



Governor Rick Snyder
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Gov. Rick Snyder continues strong efforts to prevent human trafficking, support survivors

Makes initial appointments to supporting board, commission

Wednesday, March 4, 2015

LANSING, Mich. – Gov. Rick Snyder today announced initial appointments to two advisory groups that will build upon [legislation signed by the governor](#), creating some of the strongest policies in the nation to combat human trafficking and support survivors.

The Human Trafficking Commission and the Human Trafficking Health Advisory Board will work to further protect Michigan residents from human trafficking, fight repeat violations and improve survivor support services.

“I’m proud of all that we have done in Michigan to prevent human trafficking. We must keep working together to bring a stop to this dangerous threat that has affected too many in our state and nation,” Snyder said. “I thank all of these appointees for their willingness to serve and I am confident their efforts will help ensure Michigan is doing whatever is possible to hold criminals accountable while strengthening protections for human trafficking victims.”

The 14-member Human Trafficking Commission, created by [House Bill 5158](#) of 2014, is charged with making recommendations to the Legislature to improve laws and rules to address human trafficking violations in the state. The commission will be housed in the Department of the Attorney General. Appointees will serve two-year terms expiring March 1, 2017. Their appointments are not subject to the advice and consent of the Senate.

Snyder also made initial appointments to the nine-member Human Trafficking Health Advisory Board, created by [Senate Bill 596](#) of 2014. The board will be housed in the Michigan Department of Community Health and work to address issues relating to medical and mental health of human trafficking survivors. After the expiration of one, two, three or four year initial terms, all subsequent appointees will serve four-year terms. Their appointments are not subject to the advice and consent of the Senate.

Members of the Human Trafficking Commission include:

Elizabeth Hertel, of East Lansing, is the director of health policy and innovation for the Michigan Department of Community Health. She was a senior policy adviser in the House Republican Policy Office, a policy analyst for Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan, a senior health policy consultant for Public Sector Consultants, and a legislative assistant for state Rep. Bruce Caswell. Hertel earned a bachelor’s degree in public administration from Grand Valley State University. She serves as the designee of the director of the Department of Community Health.

Carol Isaacs, of East Lansing, is chief deputy attorney general and served as project manager of the Attorney General’s Human Trafficking Commission. She previously served as an adviser and counsel to the Michigan Senate and in Governor John Engler’s office. Isaacs earned a bachelor’s degree in

physiology and anthropology from Michigan State University and a law degree from Cooley Law School. She serves as the designee of the attorney general.

Mark Jansen, of Grand Rapids, most recently served as state senator representing the 28th district. He was previously the director of special initiatives for Michigan Habitat for Humanity, the state Representative for the 72nd district and township clerk for Gaines Charter Township. He represents individuals recommended by the Senate majority leader.

Kenneth Kurtz, of Coldwater, served six years in the state House of Representatives, representing the 58th district. He also owned and operated three funeral homes. Kurtz attended Worsham School of Mortuary Science. He represents individuals recommended by the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

David Leyton, of Flint, is the prosecutor for Genesee County. He was previously Flint Township clerk and a partner of Leyton & Kasle PLC. He is past-president of the Prosecuting Attorneys Association of Michigan and served as a member of the Attorney General's Human Trafficking Commission. Leyton earned bachelor's degrees in journalism and political science from the University of Toledo and a law degree from Cooley Law School. He represents county prosecuting attorneys.

Kathy Maitland, of Sterling Heights, is executive director of the Michigan Abolitionist Project. She also worked in various roles for Hewlett Packard. She has been active in anti-human trafficking work and prevention efforts since 2012. Maitland earned a bachelor's degree in business management and organizational development from Spring Arbor University. She represents individuals recommended by the Senate majority leader.

Cheryl Pezon, of Michigan Center, is a policy adviser for the Bureau of Health Care Services in the Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs. She previously served as a policy analyst in the Senate Majority Policy Office and worked as an attorney in private practice. Pezon earned a bachelor's degree in employment relations and psychology from Michigan State University and a law degree from Michigan State University. She serves as the designee of the director of the Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs.

Edward Price, of Oak Park, is a Michigan State Police detective sergeant in the the Second District Special Investigation Section. Price is assigned to the Southeast Michigan Crimes Against Children Task Force, an FBI Task Force that investigates the exploitation of children by means of sex trafficking. He is the FBI and U.S. Attorney's Office human trafficking liaison for the Michigan State Police and is a member of the U.S. Eastern District of Michigan Project Safe Childhood Training Team. He serves as the designee of the director of the Michigan State Police.

