



CAPITOL REPORT

November 15, 2006

Leaders were elected yesterday for the incoming 2007-08 Michigan Legislature, with Sen. Mike Bishop and Rep. Andy Dillon chosen to take center stage for the next two years.

The two will lead their respective chambers by appointing committees and their chairs and serving as chief policy makers, strategists, and spokespersons for the two bodies.

Perhaps the biggest news of the day was House Democrats' selection of Dillon, 44, of Redford Twp., to be the new Speaker of the House. His selection was widely seen as a move to put House Dems in the political center. Dillon has been generally pro-business and is pro-life and anti-stem cell research. His chief opponent in the Speaker's race was Rep. Meisner, of Ferndale, who many regarded as more liberal, hard-edged, and partisan than Dillon, an attorney and former business executive.

House Democrats also chose Rep. Steve Tobocman, Detroit, to be majority floor leader, and Rep. Michael Sak, Grand Rapids, to be Speaker Pro-Tem. It is still uncertain who will be House Appropriations chair but Rep. George Cushingberry, Detroit, or Rep. Alma Wheeler Smith, Ann Arbor, may have the inside track.

Bishop, the new Senate majority leader, is a 39 year old Oakland county attorney, whose father served in the Legislature before him. He edged out Sens. Wayne Kuipers, Holland, and Jason Allen, Traverse City, to take the top spot. With the departure of term limited Sen. Ken Sikkema and demotion of outgoing Speaker Craig DeRoche, Bishop now becomes the most powerful Republican in the Legislature. Chosen majority floor leader was Sen. Alan Cropsey, with incoming Sen. Randy Richardville to be President Pro-Tem of the Senate. It's unclear who will head the Senate Appropriations committee.

The two minority caucuses also chose leaders. Outgoing Speaker Craig DeRoche fought off a challenge to deny him the GOP's minority leader position, but he survived along with Rep. Chris Ward who will remain as Republican floor leader, albeit in a minority capacity. Over in the Senate, Mark Schauer, 45, of Battle Creek, won the Democratic (minority) leader's position, staving off a late threat from Sen. Mike Prusi, Ishpeming. Sen. Buzz Thomas, 37, Detroit, will be the new minority floor leader.

Interestingly, Schauer won the post in part by pledging not to run for a Congressional seat that many thought he could win in 2008.

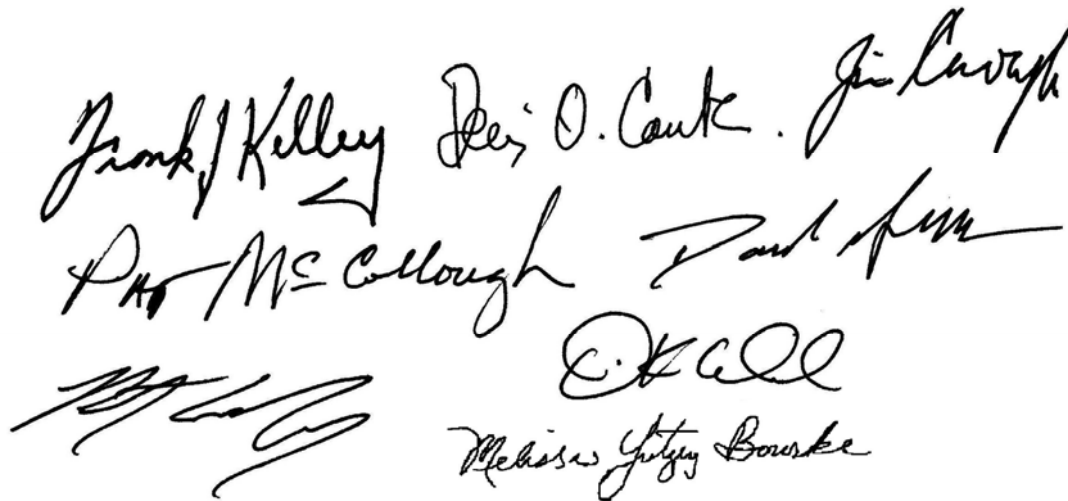
Here is the complete leadership line-up for 2007-08:

SENATE LEADERSHIP

Majority Leader - Mike Bishop
Majority Floor Leader - Alan Cropsey
President Pro Tempore - Randy Richardville
Asst. Majority Leader - Michelle McManus
Majority Caucus Chair - Nancy Cassis
Minority Leader - Mark Schauer
Minority Floor Leader - Buzz Thomas
Assistant Minority Leader -
Minority Caucus Chair - Gilda Jacobs

HOUSE LEADERSHIP

Speaker - Andy Dillon
Speaker Pro Tempore - Michael Sak
Associate Speaker Pro Tempore -
Associate Speaker Pro Tempore -
Majority Floor Leader - Steve Tobocman
Majority Caucus Chair -
Minority Leader - Craig DeRoche
Minority Floor Leader - Chris Ward
Asst. Minority Leader - Kevin Elsenheimer
Minority Caucus Chair - John Proos



Frank J. Kelley, Deris O. Cantle, Jim Lavanph
Pat McCullough, Paul Spurr
C. H. Cole
Melissa Gitzinger Bourke

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