

## **Michigan Democratic Party's**

### **Spring 2023 Resolutions Packet**

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## Resolution on MSHDA “Missing Middle”

**WHEREAS**, the severe shortage of housing unit availability is at a crisis point, and

**WHEREAS**, residential housing of any kind is unavailable in many areas in Michigan, and

**WHEREAS**, the cost of residential housing is causing severe consequences on Michigan family and social structures, including homelessness, instability, and domestic disorder, and

**WHEREAS**, the Michigan State Housing Development Authority has a “Missing Middle” program of some \$50 million, to be awarded to local communities through grants aimed at 185% to 300% of US poverty level families,

**WHEREAS**, \$15 million of this has already been awarded,

**WHEREAS**, the Michigan Democratic Party finds \$50 million to be less than an appropriate level response and;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, the Michigan Democratic Party insists the MSHDA spend the money that has already been allocated; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the Michigan Democratic Party insists our Democratic Party members of the Michigan Legislature also dramatically increase the scope and funding of the MSHDA “Missing Middle” program as soon as practical.

## Resolution in Support of Funding for Rural Housing Needs

**WHEREAS**, a significant portion of renter and owner households are overburdened with the cost of their housing; and

**WHEREAS**, there is a severe shortage of rental units that are affordable to low and moderate income households and that are affordable and accessible for persons with disabilities or who are seniors; and

**WHEREAS**, there is a shortage of single family homes that are for sale and affordable to low and moderate income households; and

**WHEREAS**, a significant proportion of owner occupied homes are in disrepair and either need to be deemed uninhabitable or have become unsafe; and

**WHEREAS**, the cost to develop rental or for-sale housing units is the same for both urban and rural communities; however, revenue generated by rents or sales from the units in rural communities is often 50% or more less than in urban communities; thus, creating numerous negative impacts on rural communities.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Michigan Democratic Party supports the following potential solutions to the disparities between urban and rural communities with regard to housing programs and funding:

1. Move away from housing programs that apply a "one size fits all" approach for both urban and rural communities across the State in the administration of funds.
2. Increase the supply of and provide sufficient funding for Permanent Supportive Housing targeted toward persons with disabilities experiencing homelessness or fleeing from domestic violence.
3. Create Housing Trust Funds for every Michigan county.
4. Provide gap financing for developers to create new rental and ownership housing units.
5. Recommend funding for housing at the local level where there is local control of how the money is spent.

## Resolution in Support of Legislation to Facilitate Affordable Housing

**WHEREAS**, Many Michigan villages, towns, cities and rural counties are experiencing a shortage of affordable or “workforce” housing for low- and moderate-income residents, and

**WHEREAS**, This shortage crisis of workforce housing is one cause of homelessness in rural areas where shelters are lacking, and

**WHEREAS**, The shortage of said housing has been linked to regional shortages of nurses and other health care workers, seasonal workers, and retirees who struggle to find affordable housing, especially in rural areas, and

**WHEREAS**, Employers can’t fill job openings for expansion of manufacturing for full-time or seasonal jobs because there is a direct connection between affordable housing shortages and the workforce shortages in rural areas where some new businesses want to locate, and

**WHEREAS**, Younger adults are often forced to leave (home) rural areas that lack affordable housing for other regions of Michigan or out of state for opportunities creating cycles of economic and demographic losses, and

**WHEREAS**, Housing shortages affect staffing security for hospitals, public health agencies, laboratories, outpatient medical & mental health facilities. Insufficiently staffed hospitals, laboratories and clinics discourage attracting medical specialists exacerbating rural Michigan's health care access and availability crisis.

**WHEREAS**, Seasonal housing stock vacancies in many rural areas in Northern Michigan present opportunities for owners to convert stock into short term rental income:

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that legislation be passed that allows, permits, requires and encourages local government entities to increase affordable housing options regardless of population or location by way of:

- **The ability to determine** and regulate the type, size, number and general makeup of Short-Term Rental\* (STR) rooms, homes and structures, and
- **The ability to charge** a set, standard & uniform - as set periodically by the state Treasury Department via a Lodging Tax on STRs/STR owners;
- **The ability to create**, set and allow property tax breaks to subsidize affordable workforce housing, and the ability to increase the local Non-Homestead Tax rate, to use said revenue to subsidize affordable and or low-income and workforce housing. Example: A third local property tax rate (besides Homestead and Non-Homestead) that benefits “Special” affordable or low-income, workforce housing”;

**\*SHORT-TERM RENTAL, DEFINED:** Short-Term Rental Unit is a dwelling that is rented for 30 consecutive days or less to persons other than the permanent resident or owner. The City of Ann Arbor has defined three types of STR units.

**References:**

<https://www.a2gov.org/departments/planning/Pages/Short-Term-Rentals.aspx>

<https://michiganadvance.com/2022/11/27/whats-next-in-the-fight-over-regulating-short-term-rentals-in-michigan/>

<https://michiganadvance.com/2022/11/27/whats-next-in-the-fight-over-regulating-short-term-rentals-in-michigan/>

**Legislative Committee Zooms**

**Michigan Senate**

<https://committees.senate.michigan.gov/details?com=ENGENV&sessionId=15>

**Michigan House**

<https://www.house.mi.gov/Committee/HNATU>

Resolution to Accept and Honor Native American Indian, Pacific Islander,  
and Alaskan Native Students Wearing of Traditional Regalia  
at Graduation Ceremonies and School-Sponsored Events

**WHEREAS**, from time immemorial, many tribal nations have viewed eagles, eagle feathers, and traditional regalia as sacred elements of their cultural and religious traditions; and

**WHEREAS**, Native students and their families assemble and bless cultural and religious items appropriate for celebrating significant achievements and rites of passage, to honor the student's family, community, and tribal nation, and for many other reasons; and

**WHEREAS**, Native Americans obtained the legal right to express and exercise religious practices only after passage of the American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978; and

**WHEREAS**, many schools across the county still deny student requests to wear traditional items at graduation; and

**WHEREAS**, several states have enacted legislation to protect Native American students' rights to cultural and religious expression at school-sanctioned events, and

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Michigan Democratic Party supports the right of Native American Indian, Pacific Islander, and Alaskan Native school students to practice and express their traditional religious and spiritual beliefs, urges all school governing bodies to respect traditional tribal religious and spiritual beliefs by accepting and honoring Native American students wearing of traditional regalia or recognized objects of religious or cultural significance as adornment at school graduation ceremonies and other school-sanctioned events, and urges Michigan legislators to provide legal remedy.

## Resolution to Ban the Use of Conversion Therapy on Minors

**WHEREAS**, Being lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or questioning is part of the natural spectrum of human identity, not a disease, disorder, illness, deficiency, or shortcoming and the major professional associations of mental health practitioners and researchers in the United States have recognized this fact for nearly 40 years; and

**WHEREAS**, Violence, bullying, discrimination and social stigmatization for being lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or questioning is widespread and a national crisis; and

**WHEREAS**, A United Nations' report found that practices of conversion therapy are degrading, inflict suffering and are rooted in the belief that lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or questioning individuals are inferior, and that they must modify their orientation or identity to remedy that supposed inferiority; and

**WHEREAS**, Conversion therapy pressures gender non-conforming children to view themselves and their sexual orientation or gender identity as pathological and inferior, the practice of conversion therapy represents a form of emotional violence; and

**WHEREAS**, Bias against individuals based on actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression negatively affects mental health, contributing to an enduring sense of stigma and pervasive self-criticism through the internalization of such prejudice; and

**WHEREAS**, The American Psychological Association reports that sexual orientation and gender identity change efforts can pose critical health risks including depression, guilt, helplessness, hopelessness, shame, social withdrawal, suicidality, substance abuse, stress, self-blame, hostility and blame toward parents, feelings of anger and betrayal, a feeling of being dehumanized and a loss of faith; and

**WHEREAS**, All children have an equal right to health and well-being and in actions concerning children, the best interests of the child shall be the primary consideration; and

**WHEREAS**, Children are even more vulnerable than adults to discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity and require special measures of protection that take into account their particular vulnerability vis-a-vis the State, but also vis-à-vis their families and other individuals; and

**WHEREAS**, In the United States, an estimated 20,000 youth ages 14 to 17 will be subjected to conversion therapy by licensed health care professionals annually; and

**WHEREAS**, There is no sound scientific evidence that innate sexual orientation or gender identity can be changed, the provision of any intervention purporting to "treat" something that is not a disorder is wholly unethical; and

**WHEREAS**, At least 20 other states have banned conversion therapy for minors, bills were previously introduced but failed in both Michigan's House and Senate, and



ordinances banning the practice have been passed in at least seven Michigan cities;  
and

**WHEREAS**, The Democratic Party has a compelling interest in upholding the human rights of all children to equality, healthy, and well-being, and in protecting them against the negative consequences of unethical professional practices to which they are especially vulnerable due to their minority;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Michigan Democratic Party calls on the Michigan Legislature to adopt legislation banning the use of conversion therapy on minors within the State of Michigan.