Michelle Rick, of DeWitt, is the 29th Circuit Court's family court judge and also presides over the criminal division. Rick is a legislative and executive committee member of the Michigan Judicial Association and a member of the Gratiot County Community Corrections Board. Rick earned a bachelor's degree in social science from Michigan State University and a law degree from the University of Detroit School of Law. She represents circuit court judges.

Herbert Smitherman Jr., of Detroit, is CEO of Health Centers Detroit Foundation and assistant dean of community and urban health as well as associate professor of medicine at the Wayne State University Medical School. Smitherman earned a bachelor's degree in chemical engineering from Northwestern University, a doctorate from the University of Cincinnati, and a master's degree in public health and health services administration from the University of Michigan. He represents individuals recommended by the speaker of the House of Representatives.

Tom Tiderington, of Plymouth, has been chief of the Plymouth Township Police Department since 2001. He helped found the first human trafficking special investigations division in Ft. Lauderdale during his time in the department. Tiderington earned an associate degree in criminal justice from Mercy College

of Detroit and a bachelor's degree in police administration from Florida Atlantic University. He represents law enforcement

Beth Emmitt, of Byron Center, is currently the director of scheduling for Snyder. She has worked in state government for more than 12 years, previously serving as the Department of State liaison to the Michigan Women's Commission. She is a 2010 graduate of the Michigan Political Leadership Program and will serve as the designated representative from within the office of the governor.

The two remaining appointees to the Human Trafficking Commission will represent survivors of human trafficking. To learn more or apply, visit the appointments page at www.michigan.gov/snyder.

Members of the Human Trafficking Health Advisory Board include:

Brigette Robarge, of Belleville, will serve a one-year term expiring Dec. 31, 2015. Robarge is a human trafficking survivor and is working toward an associate degree in liberal arts at Schoolcraft Community College. She represents human trafficking survivors.

Ruth Rondon, of Wyoming, will serve a two-year term expiring Dec. 31, 2016. Rondon is retired, most recently serving as a clerk for the Kent County Register of Deeds. She also worked for the Kent County Health Department. She is a board member for Red Cord Community, a support organization for women who have survived commercial sexual exploitation and/or drug addiction. She represents human trafficking survivors.

Dena Nazer, of Detroit, will serve a three-year term expiring Dec. 31, 2017. Nazer is chief of the child protection team at the Children's Hospital of Michigan, an assistant professor of pediatrics at Wayne State University, and performs medical evaluations of suspected child sexual abuse at Kids-TALK Children's Advocacy Center. Nazer completed her pediatric residency and a fellowship in child abuse and neglect at Wayne State University and earned a medical degree from the University of Jordan. Nazer represents individuals licensed to practice medicine and recommended by the Speaker of the House.

Subburaman Sivakumar, of Northville Township, will serve a three-year term expiring Dec. 31, 2017. Sivakumar is president of Subburaman Sivakumar Medical Group and medical director and CEO of Michigan Academic Hospitalist Group. He is also a physician at St. Mary Mercy Hospital where he serves on the Medical Executive Committee. He is also a member of the strategy council at St. John Providence Health System. Sivakumar earned a medical degree from Tirunelveli Medical College. He represents individuals licensed to practice medicine and recommended by the Senate majority leader.

Erin Diamond, of Livonia, will serve a four-year term expiring Dec. 31, 2018. Diamond is an investigator and electronic forensic examiner in the Wayne County Sheriff's Department Internet Crimes Unit. He is part of the Southeast Michigan Crimes Against Children Task Force and has assisted ICE, the FBI, and the Secret Service in investigations. He represents individuals with experience and expertise in the field of intervention in or prevention of human trafficking or treatment of human trafficking survivors. He will also serve as chair.

Jeffrey Jackson, of Grand Rapids, will serve a four-year term expiring Dec. 31, 2018. Jackson is a staff psychiatrist at Pine Rest Christian Mental Health Services and assistant psychiatry clerkship director at Michigan State University. He served as the medical staff president and Schwartz Rounds physician leader at Pine Rest. Jackson earned a bachelor's degree in biology from Kalamazoo College and medical degree from Michigan State University. He represents mental health professionals.

Sheila Meshinski, of Macomb, will serve a four-year term expiring Dec. 31, 2018. Meshinski is the staff development instructor for emergency services at Henry Ford Macomb Hospital. She has been an emergency nurse for more than 35 years and has served as a sexual assault and forensic nurse. Meshinski earned a bachelor's degree in nursing from Nazareth College. She represents registered

professional nurses with experience in an emergency department, emergency room, or trauma center of a hospital.

Elizabeth Hertel will serve as the designated representative from within the Department of Human Services. She is also serving on the Human Trafficking Commission.

The remaining appointee will be the director of the Michigan Children's Services Agency which will be created following the effective date of the governor's [executive order](#) merging the Departments of Community Health and Human Services.