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Dillon Announces House Panel on Public Employee Health Care Reform

Byrnes to chair bipartisan effort to examine proposed overhaul

LANSING – House Speaker **Andy Dillon** (D-Redford Twp.) today announced he has formed a bipartisan House Committee on Public Employee Health Care Reform that is charged with analyzing his proposal to overhaul public employee health care administration and delivery in Michigan, a plan expected to help solve the state's persistent structural deficits, save nearly \$1 billion in taxpayer money and preserve jobs for Michigan workers.

"It's painfully clear that business as usual is not working in Michigan and that making long-lasting reforms is the only way to turn our state around," Dillon said. "We don't have to resign ourselves to bouncing from budget deficit to budget deficit year after year. We can, and must, tackle our problems head on and make real, structural reforms to our state government. This committee will help shape the best public health care reform possible to help address this structural deficit and to make sure we are using tax dollars efficiently and helping us keep teachers in the classroom and police and firefighters on the streets."

Legislation related to Dillon's public employee health care proposal is expected to be drafted within the next few weeks. The new committee is part of Dillon's commitment to reforming government and making lasting changes that achieve significant savings while protecting essential services and the jobs of Michigan workers.

Speaker Pro Tempore **Pam Byrnes** (D-Lyndon Township) has been chosen to chair the new committee, which will consist of eight Democrats and five Republicans. Members will be named soon.

"I'm excited about the opportunity to provide leadership in an area I've always felt strongly about – getting our state on stable financial ground so we are not riding a fiscal roller-coaster every year that has devastating consequences to our residents and our economy," Byrnes said. "The Speaker has given the committee complete autonomy to analyze his public employee health care proposal. I want to make sure that any reform protects quality health care insurance for teachers, firefighters and other state employees and preserves collective bargaining for workers."

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