## Resolution Calling for the Repeal of the Anti-Union “Right to Work” for Less

**WHEREAS**, the core principle of supporting workers is their right to collectively bargain and form a union;

**WHEREAS**, the attack on workers through the passage of anti-union “Right to Work” for Less laws has negatively impacted access to organize and strengthen unions; and

**WHEREAS**, unions in Michigan have created pathways for good paying jobs and human dignity in the workplace; and

**WHEREAS**, the right to organize unions is how we fight against corporate greed and special interest groups that hurt working families;

**WHEREAS**, no worker should be denied access to strengthen their rights in the workplace and anti-union “Right to Work” for Less laws hurts their efforts;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the members of the Michigan Democratic Party support legislation to repeal the anti-union “Right to Work” for Less in Michigan.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the members of the Michigan Democratic Party call on members of the Michigan State Legislature to pass legislation to repeal **anti-union** “Right to Work” for Less laws in Michigan for Governor Whitmer’s signature **immediately**.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Chair of the Michigan Democratic Party (MDP) shall, on the Party’s behalf, consult and collaborate with Governor Whitmer and Michigan’s Democratic State House and Senate Caucuses for purpose of determining the most effective path to drafting legislation, gaining support for the repeal’s passage in 2023.

## Resolution to Restore Worker Freedom and Collective Bargaining Rights to Michigan's Workers

**WHEREAS**, unions increase wages, benefits, safety, and protections for all workers, but especially women, people of color, immigrants, and the LGBTQ community in areas where our non-discrimination laws continue to fall short; and

**WHEREAS**, in 1961, Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. stated that the purpose of "false slogans such as 'Right to Work' is to "destroy labor unions and the freedom of collective bargaining by which unions have improved wages and working conditions of everyone;" and

**WHEREAS**, in 2012, the Michigan Legislature enacted anti-worker, anti-union "Right to Work" without holding a single public hearing and with the aim of crippling the ability of unions to fairly represent all members of a collective bargaining unit; and

**WHEREAS**, dozens of other anti-worker laws passed during the Engler and Snyder administrations have made it even harder for working people to make a living and be safe at work, including the repeal of prevailing wage and the institution of a retirement tax on the elderly with fixed incomes,

**WHEREAS**, the Snyder administration's systematic erosion of collective bargaining rights for teachers, first responders, and public-sector employees has made it even more challenging for governments to attract and retain new talent and for workers to provide for their families; and

**WHEREAS**, there has been no evidence in the past decade that the enactment of these laws has improved wages or working conditions for Michigan workers; and

**WHEREAS**, the COVID-19 pandemic, in particular, has made paramount the failings of workplace safety standards and inadequate protections for workers on the job, and the importance placed on public health and workplace safety; and

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that this body affirms its support for workers and their right to organize and, in expressing those values, urges the legislature to Restore Worker Freedom; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Michigan Democratic Party joins with millions of Michigan workers and urges the Michigan Legislature to immediately repeal PA 348 of 2012 and PA 349 of 2012;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Michigan Democratic Party urges the Michigan Legislature to support the pay, health, and safety of Michigan workers by reinstating Prevailing Wage requirements;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Michigan Democratic Party supports the rights of working people to use their voice to advocate in their workplace and through the political process by repealing laws such as PA 53 of 2012 and PA 269 of 2015 and removing excessive penalties for striking and end the prohibition on Unfair Labor Practices strikes;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Michigan Democratic Party supports the immediate repeal of the Pension Tax, which unfairly balances the state budget by taxing fixed-income retirees;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Michigan Democratic Party supports the rights of working people to collectively bargain and their freedom to negotiate contracts by repealing laws such as PA 105 of 2015, PA 98 of 2011, PA 238 of 2012, PA 54 of 2011 and PA 152 of 2011;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Michigan Democratic Party urges the Michigan Legislature to allow for free and fair negotiations by restoring many topics that are currently prohibited subjects of collective bargaining including, but not limited to, support staff privatization, and teacher discipline, seniority, evaluation, placement and merit pay and the ability of all Detroit Public School employees to negotiate for wage increases, and restore Just Cause standards to teacher tenure.

#### **References:**

**Pa 53 2012 AN ACT** to prohibit strikes by certain public employees; to provide review from disciplinary action with respect thereto; to provide for the mediation of grievances and the holding of elections; to declare and protect the rights and privileges of public employees; to require certain provisions in collective bargaining agreements; to prescribe means of enforcement and penalties for the violation of the provisions of this act; and to make appropriations.

**PA 54 2011 AN ACT** to amend 1947 PA 336, entitled "An act to prohibit strikes by certain public employees; to provide review from disciplinary action with respect thereto; to provide for the mediation of grievances and the holding of elections; to declare and protect the rights and privileges of public employees; and to prescribe means of enforcement and penalties for the violation of the provisions of this act

**PA 98 2011 AN ACT** to provide for fair and open competition in governmental construction contracts, grants, tax abatements, and tax credits; to prohibit requirements for certain terms in government contracts; to prohibit certain terms in procurement documents for certain expenditures involving public facilities; and to provide for powers and duties of certain public officers, employees, and contractors.

**Prevailing Wage:**

**PA105 2015 AN ACT** to limit the powers of local governmental bodies regarding the regulation of terms and conditions of employment within local government boundaries for employees of nonpublic employers. Preemption

**PA 152 2011 AN ACT** to limit a public employer's expenditures for employee medical benefit plans; to provide the power and duties of certain state agencies and officials; to provide for exceptions; and to provide for sanctions.

**Pa 238 2012** "An act to provide for the effect, processing, promulgation, publication, and inspection of state agency rules, determinations, and other matters; to provide for the printing, publishing, and distribution of certain publications; to provide for state agency administrative procedures and contested cases and appeals from contested cases in licensing and other matters; to create and establish certain committees and offices; to provide for declaratory judgments as to rules; to repeal certain acts and parts of acts; and to repeal certain parts of this act on a specific date

**Pa 269 2015 AN ACT** to amend 1976 PA 388, entitled "An act to regulate political activity; to regulate campaign financing; to restrict campaign contributions and expenditures; to require campaign statements and reports; to regulate anonymous contributions; to regulate campaign advertising and literature; to provide for segregated funds for political purposes; to provide for the use of public funds for political purposes; to create certain funds; to provide for reversion, retention, or refunding of unexpended balances in certain funds; to require other statements and reports; to regulate acceptance of certain gifts, payments, and reimbursements; to prescribe the powers and duties of certain state departments and state and local officials and employees; to

provide appropriations; to prescribe penalties and provide remedies; and to repeal certain acts and parts of acts,"

**PA 348 2012** An act to create a commission relative to labor disputes, and to prescribe its powers and duties; to provide for the mediation and arbitration of labor disputes, and the holding of elections thereon; to regulate the conduct of parties to labor disputes and to require the parties to follow certain procedures; to regulate and limit the right to strike and picket; to protect the rights and privileges of employees, including the right to organize and engage in lawful concerted activities; to protect the rights and privileges of employers; to make certain acts unlawful; to make appropriations; and to prescribe means of enforcement and penalties for violations of this act."

**PA 349 2012 AN ACT** to amend 1947 PA 336, entitled "An act to prohibit strikes by certain public employees; to provide review from disciplinary action with respect thereto; to provide for the mediation of grievances and the holding of elections; to declare and protect the rights and privileges of public employees; to require certain provisions in collective bargaining agreements; to prescribe means of enforcement and penalties for the violation of the provisions of this act; and to make appropriations.

