

## **News From Ingham County Treasurer Eric Schertzing**

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# **Ingham County Treasurer & Land Bank Chair Eric Schertzing Launches Program to Bank the Unbanked**

(Lansing). Ingham County Treasurer Eric Schertzing and Lansing Mayor Virg Bernero announced today the formation of "Bank On Michigan," a program to bring financial training and access to financial products to those without bank accounts and those who are currently underserved by financial institutions. The program was announced at a press conference this morning at the southside branch of Michigan State University Federal Credit Union.

Many banking programs around the country provide access to free or low cost savings and checking accounts. Bank On Michigan, however, is the first program in the nation to also provide access to Micro Loans and Tax Refund Anticipation Loans (RAL) at reasonable interest rates. The addition of Micro Loans and RALs is designed to provide competition to the high interest rates charged by some payday lenders and tax preparers.

"The need for Bank On Michigan is clear from the evidence. In the City of Lansing, for example, there are 8,400 unbanked households. That means nearly 18% of the households in Lansing are unbanked," Ingham County Treasurer Eric Schertzing said. "National estimates range from 20-30% of low to moderate income people without bank accounts."

Bank On Michigan will start with a pilot group in Lansing who will receive financial training and access to banking products. The training will include a session on income taxes along with tax preparation provided by the MSU College of Law Tax Clinic. Current plans are to continue to expand membership in Bank On Michigan in Lansing and take the program statewide. "Statewide, there are over 200,000 households without bank accounts," Schertzing said. A sister program under the Bank On Michigan umbrella is being designed in Kalamazoo County by County Treasurer Mary Balkema.

Ingham County Commissioner Todd Tennis said, “Bank On Michigan should provide competition to payday lenders and hopefully allow hard-working people to pay less in interest and bank fees.”

Bank On Michigan partners include MSU College of Law Tax Clinic, Community Economic Development Association of Michigan (CEDAM), and the Michigan Association of United Ways. Participating financial institutions include Michigan State University Federal Credit Union (MSUFCU), Lansing Automakers Federal Credit Union (LAFCU), Flagstar Bank, Fifth Third Bank, NuUnion Credit Union, Dart Bank, Chase Bank, Charter One Bank, Key Bank and National City Bank.

Anyone who would like to participate, or knows someone who would like to participate in Bank On Michigan is encouraged to contact Treasurer Schertzing’s office at 517- 676-7235 or [jschlinker@ingham.org](mailto:jschlinker@ingham.org).

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