & Adult Services Agency .....(517) 373-8230
- Consumer Protection Division .....(877) 765-8388
- Do Not Call Registry.....(888) 382-1222
- Emergency Relief: Home, Utilities & Burial..... (855) ASK-MICH
- Medicare/Medicaid Assistance Program ... (800) 803-7174
- MI Dept. of Military and Veterans Affairs ....(517) 481-8000
- MI Veterans Affairs Agency ..... (800) MICH-VET
- Report Abuse and Neglect.....(855) 444-3911
- Social Security Administration.....(800) 772-1213
- Tax Assistance (Federal) .....(800) 829-1040
- Tax Assistance (State).....(517) 636-4486
- Utility Assistance (Public Service Commission) .....(800) 292-9555

### WE'RE HERE TO HELP!

If you have comments or concerns regarding state government that you would like to share with me, or would like to request any of the free publications below, please call my office at (888) 373-0078.

#### Changes and Choices

Highlights senior legal issues pertaining to disability and consent, age discrimination, tax benefits, pension rights, consumer protection, legal resources, wills, estate planning, and Medicare/Medicaid eligibility.

#### Peace of Mind

Information on creating wills and indicating medical care preferences. Forms for organ donation, the Michigan Statutory Will, Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care, and personal records.

#### Services for Seniors

Describes state programs and services pertaining to tax credits, Medicare and Medicaid, nursing homes and long-term care options, consumer protection, housing, transportation, employment and senior discounts.

STATE REPRESENTATIVE

**DAVE PAGEL**

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# SENIOR UPDATE

FALL 2015



STATE REPRESENTATIVE DAVE

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# STATE REPRESENTATIVE **DAVE PAGEL**

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## REPUBLICAN BILL EXPANDS AND STRENGTHENS HOMESTEAD PROPERTY TAX CREDIT

As part of a complete road funding agreement, I supported a plan to make the Homestead Property Tax Credit more generous and offer it to more people.

In 2011, Michigan made a number of tax changes to save the state from the recession, keep critical services running and encourage job creation. Those changes did their job, but now we are all on more stable footing.

Our state is very different now than it was in 2011. With hundreds of thousands of new jobs, record growth and budget surpluses, it is well past time to return this money to the people. That is why I supported House Bill 4370.

The Homestead Property Tax Credit is designed to help middle-class homeowners and renters, as well as seniors on a fixed income. With state revenues looking stronger, we can now move up the cutoff, so everyone making up to \$60,000 can now claim the credit.

Additionally, the credit now gives you more money back, which means about \$200 million back in the pockets of Michigan's hard-working taxpayers.

HB 4370 was signed into law by the governor on November 10.

## STAY SAFE ONLINE AND PROTECT YOURSELF FROM CYBER-FRAUD

Michigan residents can protect themselves while online by following some common-sense tips.

According to the FBI Internet Crime Complaint Center, Michigan residents and businesses have lost more than \$20 million to cyber-criminal activities so far in 2015, with an average victim loss of \$4,500.

Included are some tips on how to protect yourself online:

- Set strong passwords and don't share them
- Keep your operating system and software up to date
- Limit the amount of personal information you post online
- Maintain an open dialogue with family and friends about Internet safety
- Use caution online — if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is!

To learn about staying safe and protected online, people are encouraged to go to the Michigan Cyber Initiative website at [www.michigan.gov/cybersecurity](http://www.michigan.gov/cybersecurity).



## ANNOYED BY TELEMARKETERS?

You can stop receiving unwanted telemarketing calls by signing up for the national Do Not Call List. It is against the law for telemarketers to call any number once it has been listed on the registry for 31 days. You may still receive calls from charities and nonprofit organizations, political campaigns, pollsters and organizations with which you currently conduct business.

To register for the national Do Not Call List, call **(888) 382-1222** or visit [www.donotcall.gov](http://www.donotcall.gov)



## DON'T FLUSH PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS

In the past, people were told to flush old pills and other medication down the toilet when they were no longer needed. But with millions of people flushing unwanted medicine, traces of drug residue could leak into the water supply and create unknown health risks to people and danger to the environment.

Water treatment plants cannot remove all drug compounds, and flushed medicine can also kill bacteria that septic systems need to work. Instead of flushing pills and other old medication, see if your pharmacy has a drug take-back program.

If not, dispose of medicine by throwing it away in the trash. Keep pharmaceuticals in their original container and be sure to cross out personal information with a permanent marker. Then seal the container with duct tape or put in a plastic bag you can close before throwing it away.

In addition, some local and county governments now offer prescription drug take-back days.