

**STATE SENATOR • MICHAEL PRUSI • 38TH DISTRICT**

# Prusi Press Release

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## **Prusi Introduces Legislation to Convey U.P. State Fairgrounds to Delta County**

LANSING, Mich. -- Senate Democratic Leader Mike Prusi (D-Ishpeming) today introduced Senate Bill 596, which would convey the U.P. State Fairgrounds property to Delta County for \$1. The legislation will require that the property continue to be used for a public purpose including, but not limited to, an annual U.P. State Fair.

"People across the U.P. have enjoyed the U.P. State Fair in Escanaba for more than 80 years," Prusi said. "While the state is getting out of the fair business, I am confident we can build upon the tremendous amount of work individuals in Delta County have already done to ensure a smooth transition to local management and operation of the fair."

The Governor's proposed Fiscal Year 2009-2010 state budget, slated to take effect October 1, eliminates state support for both the U.P. State Fair and the Michigan State Fair in Detroit. Executive Order 2009-04 abolishes both the Michigan Exposition and Fairgrounds Authority and the Upper Peninsula State Fair Board of Managers on that date as well. Since the elimination of state funding for the U.P. State Fair was announced in February, local community leaders and fair stakeholders have put forth enormous amounts of time and effort to prepare for operation and management of the fair to be performed locally.

"We are grateful to the local units of government, the Hannahville Indian Community, the Upper Peninsula Commission for Area Progress (UPCAP), and community members for their involvement and commitment during the conveyance process and transition," said Vickie Micheau, Executive Director of the Delta County Chamber of Commerce. "Our heartfelt thanks go to Senator Prusi for drafting the legislation to convey the property and the support he garnered from our U.P. legislators. We look forward to nurturing and strengthening the relationships that have been established amongst the Upper Peninsula county partners who have exhibited the determination necessary to continue the tradition that has been celebrated for more than 75 years."

The U.P. State Fair will operate this August as it has in the past. However, should SB 596 be enacted into law, the fair property will be conveyed to Delta County for public use. UPCAP has drafted an interlocal agreement creating an Upper Peninsula State Fair Authority (UPSFA) to manage fair operations that will be presented to all 15 U.P.

counties. Each county may, by resolution, adopt the agreement and appoint a member. The Authority will then be responsible for all fair activities and management of the property, similar to the responsibility previously held by the Michigan Department of Agriculture (MDA) and the U.P. State Fair Board of Managers.

"All 15 counties of the Upper Peninsula, as potential future members of the U.P. State Fair Authority look forward, with excitement and diligence, to the opportunity to carry on the tradition of the U. P. State Fair and to provide local leadership and innovation for many years to come," noted Jonathan Mead, Executive Director of UPCAP.

MDA Director Don Koivisto added, "I recognize and commend the tremendous local effort that culminated in the introduction of this bill. It was great to see U.P. legislators and the community unite to move forward even though there were many concerns that needed to be addressed. This is an effort you all can be proud of as the status of the fair will be made crystal clear."

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