## Resolution to Improve Educational Opportunity for Youth in Foster Care

**WHEREAS**, youth living in Michigan congregate care and juvenile justice facilities are often denied the opportunity to learn and be educated in credit-bearing educational programs that guide students toward high school graduation and postsecondary opportunities; and

**WHEREAS**, many youth are not aware that these classes are not credit-bearing and become discouraged once they try to transfer credits to a credit-bearing school. They may have lost one, two, or three years of high school. Some youth that have plans to go to college or into post-secondary programs simply give up; and

**WHEREAS**, youth in Michigan congregate care and juvenile justice facilities are systemically facing obstacles to graduation, with only 39.51% earning a diploma or GED certificate by age 19, compared to 80.47% of public high school students overall; and

**WHEREAS**, children and youth of color in Michigan are more likely to be placed in institutions and in the most restrictive settings, to stay there for long periods of time, and to age out of the foster care system without a family. As a result of these experiences, black and brown children and their families are at greater risk for negative health, social and economic effects. (Michigan's Child Welfare Improvement Task Force, 2021); and

**WHEREAS**, children and youth who are a part of a minority group face even greater odds, as they are more likely to have unmet social and emotional learning needs, and are less likely to have advocates that speak on their behalf; and

**WHEREAS**, Section 380.10 of Michigan's Revised School Code establishes parents as partners in their children's education and ensures a positive educational setting. However, children and youth under Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) supervision have non-traditional parents and the Michigan Department of Education (MDE), MDHHS, and Child Welfare Court must provide information about a student's education to the child's legal parent as appointed by court, which may or may not include the biological parent; and

**WHEREAS**, congregate care and juvenile justice facilities should ensure that every child is enrolled in credit-bearing educational programs by either transporting the youth, implementing credit-bearing programs, or partnering with a credit-bearing program; and

**WHEREAS**, The Michigan Merit Curriculum (MMC) (P.A. 141 of 2007) states that, "The board of a school district or board of directors of a public school academy shall provide the opportunity for each pupil to develop an educational development plan during grade 7, and shall ensure that each pupil reviews his or her educational development plan during grade 8 and revises it as appropriate before the student begins high school;" and

**WHEREAS**, the education development plan is required for all learners to help students understand, navigate and stay on-track with their academic requirements and progress,

including help to identify both career goals and a plan of action to achieve them, starting at grade 7 and updated as student interests and abilities become more focused; and

**WHEREAS**, congregate care and juvenile justice facilities personnel or contractors should not re-define what adequate and appropriate public education is, as the Michigan Merit Curriculum provides clear guidance on educational requirements needed for high school graduation; and

**WHEREAS**, the success of youth in congregate care and juvenile justice facilities is important so that no child falls behind, and every child has the opportunity to become a productive and successful adult. It also coincides with the federal Every Student Succeeds Act, Michigan's Top 10 Strategic Education Plan, and Governor Whitmer's Sixty by 30 Plan.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Michigan Democratic Party strongly supports laws and policies that better support the adequate education and support of Michigan's most vulnerable youth and ask the legislature to amend laws that will guarantee that vulnerable youth receive credit-bearing educational programming that will keep them on target to receive high school diplomas and allow them to access post-secondary opportunities.



## Resolution on Working Conditions and Funding for Education

**WHEREAS**, the future of our state, our country, and our world is in the hands of our current students who will one day be responsible for its continued development,

**WHEREAS**, a majority of Michigan residents believe that Michigan's public school educators should be the trusted sources on education issues,

**WHEREAS**, a majority believe that both teachers and parents should have a say in school curriculum, without interference by politicians.

**WHEREAS**, Michigan's public-school employees are the experts on educational issues

**WHEREAS**, 83% of Michigan voters say public schools and education should be a high priority

**WHEREAS**, 68% of voters place increasing pay and benefits to recruit and retain quality educators as a high priority,

**WHEREAS**, improving access to two- and four-year colleges and trade schools and updating aging school facilities are priorities,

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the financing of public education in the state be funded at a level that insures an excellent education for every student

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that there be increased support that will ensure that all Michigan families have access to high-quality K-12 public schools, preschools and community colleges, in both urban and rural areas

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that offering additional support to students who may be in need of supplementary assistance be adopted, in place of utilizing punitive measures

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that policies be adopted that favor improving pay, benefits and working conditions for school personnel, including but not limited to

- Having the voices of educators be heard and respected on education reform and issues
- Assuring a financial compensation that reflects the significance contributions of educators
- Improving retirement benefits for educators
- Ensuring educators have access to due process in their employment status
- Increasing the amount school districts may pay toward school employees' health insurance
- Allowing for payroll deduction of fees, dues, assessments
- Repealing of the ominous "right to work" law

Resolution Advocating for a Program to Recruit Retired Seniors to Volunteer as Mentors in Public Schools.

**WHEREAS**, some children avoid going to school for various reasons, such as bullying, feeling inadequate, trouble at home, new surroundings, or school shootings.

**WHEREAS**, retired Seniors who volunteer as mentors in public schools can offer understanding, support, and advice to these children. A mentor is a caring adult, a friend who listens.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that this resolution be forwarded to the Michigan Democratic Party with a recommendation for its acceptance and placement in the appropriate document or with the appropriate committee for action.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Michigan Democratic Party advocates for a program to recruit retired Seniors to volunteer as mentors to troubled children in public schools.

## Resolution to Improve Behavioral Health Services in Rural Michigan

**WHEREAS**, There is a crisis of behavioral health needs in Michigan, affecting all ages

**WHEREAS**, Michigan has fewer behavioral health providers than are needed in the state

**WHEREAS**, Behavioral Health providers are especially lacking in rural areas

**WHEREAS**, Michigan has several educational institutions that train and credential behavioral health providers

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the state of Michigan supports the education and placement of behavioral health providers in rural Michigan, including but not limited to the creation of grants of tuition aid or grants that pay off student debt to persons who agree to serve for a number of years in behavioral health services in rural areas of Michigan after obtaining their credential.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, Michigan should promote a unified agreement between educational institutions and those entities who can take students for internships. Further, that Michigan provides a stipend for students who take internships in rural areas.

## Resolution in Support of the Elimination of Medical Debt in Collection for Michiganders

**WHEREAS**, Medical costs have exceeded the ability of many Michiganders, and

**WHEREAS**, Bankruptcy rates have quadrupled, creating an avalanche of destructive medical debt, and

**WHEREAS**, RIP Medical Debt — a national nonprofit — can leverage \$1 to abolish \$100 in medical debt, and

**WHEREAS**, 190,000 Michiganders have an estimated \$181 million of medical debt in collections, and

**WHEREAS**, Medical debt causes serious financial and emotional harm to families and the well-being of the State of Michigan, and

**WHEREAS**, Medical debt makes it difficult for people to afford basic necessities such as food and clothing, and

**WHEREAS**, People with medical debt also have a greater likelihood of experiencing mental health problems such as anxiety or depression.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, Michigan partner with RIP Medical Debt to erase the entire burden of medical debt currently in collections by using COVID federal funds given to the states for the benefit of the Michigan residents who are burdened by medical debt, not to exceed \$2 million dollars total expenditure, no later than Jan 2025.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, The Michigan Democratic Party encourages the Michigan Legislature to find long-term solutions to make healthcare affordable to all Michigan residents.

