

# The Public Affairs Pulse

## Keeping You on Top of Legislative & Advocacy Issues

### ACA Deadline Extended, Healthy Michigan Plan Begins

March 31 marked the end of the first Open Enrollment Period for the Affordable Care Act Health Insurance Law. Since the beginning of Open Enrollment on October 31, 2013, despite roll-out challenges and technical difficulties, more than 6 million Americans have enrolled in health insurance plans.

Because of the aforementioned technical difficulties as well as issues with immigration status, document verification and complex cases, the federal government has issued an extension to complete the health insurance application for those who were “in line” by March 31. This means that, if you started an application prior to the March 31 deadline, you have extra time to complete the enrollment process and make your first premium payment.

In order to qualify for this Special Enrollment Period, people will need to “attest” their need for an extension. This can be done in one of two ways. You can login into to your Marketplace account at [healthcare.gov](http://healthcare.gov) or call the enrollment helpline at 1-800-318-2596. As of the publication of the Pulse, no firm deadline for this Special Enrollment Period had been announced.

While March 31 marked the end of the ACA for this year, April 1 marks the beginning of the long-awaited Medicaid Expansion Program known as the Healthy

Michigan Plan.

People between the ages of 19 and 64 who make less than 133% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) are eligible to apply for the new expanded Healthy Michigan Plan through the MiBridges State Assistance Application. This plan provides coverage comparable to plans purchased through the ACA Marketplace or employer insurance. For more information, please visit [www.healthymichiganplan.org](http://www.healthymichiganplan.org).

Those who completed health insurance applications through the ACA Marketplace and had their information sent to the Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH), and those who applied for Healthy Michigan prior to April 1, will have their applications processed by MDCH beginning April 1. However, to ensure faster results, MDCH has encouraged people to reapply. There has been no Coverage Start Date yet announced as of the writing of the Pulse.

### Gay Marriage in Michigan: Good News & Bad News

On March 21, 2014, a federal judge in Detroit struck down Michigan’s ban on same-sex marriage. Over that weekend, several County Clerks opened the doors to allow marriage licenses to be issued and more than 300 LGBT couples were legally married in Michigan.

Michigan Attorney General Bill Schuette announced soon after the decision that he would make an

emergency request for an appeal. An appeals court judge quickly placed a stay on the ruling and the case, for now, is in awaiting further consideration.

Governor Snyder has stated that, while the marriages were legal when performed, the state will not recognize the new couples until a final ruling comes down from the appeals court judge.

Federal Attorney General, Eric Holder has stated that the Federal government will recognize these new marriages and the rights and privileges that go along with them.

The case is expected to move forward quickly, with an anticipated resolution in June.

### PPAM Launches “MI Women Are Watching” Campaign

Planned Parenthood Affiliates of Michigan (PPAM) has launched its program known as MI Women are Watching. This non-electoral, voter education program will span 7 target districts including Grand Rapids and Muskegon.

To sign up to learn more about the MI Women Are Watching Campaign, visit: <http://www.miplannedparenthood.org/miwaw2014>

To learn if your legislator is a Champ or a Chump, visit <http://www.miplannedparenthood.org/champchump/>