

Rep. David Maturen (R-Brady Twp.)

Numbers don't scare David Maturen. In fact, he'd even call himself a nerd—and if you don't believe him, read the title of his Master's thesis: "Coefficient of Dispersion: A Measurement of Assessment Equity and its Integration into the State Equalization Process."

The **Brady Township** (Kalamazoo Co.) Republican loves data, and when he sees an imbalance, he wants to correct it. So when Maturen heard about the "dark stores" property tax issue, he knew he had to take action.

Earlier this year, Maturen sponsored House Bill 5578, designed to end the unfair practice of valuing big box retailers solely based on the comparable sales approach to property tax assessment. He was determined to stop the cycle of slashing retailers' valuations and property taxes by as much as 70 percent due to a lack of comparable properties and the extensive use of deed restrictions to limit competition. Maturen's bill experienced a major victory when it overwhelmingly passed the House with a bipartisan vote of 97-11. Maturen called the moment the bill passed one of his proudest since he was elected.

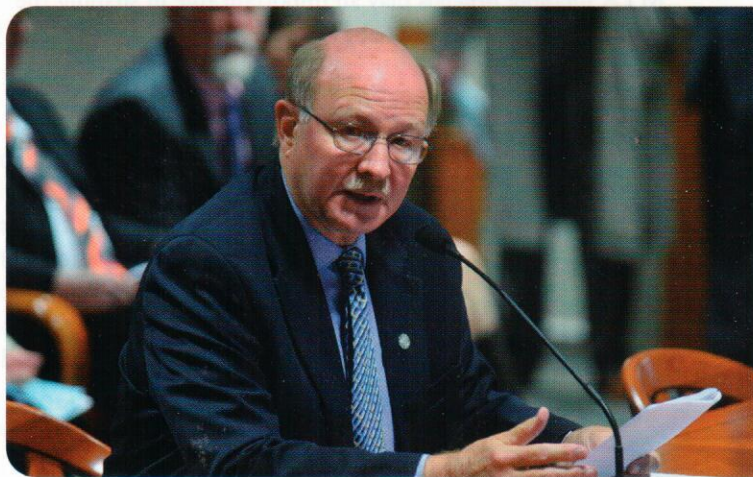
"It took six months of detailed work and collaboration with local governments and some members of the business community to get it passed," Maturen said of the bill, which heads to the Senate this fall. "It truly focuses on sound valuation practices and I believe it will ensure a better assessment system and a sharing of the tax burden."

Maturen knows from experience that there's a fine balance between providing tax incentives to businesses and ensuring that local governments have the funds they need to keep offering services to citizens. He served as Brady Township trustee for 14 years, and, later, 12 years on the Kalamazoo County Board of Commissioners. He learned how state mandates dramatically affected local governments' costs as well as the role local units play in Michigan's governance structure.

"It is a balancing act to make government competitive and attract business, yet keep needed funding and local control for local governments, which supply so many services that directly impact the lives of our citizens," Maturen said.

With his years in local government under his belt, Maturen decided to help bring good governance to the state level and run for office. Since then, he's sponsored bills and resolutions that he believed would correct policies that countered the spirit of the law.

Maturen is concerned about the long-term debt obligations and unsustainable costs facing local governments.



Rep. David Maturen (R-Brady Twp.) served as Brady Township trustee for 14 years. Now, as the only certified appraiser in the state Legislature, Rep. Maturen is working with MTA and other local government organizations to close the "dark store" assessing loophole.

Combined with shrinking tax bases, local units face a threat to their basic service delivery. To combat this issue, Maturen said local units must present their case to the Legislature, using data to show lawmakers why a bill should be approved or defeated. In the meantime, townships can save money by working with other local units in cooperative agreements.

Since he was first elected in 2014, Maturen has dedicated himself to resolving inequities in the property tax appeal process and encouraging economic development in his district. It's not a Republican or Democratic issue to him—it's about doing what's right.

"I want people to remember that I spent six years of my life trying to make our state a better place to live and grow a business, while doing it in as bipartisan a fashion as possible," Maturen said.

An advertisement for Fleis & Vandenberg. At the top is a logo consisting of a square with a smaller square inside, followed by the text "FLEIS & VANDENBRINK" in a bold, sans-serif font. Below this is the tagline "DESIGN. BUILD. OPERATE." in a smaller font. The main body of the ad features a photograph of a vibrant public square with a fountain, people walking, and modern architecture. At the bottom of the ad, the phone number "800.494.5202" and the website "www.fveng.com" are listed.