<https://ripmedicaldebt.org/campaign/michigan-2/>

## Resolution Regarding County & Regional Boards of Health - Members Eligibility and Credentials

**WHEREAS**, The State of Michigan has long advocated public health measures and supported reasonable, science-based laws, rules and public health codes (Ref 1), and

**WHEREAS**, Recent, ongoing and serious pandemic, substance abuse and mental health problems, for example, have highlighted the need to support said public health efforts, public health professionals and public health departments in Michigan, and

**WHEREAS**, Many of the above-described public health departments and professionals have come under unjust criticism for doing the jobs required of them by public health law and science-based recommendations, (Ref 2) and

**WHEREAS**, Rural Counties in Michigan have witnessed the abuse, threats, intimidation and loss of critical health care and public health professionals because the local board of health has been politicized, (Ref 2) and

**WHEREAS**, Many Rural Health Departments are regional in nature and are overseeing several (2 or more) lower, non-urban population counties, and are overseen only by elected and partisan officials (County Boards of Commissioners) who lack any public health and or medical expertise, and

**WHEREAS**, Some states - Indiana, for example - forbid boards of health from being dominated by members of only one political party (Ref 3) and

**WHEREAS**, Most states, including Ohio, Iowa, Wisconsin, Georgia, Massachusetts, and Colorado, among others – clearly establish eligibility to serve on a local board of health on the basis of professional training and licensing, established technical ability, and comprehension of the mission of the field of public health. In Maryland, for illustration:

- All members must be residents of (name) County, 18 years of age or older
- One member must be a professional in the area of Environmental Health
- Three members should be health professionals and one of the health professionals may be a veterinarian.
- The seven remaining members will represent the general public and will meet one of the following qualifications provided that not more than three meet the same qualification:
  - at least two may not have professional or administrative training in the health occupations;

- o at least two may have had professional or administrative training in the health occupations, but have not worked as a health professional in the past five years;
- o at least one shall have professional experience in mental health; and
- o at least one shall have professional experience in substance use disorders. (ref 4) and;

**WHEREAS**, Michigan's Public Health Code **fails** to clearly define appropriate eligibility, credentials, or competencies to serve the public health as a member of the local board of health, and

**WHEREAS**, The lack of clearly defined competencies and credentials for local board of health members in Michigan puts communities at risk from communicable diseases, environmental toxins, and violations of water, sanitation and other technical applications of public health science and law, and

**WHEREAS**, Politicization of local boards of health is a preventable threat to the fundamental charge of government to protect the people.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:** The relevant elements of the Michigan Public Health Code (1978) be amended to include clear requirements, expectations, competencies, credentials and other elements of eligibility to serve as a member of a local board of health that meet criteria of scientific, best-practices of the field of public health.

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**Ref 1: Michigan Public Health Code.** Act 368 of 1978 Part 24 Local Health Departments (Excerpt)

**Ref 2:** Halverson, Paul K., Valerie A. Yeager, Nir Menachemi, Michael R. Fraser and Lori T. Freeman. 2021. "Public Health Officials and COVID-19: Leadership, Politics and the Pandemic." *Journal of Public Health Management and Practice* 27: Supplement 1. doi:10.1097/PHH.0000000000001281

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**Ref 4:**

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## Resolution for the Decommissioning of the Enbridge Line 5 Pipeline

**WHEREAS**, the Enbridge Line 5 Pipeline has transported predominantly Canadian crude oil and natural gas liquids since 1953 from Superior, Wisconsin eastward across Michigan's Upper Peninsula to dual submerged pipelines under the Straits of Mackinac, through Michigan's Lower Peninsula and crossing under the St. Clair River to refineries in Sarnia, Ontario, Canada for a total length of 645 miles; and

**WHEREAS**, Line 5 has leaked over a million gallons of oil since 1968 and in July, 2010 Enbridge Line 6B spilled over a million gallons of heavy crude into the Kalamazoo River watershed causing a \$1.2 billion clean-up effort, demonstrating that continued operations of Line 5 pose a major risk of severe damage and economic loss to individuals, businesses, native American communities and the environment; and

**WHEREAS**, Line 5 delivers nearly 95% of the 23 million gallons of Canadian crude oil transported daily under the Straits of Mackinac to Canadian refineries for the Canadian domestic market or export, as well as crude oil products from the Kalkaska area oil fields to refineries in Detroit, Michigan and Toledo, Ohio; and

**WHEREAS**, operations of Line 5 provide only modest revenue to the State and its municipalities along with a few hundred jobs and provides delivery of less than 40% of the propane usage in the Upper Peninsula; and

**WHEREAS**, a major rupture of Line 5 under the Straits would be impossible to contain and be cleaned-up risking contamination of more than 700 miles of Michigan shoreline, resulting in multi-billion dollars in losses to tourism, commercial navigation, recreational boating, commercial and sports fishing, declines in property values and contamination of drinking water, with decades of environmental and public health damages and losses of more than 25,000 tourist jobs across the state; and

**WHEREAS**, a tunnel carrying highly explosive natural gas liquids would pose a tremendous threat to the Straits area; and

**WHEREAS**, an industry consulting firm reported that decommissioning Line 5 would cause only a modest rise in gasoline and propane prices in Michigan, and furthermore that propane supplies to users in the Upper Peninsula could be supplied via a new smaller pipeline from Superior, Wisconsin or via a few rail cars; and

**WHEREAS**, former Governor Snyder concluded a deal with Enbridge to keep crude oil flowing for the foreseeable future under the Straits of Mackinac ignoring pleas from thousands of constituents of Michigan and shortchanging the work of his own advisory panel and task force; and



**WHEREAS**, the 1953 Easement gives the Governor the authority to terminate in the event that Enbridge has not complied with its written promises; and

**WHEREAS**, Governor Whitmer terminated the agreement in November 2020 based on Enbridge's numerous violations; and

**WHEREAS**, the State of Michigan has the legal authority and duty under public trust law to manage the bottomlands and waters of the Great Lakes within Michigan to prevent pollution and protect the natural resources of the State.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Michigan Democratic Party supports State actions to promote uninterrupted and economical energy supplies to all residents of the State, including increased usage of renewable energy resources; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Michigan Democratic Party calls for immediate State action to promote decommissioning and removal of Line 5 from under the Straits of Mackinac and along its entire route across the State, the construction of a new pipeline or alternative method to deliver propane to Upper Peninsula users and the construction of a new smaller pipeline to deliver Kalkaska area oil products to refineries in Michigan and Ohio; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the MDP supports Governor Whitmer's decision to revoke the 1953 Easement and also supports Attorney General Nessel's efforts to shut down the Line 5 pipelines in the Straits of Mackinac; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the MDP encourages President Biden to declare a Climate Change/Global Warming emergency and issue an executive order to withdraw Enbridge's permit to allow Line 5 to cross the US/Canada border.

## Resolution in Support a Rural Environmental Policy with a focus on Michigan's Waters

**WHEREAS**, the two peninsulas of the great state of Michigan are bounded by four of the five great lakes, with a combined shoreline of over 3,300 miles, plus inland lakes numbering about 11,000, as well as approximately 36,000 streams, it truly merits being characterized as America's Water Wonderland; and

**WHEREAS**, 35 million area residents should be allowed to share equally in the many benefits of living adjacent to this source of 20% of our planet's fresh water; and

**WHEREAS**, all should be tasked with the dual responsibilities of, first, individually and/or as members of their various interest associations, serve as stewards for the region, helping to maintain its infrastructure and its physical demands, and, secondly, to ensure that no individual or group is excluded due to any less equity than others; and

**WHEREAS**, major issues of stewardship persist, for example, massive ruinous crude oil leaks from the Line 5 pipeline located on the seabed beneath the Straits of Mackinac, to the agricultural runoff of sediments, chemical fertilizers, pathogens, and pesticides, to cancer and other disease causing never-break-down PFSA fluoride chemicals, to industrial waste like metals, chemicals, solvents, to the by-products of food processing, and impact the well-being of all Michigan residents; and

**WHEREAS**, continued efforts to mitigate these large concerns must be addressed, as well as more local ones like the infrastructure of inland lake and river communities where discharge from septic systems and drainage fields need to be replaced by sewer and water treatment systems, and the enforcement of local ordinances to manage spread of chemical fertilizers, all of which kill natural vegetation and serve as nutrients for invasive plants and algae bloom; and

**WHEREAS**, wide ranging as well as regional water issues require complex solutions, we must still see to the, often overlooked, needs of our rural and low-income communities, Native Americans, migrants, communities of color, victims of under investment and environmental injustice; and

**WHEREAS**, here specifically, concerns regarding poorly maintained water infrastructure, unsafe drinking water, lead pipe replacement, inadequate human waste disposal systems and unsafe wells, all contribute to waterborne diseases, poor nutrition, learning issues; and

**WHEREAS**, legislative and fiscal remedies to address many of the aforementioned concerns are already in place or have been proposed, such as, the \$500M dollar Michigan Clean Water Act, the 20-40 year Drinking Water State Revolving Fund loan program, or the \$36.5M Drinking Water Asset Management grant program, than

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Michigan Democratic Party, fully supports and encourages the broad undertaking of these and any additional programs to provide environmental equity respecting the waters and people of this great state

## Resolution on Clean Water Protection, Uniform State Standards and Regulation of Septic Tank Systems

**WHEREAS**, The abundance of clean, available, and naturally pristine fresh water in the Great Lakes, inland lakes, aquifers, streams and rivers defines Michigan in ways unlike any other state and is integral to the identity, prosperity, past and future of Michigan residents, and

