**LEGISLATIVE UPDATE**

With the House and Senate both flipping from Republican to Democratic majorities in January, the Governor has held off on attempting major deals during the lame-duck session. According to Hurley, however, repeal of the 2011 tax on retirement income is at the top of the Governor’s 2023 agenda.

"Whitmer has called for repeal of the so-called pension tax," Hurley said at a press conference last week. This year’s revenue forecast shows that Michigan’s General Fund is in decent shape. To maintain this surplus, the Governor prefers to cut taxes and increase the state’s $9.9 billion general fund surplus to $10.9 billion.

Once legislation is finalized and in their offices again, MARSP will need YOUR help in continuing advocacy efforts. Follow along in introducing our re-election candidates to MARSP and educating members of the new House about the importance of pension benefits. Stay tuned for future communication on how you can best advocate as a member of MARSP.

In the meantime, we encourage you to contact your sitting legislators and thank them for their service! If you do not know who your current legislators are, [BEACON'S Advocate page](https://www.marsp.org/advocacy) can help you find them and their contact information.

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**4 Steps to Take if Your Pension Beneficiary Passes**

As members of the Michigan Public School Retirement System (MPSERS), many of you will name a pension beneficiary, often a spouse. Naming a beneficiary lowers the amount that you receive each month.

In the event that your pension beneficiary passes before you do, you can go back to what’s known as the “straight life” amount. “Straight life” means that you have no pension beneficiary and choose to receive your pension for your lifespan.

Here are the steps you should take to manage your pension after a beneficiary passes:

1. **Contact ORS to revert to straight life.** ORS administers your pension and handles the cancellation of insurance for your beneficiary. ORS will require a death certificate to make changes to your plan.
2. **Purchase death certificate.** In general, you should obtain a death certificate to provide entities that assist in closing the estate. Cost is minimal, and it’s easier to request these copies earlier in the process.
3. **Contact your Social Security Administration office.** You may be eligible for a deceased payment or survivor’s benefits.
4. **Contact MARSP.** Reach out to MARSP by phone or email so we can update our records.

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**GIVE THE GIFT OF TRAVEL THIS SEASON**

**Don’t Miss! Register TODAY for the National Parks of America Tour**

**August 25 – September 5, 2023**

Experience the grandeur of the American West on this 12-day journey through seven cherished national parks and monuments.

Your journey begins in Arizona, where you’ll observe the vast geological wonder that is the Grand Canyon. From here, you’ll make your way to Yellowstone National Park, a place to marvel at the depth and grandeur of Old Faithful, and Yellowstone Lake. After a breath-taking cruise on Lake Powell, you’ll travel to the historic and colorful town of Zion National Park. After 2-night stays in Springdale, Utah and Jackson Hole, Wyoming, you’ll drive through the Bighorn Mountains and the great Sioux Nations Territory before arriving at Mt. Rushmore and Crazy Horse Memorial. You’ll end your journey with a local lakeland Native American dinner and an introduction to the Lakota way of life, past and present.

Highlights on this trip include:

- **Bighorn Mountains, Crazy Horse Monuments, Old Faithful, Yellowstone Lake, Lake Powell, Zion National Park, Crazy Horse Memorial, Mt. Rushmore, and Salt Lake City**
- **Traveling for 12 days**
- **2-night stays in Springdale, Utah and Jackson Hole, Wyoming**
- **Local Native American dinner**
- **4 nights at the beautiful Grand Canyon Inn**

**Travel Destinations!**

**NOTES:**

- Seats are limited and filling fast if you have any questions about the Travel Program, please call us at 1-888-960-4022 or email [staff@marsp.org](mailto:staff@marsp.org).
- Please review the costs and terms associated with the Travel Program here:
  - [2023 Travel Program FAQ](https://www.marsp.org/2023-travel-program-faq)
- Did you know outdoor vision is more likely to occur in winter when the atmosphere is cooler? Symptoms of temporary blurred vision, especially if you already have issues with dry eyes, can be partially eliminated. Fortunately, there are ways to alleviate this condition.
- Please visit MARSP’s recent blog post on how to relieve eye pain and blurred vision:
  - [How to Relieve Eye Pain and Blurred Vision](https://www.marsp.org/blog/how-to-relieve-eye-pain-and-blurred-vision)

**MARSP Holiday Office Closure**

The office will be closed from Thursday, December 22, 2022 - Tuesday, January 3, 2023. Staff will respond to any phone or email messages after January 3rd.

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