

STATE SENATOR • MICHAEL PRUSI • 38TH DISTRICT

# Prusi Press Release

P.O. Box 30036 • Lansing • Michigan • 48909-7536 • 517-373-7840 • Fax: 517-373-3932  
E-mail: [senmprusi@senate.michigan.gov](mailto:senmprusi@senate.michigan.gov) • [www.senate.mi.gov/prusi](http://www.senate.mi.gov/prusi)



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Contact: Sen Mike Prusi  
Phone: (517) 373-7840

## **U.P. Legislators Express Opposition to Cox Closure of U.P. Attorney General's Office**

LANSING, Mich. -- Senate Democratic Leader Mike Prusi (D-Ishpeming) today joined State Representatives Judy Nerat (D-Menominee), Steven Lindberg (D-Marquette) and Gary McDowell (D-Rudyard) to express disappointment with the recent decision of Attorney General Mike Cox (R-Livonia) to close the Attorney General's Office in Escanaba.

"Attorney General Cox apparently has forgotten that the Upper Peninsula is part of Michigan," Prusi said. "U.P. residents deserve the same services from state government that downstate citizens enjoy, and it is disappointing that when the Attorney General needs to make a budget cut, the first place he looks to cut is the Upper Peninsula."

The Attorney General currently maintains an office in the Escanaba State Office Building to provide service to the people of Michigan. With the elimination of this office, Attorney General offices will now remain only in Grand Rapids, Lansing and Detroit.

"With a current year budget for the Department of Attorney General that provides for 537 full-time employees (FTEs) across the state, I find it unconscionable that Attorney General Cox has seen fit to eliminate an efficient U.P. office housing the only two Departmental employees in the U.P.," Prusi said. "This cut is unfair to the Upper Peninsula, and I call on Attorney General Cox to explain how services will continue to be provided to U.P. residents in an efficient, cost-effective manner."

"It isn't fair that our U.P. residents won't be able to receive the services of the Attorney General without traveling hundreds of miles," said State Representative Judy Nerat (D-Menominee). "With the closest offices in Lansing, Detroit and Grand Rapids, many of our residents won't be able to make the lengthy trip to get the help they need. Our state is hurting right now, but so are our citizens and they shouldn't be penalized simply because they live in the U.P."

"It is unfortunate that AG Cox has made the decision to pull service out of the U.P.," said State Representative Steven Lindberg (D-Marquette). "This calls into question his true dedication to provide justice to all citizens of Michigan, not just to those living below

the bridge."

"We need an Attorney General that treats every part of the state fairly and makes sure all residents are receiving the same services," said Representative Gary McDowell (D-Rudyard). "By closing the office in Escanaba, Attorney General Cox is ultimately telling U.P. residents that they don't deserve the same protection and advocacy that other citizens in the state of Michigan do and that is wrong."

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