**WHEREAS**, Michigan's waters are cherished and historically essential to indigenous people and their culture, and

**WHEREAS**, Michigan's waters are valued for recreational use, interstate (commerce), tourism and manufacturing industries and are fundamental to Michigan's economic security, and

**WHEREAS**, The ponds, wetlands, streams, rivers, lakes and underground aquifers supply and directly affect the quality and drinking water and water for sanitation, and

**WHEREAS**, As the "Great Lake State" Michigan's water resources are essential for Michigan's industrial and tourism industries, coveted by these industries in other states, and attract millions of visitors supporting tourism revenue as the backbone of local economies in coastal and inland rural counties through tax revenues, business development and employment, and

**WHEREAS**, Michigan has between 1.3 and 1.4 million onsite septic systems and 35 percent of Michigan residents rely on septic systems for personal, home or business sanitation, and

**WHEREAS**, Recent evidence indicates that up to 10 percent of Michigan's septic systems may be leaking into all categories of open or aquifer fresh water, (Refs. 1, 2), and

**WHEREAS**, Proven and suspected leakage from randomly regulated septic tanks pose known and verifiable threats to the state's critical aquifers waterways, and, therefore to the public's health, and economic security, and

**WHEREAS**, Regulation of septic systems in Michigan is patchwork, varied and without uniform functional or sanitary standards, because Michigan is the only state without a statewide sanitary code for septic systems, leaving regulation, monitoring and surveillance to the discretion of counties or townships to randomly set standards. (Ref 2), and

**WHEREAS**, Michigan's lack of uniform septic system regulations is an unnecessary risk for the state's lakes, ponds, aquifers and streams (Ref 3).

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:** that legislation is passed to establish uniform standards for septic system function and sanitary security that would address septic system failure threats. Such legislation should delegate regulation and inspection of septic systems to Michigan's Department of Environment, Great Lakes & Energy (EGLE).

**LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED:** That the Michigan Democratic Party urges Democratic members of the state legislature to provide the necessary resources for the maintaining their septic system that include:

- Establishing statewide standards for testing residential wells
- Providing assistance in collecting and submitting well water samples
- Provide financial assistance for septic tanks

**Ref 1**

- <https://www.michigan.gov/egle>
- [https://www.mlive.com/environment/2013/05/thousands\\_of\\_failed\\_septic\\_tan.htm](https://www.mlive.com/environment/2013/05/thousands_of_failed_septic_tan.htm)  
↓

**Ref 2**

- <https://mymlsa.org/government-and-legal-issues/ordinances/septic-system-ordinances/>

**Ref 3**

- <https://www.michiganradio.org/environment-climate-change/2022-05-04/michigan-s-lack-of-septic-system-regulations-is-causing-problems-for-some-of-its-most-pristine-Appropriate>
- <https://www.wemu.org/issues-of-the-environment/2021-07-28/issues-of-the-environment-does-michigan-need-a-statewide-code-for-septic-systems>

## Resolution on testing residential well water in Michigan

**WHEREAS**, Michigan has nearly 1.12 million households served by private wells, with approximately 15,000 domestic wells drilled each year;

**WHEREAS**, Once a residential well has been initially inspected at the time of drilling, the property owner becomes responsible for further ongoing or periodic testing;

**WHEREAS**, The laboratory testing process involves difficult and complicated paper work as well as expensive fees,

**WHEREAS**, No state guidelines or standards exist that would provide guidance for homeowners on what materials to test for in their water,

**WHEREAS**, Rural communities especially have many people who live in rental property where wells are the water source for their homes,

**WHEREAS**, Drinking contaminated water is a public health issue with far-reaching ramifications including children who may suffer brain damage or experience other health conditions, which will affect their ability to learn and become fully productive adults.

**WHEREAS**, The Michigan Democratic Party believes that different parts of the state should treat all areas of the state roughly the same.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, The Michigan Democratic Party finds the importance of residential well-water testing and safety to be a public health issues in Michigan,

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Michigan Democratic Party must urge Democratic members of the state legislature to provide the necessary resources for the Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) and county health departments to:

- establish statewide standards, including frequency, for testing residential wells
- provide assistance in collecting and submitting well water samples
- provide financial assistance for low-income families

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, The Michigan Democratic Party urge Democratic members of the state legislature to pass legislation requiring landlords whose properties rely on well water to test the water at periodic intervals and to meet standards established by EGLE,

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, The Michigan Democratic Party urges the establishment by EGLE of standards and protocols for residential water sampling.

## Resolution to Ban on Single-Use Plastics

**WHEREAS**, The State of Michigan borders 80% of the freshwater in the United States and 20% of the world's freshwater, and

**WHEREAS**, Scientific evidence now confirms that plastic pollution is pervasive in the environment, and

**WHEREAS**, Microplastic pollution such as single-use plastics make up the bulk of all plastics found on shorelines, including hundreds of miles of Great Lakes shorelines, and

**WHEREAS**, The government of Canada, in an attempt to address the threat to wildlife and the Great Lakes, recently announced a ban, to begin in 2023, on single use plastic items such as grocery bags, cutlery, food surface wares and straws. This decision to add manufactured plastics to the Canadian Environmental Act (CEPA) of 1999 was based on findings of a scientific study of plastic pollution, and

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Michigan Democratic Party strongly urges the Michigan Legislature and the Governor to pass legislation that will join with Canada in banning the manufacture, sale and importation of single-use plastics as soon as possible in order to protect the environment, economy and quality of life for all residents in the Great Lakes Region.

## Resolution to Ban Horizontal Hydraulic Fracturing (Fracking) for Gas and Oil in Michigan

**WHEREAS**, High pressure used in hydraulic fracturing for gas and oil (fracking) creates seismic instability and has resulted in earthquakes; and

**WHEREAS**, Fracking creates pollution risks to surface water (lakes and rivers), air and groundwater (aquifers) from toxic chemicals, such as methanol, ethylene glycol, propargyl alcohol, and BTEX compounds - benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene, and xylene. resulting in serious health risks to humans and wildlife; and

**WHEREAS**, Fracking uses huge amounts of freshwater (up to 9.7million gallons per well) that is then mixed with toxic chemicals and then disposed of, untreated, in deep injection wells under great pressure; and

**WHEREAS**, Excavating sand needed for fracking decimates our natural sand deposits including sand dunes; and

**WHEREAS**, Fracking releases methane, a major air pollutant affecting climate; and

**WHEREAS**, The drilling that occurs during fracking can tap into underground radioactive deposits which are then released into the wastewater, resulting in radioactive waste; and

**WHEREAS**, Fracking creates toxic chemical waste that is disposed of in deep, high pressure injection wells which may leak into groundwater; and

**WHEREAS**, Michigan's freshwater aquifers are a natural treasure that must be protected;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Michigan Democratic Party will urge the State of Michigan to prohibit deep horizontal hydraulic fracturing for gas/oil.



## Resolution to Ban Deep Injection Wells for the Disposal of Frack Waste

**WHEREAS**, Michigan has become a state that disposes of frack waste produced locally as well as received from out of state in deep injection wells; and

**WHEREAS**, the high pressure used to drill deep into the ground to dispose of toxic chemicals is known to cause seismic instability and earthquakes which create risk to groundwater (aquifers); and

**WHEREAS**, the risk of pollution to groundwater and surface water (lakes and rivers) due to cracks and faults in cement walled pipes used for the drilling process presents a hazard to wildlife and humans; and

**WHEREAS**, radioactive waste contained in frack waste poses a health and environmental risk; and

**WHEREAS**, toxic chemicals (e.g., methanol, ethylene glycol, propargyl alcohol and BTEX compounds - benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene, and xylene) in waste from hydraulic fracturing for gas and/or oil present a health and environmental risk to groundwater- or surface-water-derived drinking water; and

**WHEREAS**, Michigan's treasure is our abundance of fresh water and it must be protected;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Michigan Democratic Party supports prohibiting deep injection wells for the disposal of frack waste.

## Resolution in Support of Biochar to Support Michigan Agriculture, Clean Water, and a Rural Circular Economy

**WHEREAS**, with the 2009 publication of the Biochar for Environmental Management Science, Technology and Implementation, edited by soil scientist Johannes Lehmann, PhD from Cornell University, along with 50 other contributing authors, and Lehmann's testimony before the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming, the same year, opened the world's attention to biochar, an Indigenous technology used for agricultural soil building (similar to charcoal); and

**WHEREAS**, since 2009 some 140 research institutions worldwide have been studying this material, including the USDA Agricultural Research Service, US Forest Service, Washington State University, Michigan State University, Cornell University, University of Minnesota, Iowa State University, the University of Wisconsin, and others have been running field trials and lab studies. The International Biochar Initiative and the US Biochar Initiative have been producing webinars, developing standards and testing methodologies, and promoting new uses in agriculture, water purification, contaminated soil remediation, reclamation, and materials improvement. In 2018 the IPCC report recognized biochar as a promising negative emission technology; and

**WHEREAS**, while we are in the early stages of adopting this Indigenous technology, biochar academics have recently outlined a 10 year comprehensive research road map that would scale up US production. Europe, China, Africa, and South America are currently ahead of the US in production and application of these pyrolysis technologies.

**WHEREAS**, that said, a number of large-scale operations are already in production here in the United States associated with logging operations, and paper mill wastes. Many low-tech operations produce for gardens in small farm applications. Retailers offer a range of biochar products on the East and West Coasts and Southeast US. The whiskey industry in Kentucky and Tennessee have been using similar hardwood charcoal production techniques for filtration in the final stages of curing (called the Lincoln County Process); and

**WHEREAS**, here in Michigan, MSU has recently added a Great Lakes Biochar Coordinator position, USDA NRCS of Michigan has recently added biochar to its cost-sharing allowable practices, and at least two Michigan composting operations are now selling biochar compost mixes. Marijuana growers are using it in their preferred potting mixes and landscapers are using the material in their plantings. Several vineyards in Leelanau and Grand Traverse Counties are also experimenting with biochar; and

**WHEREAS**, biochar has been found to significantly benefit the composting process by reducing odor, capturing several forms of nitrogen and methane reducing loss to volatilization, and doubling stable carbon content; and

**WHEREAS**, biochar collaboration in research and industry is developing mobile units of various sizes, on farm units that produce electricity in addition to char, and more sophisticated stationary units that capture complex oils and gases that provide valuable additives to diesel, and finding uses in manure management, crop specific applications, reclamation, and water purification.

**WHEREAS**, a growing number of studies have shown potential agronomic benefits of co-composting with biochar including co-location of biochar and composting facilities that provide benefits of acceleration of the composting process, odor control, GHG emission reduction, increased nutrient adsorption, and higher commercial value of the compost; and

**WHEREAS**, seven leading academic authors in a recent technical journal article on integrated biochar research conclude, “The time to define and implement solutions to address the peril of climate change is now. We believe that investment in this integrated long-term research program would, within a decade, resolve the most important information needs with respect to the technology for biochar and bioenergy production and the agronomic and environmental impacts of biochar use. This information is critically needed by both private and governmental decision makers to ensure that deployment will yield the maximum productivity, economic, and environmental benefits. Biochar and integrated biochar-bioenergy production systems have the potential to become a robust distributed industry supporting rural economies and an important part of a broader portfolio of solutions to climate change. All will be needed to meet the challenge.”; and

**WHEREAS**, as this resolution and two other related resolutions point out (“Climate Change Solutions Through Agricultural Practices”, “Composting to Support Michigan Agriculture, Clean Water, and a Rural Circular Economy” and “Biochar to Support Michigan Agriculture, Clean Water, and a Rural Circular Economy”), Michigan is uniquely positioned with an abundance of organic waste streams that could be rerouted from landfills and pit burns, one that generates methane and one that directly sends valuable carbon directly into the atmosphere to the neglect of (re)building our agricultural soils, providing new jobs, new industries, and enhancing our rural economies; and

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Michigan Democratic Party call upon federal, state, and local governments to urgently develop policies, provide funding for vibrant local and regional composting and biochar industries, foster partnerships with local municipalities, businesses, universities, and nonprofits.

## Resolution in Support of Composting to Support Michigan Agriculture, Clean Water, and a Rural Circular Economy

**WHEREAS**, food waste in the US is estimated to be 30-40% of the total food produced; and

**WHEREAS**, Michigan has a growing composting industry that is attempting to thrive in a matrix of Federal, State, and Local laws, which leave gaps in addressing local ecological realities, ignoring a huge market potential of soil building products that would serve to enhance and ensure Michigan's environmental quality and agricultural sustainability; and

**WHEREAS**, a core leadership group in the industry across a 10-county area of Northern Lower Michigan recently met to develop plans to divert this organic waste stream (currently about 100,000 tons going into landfills), into local and regional composting operation(s); and

**WHEREAS**, the group included representatives from the US Composting Council, the Michigan Recycling Coalition, Michigan Organics Council, Bay Area Recycling for Charities, Carter's Compost, SEEDS, Grand Traverse County Resource Recovery Department, Emmet County Department of Public Works Recycling Program, Genesee County Metropolitan Planning Commission Solid Waste Plan Committee, and the Composting Council of Michigan; and

**WHEREAS**, the goals of the group include building beneficial relationships with key players such as the Farming and Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) networks, Taste the Local Difference, Food Rescue of NW Michigan, Soil and Water Conservation Districts, Michigan State University Extension, Michigan Food and Farming Systems (MIFFS), Tribes (GTB/LTBB/LRB), Michigan Organics Council, Morgan Farms/DairyDoo, Camp Compost Organizers, all stakeholders in the Michigan compost value chain; and

**WHEREAS**, supporting this comprehensive composting industry represents strengthening Michigan's rural economy, linking urban to rural sectors providing organic recycling, new industry, new jobs with opportunities for career growth, improved agricultural soil health through carbon and microbiome enrichment, cleaner waters, human health, with side benefits to education, science, and much needed societal values of ecological responsibility, resilience, land stewardship, and conservation.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Michigan Democratic Party call upon federal, state, and local governments to urgently develop policies, provide funding for vibrant local and regional composting industries, foster partnerships with local municipalities, businesses, and nonprofits; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Michigan Democratic Party advocate the alignment of rules and regulations, particularly EGLE, to amend Part 115 of the Michigan Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act (NREPA) 451 of 1994, currently insufficiently addressed in Michigan HB 4454-4461.

Resolution to Enhance Rural Economy and Development, Environmental Quality, and Regenerative Agriculture Through Political and Organizational Leadership, Recycling of Tree Waste and Food Waste, and Renovation of Practices for Water, Air, and Soil

**WHEREAS**, a recent Michigan Democratic Rural Caucus (MDRC) resolution entitled, “**Climate Change Solutions Through Agricultural Practices**”, has stated that, “Agriculture is experiencing a moment of intense challenge. Climate change, market disruptions and record low prices are battering the bottom lines. The resulting social stress is driving many young people out of the industry. The Rural Caucus believes these problems have reached a crisis point demanding dramatic action.”; and

**WHEREAS**, the MDRC then resolved by the same resolution, “that the MDP [Michigan Democratic Party] promote sustainable agriculture throughout the state. Further, the MDP hear from farmers and from riparian/lake citizens organizations and other interested parties about the benefits and burdens of the current farming practices and what it would take to switch to more sustainable practices. With this information, be it further resolved that MDP work to bring together industry, farmers and other citizens to convert a significant number of farms to sustainable practices yearly, without adverse impact to farmers.”; and

**WHEREAS**, the Michigan Potato Growers produced a white paper on soil health in 2012, addressing their concerns for long term economic viability and soil capacity to produce, stated, “The Michigan potato industry has become concerned enough about productivity stagnation that it has begun an effort to address the issue. On January 11, 2012 an ad-hoc “soil-ecology group” comprising growers, marketers, consultants, agronomists and university specialists from various disciplines met to discuss possible causes of the problem and lay the groundwork for a practical response.”; and

**WHEREAS**, the Michigan Potato Growers paper further stated, Soil impairment is a limiting factor in productivity. Inputs including technological innovations may boost yields relative to past performance, but if the soil is not in optimal condition, stress on the plants exact a toll. Growers are aware of this relationship and are increasingly seeking soil analyses to determine precise data for representative fields. However, the biodynamics within the organic portion of the soil are still not adequately understood, and soil management suffers as a result. Many growers now perceive a need for a stronger grower-university partnership to expand soil research and demonstration projects applicable to the broad spectrum of Michigan commodities. Improvement in soil-management practices should spur productivity and elevate the numbers on the “dashboard” that tracks the growth and development of Michigan agriculture.”; and

**WHEREAS**, significant portions of our agricultural economy are involved in a repetitive process of chemical industrial agriculture, incentives are needed to spur movement into regenerative practices and technologies. Collaborative private, public, and governmental incentives are needed... The benefits will be great, including healthier food, watersheds, groundwater, and humans.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, this resolution builds on the aforementioned MDRC resolution of 2021 with three concurrent 2023 submissions, this, and “**Composting to Support Michigan Agriculture, Clean Water, and a Rural Circular Economy**” and “**Biochar to Support Michigan Agriculture, Clean Water, and a Rural Circular Economy**” as next steps that can be taken at the local, regional, and state level to begin to implement a comprehensive policy of carbon recycling and to build an economically and ecologically progressive future for both urban and rural Michigan.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, This resolution on regenerative agriculture builds on three others resolving to foster collaboration and coordination among government agencies, businesses, universities, and nonprofit organizations in the application of funding, ongoing research, co-location of materials recovery facilities (MRF, pronounced murf), collection sites for biomass, food waste, co-location of recycling, pyrolysis, and composting facilities, sharing transportation from source to processing, distribution to application, using geographic information systems and emerging technologies.

## Resolution in support of Universal Background Checks, Safe Gun Storage, and Red Flag Laws

**WHEREAS**, Injuries and deaths linked to firearm accidents and deaths — many involving children — and gun crimes and suicides are skyrocketing in America, and

**WHEREAS**, Nineteen states and Washington, D.C., have passed so-called “Red Flag” gun laws, many of them in the past few years, and

**WHEREAS**, Connecticut was the first state to implement a red flag law in 1999 after a mass shooting at the state’s lottery headquarters. The law was updated in 2022 to allow family members to petition for risk-protection orders, and

**WHEREAS**, Indiana passed its red flag law in 2004 after a man shot five police officers, and

**WHEREAS**, A 2018 American Psychological Association study found that Indiana’s law had resulted in a 7.5% reduction in firearms suicides, and Connecticut’s resulted in a 1.6% reduction immediately after it passed and a 13.7% reduction after the Virginia Tech shooting in 2007, and

**WHEREAS**, Similar bills have been proposed in Michigan in 2017, 2018 and 2022, but Republican-controlled Legislature did not vote on them, and

**WHEREAS**, A Nov. 28-Dec. 1 Glengariff Group poll of 600 registered Michigan voters found passing a red flag gun measure and requiring background checks for gun purchases should be the highest priority for the Legislature among seven Democratic priorities presented, and

**WHEREAS**, Students and others impacted by the Oxford High School mass shooting recently asked lawmakers to quickly pass background checks for anyone attempting to purchase any firearm in the state, safer gun storage laws and "red flag" laws.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:** The Michigan Democratic Party hereby recommends that the Legislature address, add a universal background check requirement, safe gun storage, and act on, reasonable gun-safety measures that match the restrictions in the “red flag” laws.



Resolution to Apply the Definition of Brandishing to  
Openly Carrying Long Arms in the State of Michigan

**WHEREAS**, open carry of long arms (rifles and shotguns) is not prohibited in the State of Michigan; and

**WHEREAS**, the public is increasingly threatened by gun violence in general; and

**WHEREAS**, the presence of long arms being displayed by groups or individuals at public events and gatherings is becoming more frequent; and

**WHEREAS**, the display of these long arms is perceived as a threatening stance by the general public; and

**WHEREAS**, this threatening stance is meant to intimidate the public; and

**WHEREAS**, to display a firearm with the intent of intimidation constitutes brandishing in the eyes of the law;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the open carry of long arms in any public space, save for the purpose of recreation in approved locales, shall be prohibited.

## Resolution Favoring a Fairer, Progressive Michigan Income Tax

**WHEREAS**, a progressive, graduated-rate income tax increases the tax burden on wealthier households and lessens that burden on the least among us, and

**WHEREAS**, **thirty-four** of states levy graduated-rate income taxes (Ref 1), and

**WHEREAS**, in tax year 2022 nine states had a regressive, flat income tax rate (Ref 1). Including Colorado, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Massachusetts, **Michigan**, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, and Utah, and

**WHEREAS**, a graduated income tax is a characteristic of the most equitable state and local tax systems (Ref 2), and

**WHEREAS**, several states are proposing minimum taxes on the wealthiest of their residents. (Ref 3).

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Michigan Democratic Party (MDP) hereby calls for the transition from a regressive, flat-rate income tax system to a more-equitable, graduated income tax by way of a constitutional amendment.

### **CITATIONS:**

Ref 1 <https://budgeting.thenest.com/many-states-progressive-income-taxes-26312.html>

Ref 2

<https://itep.org/the-progressive-income-tax-an-essential-element-of-fair-and-sustainable-state-tax-systems/>

Ref 3 <https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2023/01/17/wealth-taxes-state-level/>

Resolution for Rescission of State Laws that remove control from or supersede laws passed by counties or communities

**WHEREAS**, the State of Michigan under Republican control has a long history of systemically passing legislation to override or supersede laws and regulations passed by Counties, Townships and Communities, and

**WHEREAS**, the Michigan Legislature as an active legislative body does not know nor take into account the underlying reason the laws and regulations were passed by each County, Township and local Community, and

**WHEREAS**, the Michigan Legislature does not know nor value the data of any public polling nor community sentiment about the locally passed laws and regulations, and

**WHEREAS**, the Michigan Legislature as an active legislative body has shown a strong history of legislating based on the lobbying by business interests such as the Chamber of Commerce, Michigan Realtors Association, Farm Bureau, Michigan Mining Association and many others, and

**WHEREAS**, the Michigan Legislature as an active legislative body has introduced and passed legislation heavily influenced and sometimes even written by business lobbyists, and

**WHEREAS**, the Michigan Legislature as an active legislative body has introduced and passed legislation for strict ideological reasons and sometimes those laws' verbiage was taken from sample legislation provided by the conservative lobbying group ALEC (American Legislative Exchange Council) and

**WHEREAS**, the Michigan Legislature has passed laws that supersede local laws and regulations governing rent control, transportation and ride sharing, municipal broadband, guns, taxation and expenses, banning plastic bags and land usage such as gravel mining being a "preferred" use, and

**WHEREAS**, the Michigan Legislature has passed laws that supersede local laws and policies regulating retention of third graders for reading deficiencies, emergency managers for school districts, nutrition and

**WHEREAS**, the Michigan Legislature has passed laws that remove local control regulating gun concealed-carry permits from the Counties to the State and

**WHEREAS**, the Michigan Legislature has proposed laws that remove County, Township and Community control of regulating mineral extraction such as gravel mining and setting rules and regulations on short term rentals.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Michigan Legislature should prioritize the review and overturning of those laws that have removed local control by enacting State laws that supersede County, Township and Community passed laws and zoning unless the law can meet an extra standard of proof of its need and/or proof that the law is not illegal nor discriminatory.

## Resolution Recognizing the Life and Service of Joan Robinson-Cheeks

**WHEREAS**, it is with extreme gratitude that we, the members of the Michigan Democratic Party pause to humbly reflect and look upon with great honor on the life of JOAN ROBINSON-CHEEKS who made her transition on November 23, 2022; and

**WHEREAS**, JOAN ROBINSON-CHEEKS was born October 9, 1936 in Detroit, Michigan; and

**WHEREAS**, JOAN ROBINSON-CHEEKS was a lifelong provider for her community. For over 60 years, she has dedicated her life to ensure that the needs of the most vulnerable in our State, County and City were responded to by those elected to make a difference in people's lives; and

**WHEREAS**, for over two decades, JOAN ROBINSON-CHEEKS has served as the District Office Manager and Election Day Coordinator for the 13th Congressional District Democratic Party Organization, State Central Committee Member, Michigan Democratic Party Officer at Large, Delegate to the National Convention, Democratic Elector to Michigan's Presidential Electoral College and as a precinct delegate for over 50 years.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that this resolution recognizes the immense loss of JOAN ROBINSON-CHEEKS has on her family, Michigan Democratic Party and the State of Michigan. Let this resolution be a testament in the minutes of the Michigan Democratic Party State Central Committee as a memorial to a lifelong Democrat. May a suitable copy of this resolution be presented to the family of JOAN ROBINSON-CHEEKS.

## Resolution to Establish Minimum Threshold Requirements to Petition for a Recount of Votes on a Proposal

**WHEREAS**, the results of two statewide proposals on the Michigan 2022 General Election ballot that received a majority of “yes” votes were challenged by a petitioner claiming fraud and error; and

**WHEREAS**, the approval margin of each of these ballots made it highly unlikely that a recount would change the outcome; and

**WHEREAS**, Section 168.880 of the Michigan Election Code states that “[a]ny elector in this state who believes that there has been fraud or error...” may file a petition requesting a recount; and

**WHEREAS**, there is no requirement to provide any evidence of suspected fraud or error when petitioning for a recount; and

**WHEREAS**, nearly 1,000 precincts, representing about 20% of all of Michigan’s precincts, were targeted in this petition; and

**WHEREAS**, the recount of these two proposals in 2022 came at a reported cost to taxpayers of hundreds of thousands of dollars, which, if the whole state had been targeted, would have totaled in the millions of dollars;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Michigan legislature should review sections of the Election Code, including but not limited to 166.880, 168.881, and 168.894, and establish minimum threshold requirements for individuals and groups to petition for a recount of votes on a proposal;

**AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Michigan Election Code should define the calculations necessary to determine if a petitioned recount is unlikely to change the outcome, to prevent frivolous or otherwise unwarranted recounts.

## Resolution Regarding the DCCC's Failure to Support Democratic Candidate

**WHEREAS**, the Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission, which created the Tenth Congressional District, rated it more Democratic than both the Third and Seventh Congressional Districts, in which the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee ("DCCC") spent millions of dollars; and

**WHEREAS**, another independent analyst—the Princeton Gerrymandering Project—found that the Tenth Congressional District was essentially 50–50, much like the Seventh Congressional District, in which the DCCC spent millions of dollars; and

**WHEREAS**, Marlinga was outspent by James \$4 million versus \$814,000 through October 19, 2022; and

**WHEREAS**, the DCCC spent no money to help elect Marlinga, but spent over \$9 million on three other races in Michigan, including the Third and Seventh Congressional Districts; and

**WHEREAS**, Democrat Carl Marlinga lost to Republican John James by 1,601 votes, or 0.49 percentage points, making it the closest congressional race in Michigan; and

**WHEREAS**, with a minimal investment in the Tenth Congressional District by the DCCC, Marlinga would have defeated James;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Michigan Democratic Party strongly criticizes the DCCC for its failure to spend any money in support of Marlinga, and the MCDC encourages the DCCC to put resources into the 10th Congressional District in 2024 to turn it blue, as it should have done this year.

**LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Michigan Democratic Party strongly urges the Michigan Democratic Congressional Delegation to communicate with the DCCC about their failure to engage in the 10th congressional race and that in 2024 the DCCC must put resources into the 10th congressional race.

Resolution supporting enforcement of the U.S. CONSTITUTION,  
AMENDMENT 14, SECTION 3

**WHEREAS** the U.S. Constitution, in Amendment 14, states:

“SECTION 3. No person shall be a Senator or Representative in Congress, or elector of President and Vice President, or hold any office, civil or military, under the United States, or under any State, who, having previously taken an oath, as a member of Congress, or as an officer of the United States, or as a member of any State legislature, or as an executive or judicial officer of any State, to support the Constitution of the United States, shall have engaged in insurrection or rebellion against the same, or given aid or comfort to the enemies thereof. But Congress may by a vote of two-thirds of each House, remove such disability.”; and

**WHEREAS**, following the 2020 Presidential election, a widespread conspiracy against the United States attempted to overthrow the legal election results thereby allowing the Loser, Donald Trump, to continue in office; and

**WHEREAS**, this conspiracy culminated when, on “January 6, 2021, a mob of 2,000–2,500 supporters of U.S. President Donald Trump attacked the Capitol Building in Washington, D.C. They sought to overturn his defeat in the 2020 presidential election by disrupting the joint session of Congress assembled to count electoral votes that would formalize President-elect Joe Biden's victory.” (Wikipedia); and

**WHEREAS**, a number of U.S. Congresspersons and Senators voted against the certification of Joe Biden's victory, including three Michigan members of Congress, Jack Bergman, Lisa McClain and Tim Walberg; and

**WHEREAS**, by voting against the certification of Joe Biden's victory, these legislators gave aid and comfort to those seeking to overturn the legal results of the 2020 Presidential election;

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that these legislators, Jack Bergman, Lisa McClain and Tim Walberg, shall not be eligible to hold any office, civil or military, under the United States, or under the State of Michigan **Sedition** is overt conduct, such as [speech](#) and [organization](#), that tends toward [rebellion](#) against the established order. Sedition often includes [subversion](#) of a [constitution](#) and [incitement](#) of discontent toward, or [insurrection](#) against, established authority. Sedition may include any commotion, though not aimed at direct and open violence against the laws. Seditious words in writing are [seditious libel](#). A **seditionist** is one who engages in or promotes the interest of sedition.

Because sedition is overt, it is typically not considered a subversive act, and the [overt acts](#) that may be prosecutable under sedition laws vary from one legal code to another.



## Resolution Supporting an Elected Officials Code of Integrity and Ethics

**WHEREAS**, Michigan lawmakers swear an oath to uphold and protect the Constitution of the State of Michigan; and

**WHEREAS**, Michigan voters have the right to representation that upholds all the laws of the State of Michigan; and

**WHEREAS**, elected officials should be able to do their jobs free from intimidation, threats, or other unlawful interference;

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that no person should be allowed to hold any state level public office in Michigan if they have instigated or been convicted of participating in or have been proven to have knowingly or intentionally financially supported an insurrection or other action for the purpose of overthrowing a lawful election through fraud or violence, or if they have participated in a plot or action to threaten, kidnap or physically harm any public official at any level in the State of Michigan. Any such person should be removed from office if currently holding state office, and should be barred from holding office for life.

## Resolution Honoring Debbie Stabenow's Political Career

**WHEREAS**, Senator Debbie Stabenow has indicated her decision to not seek re-election to the United States Senate in 2024, and

**WHEREAS**, Senator Stabenow has represented the people of the State of Michigan with great Ability and Leadership, and

**WHEREAS**, Senator Stabenow earned the respect of those she represented as Chair of the Agriculture Committee, has focused on job development, protecting the Great Lakes, and been a champion for health care quality and access, and

**WHEREAS**, Senator Debbie Stabenow was the woman to represent Michigan in the U.S. Senate,

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Michigan Democratic Party and the People of this County and State thank her for her work and leadership and pledge **to continue her work and vision for this Country.**

Resolution to Salute Winnie Brinks

**WHEREAS**, The State Senate Democratic Caucus recently selected Senator Winnie Brinks of Grand Rapids to be the next Majority Leader of the Michigan State Senate; and

**WHEREAS**, The Michigan Democratic Party fully supporting diversity and equal opportunity and

**WHEREAS**, Winnie Brinks earned a Bachelor's Degree in Spanish from Calvin College; and

**WHEREAS**, Winnie Brins served as a director at several non-profits in the Grand Rapids area; and

**WHEREAS**, Winnie Brinks in a daughter of Dutch immigrants; and

**WHEREAS**, Winnie Brings has already served 3 terms in the Michigan State House and one term in the Michigan State Senate; and

**WHEREAS**, Winnie Brinks has compiled a strong, people-oriented legislative record, particularly in the area of health policy, veterans and women;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Michigan Democratic Party salutes Winnie Brinks for becoming the first women ever in this high legislative position; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Michigan Democratic Party commends the members of the Michigan State Senate Democratic Caucus for making this choice.

## Resolution to Salute Jeremy Moss

**WHEREAS**, The State Senate Democratic Caucus recently selected Senator Jeremy Moss of Southfield to be the next Michigan State Senate President Pro Tempore; and

**WHEREAS**, The Michigan Democratic Party fully supports diversity and equal opportunity; and

**WHEREAS**, Jeremy Moss earned a Bachelor's Degree with honors from Michigan State University; and

**WHEREAS**, Jeremy Moss was the youngest person ever elected to the Southfield City Council; and

**WHEREAS**, Jeremy Moss has already served 2 terms in the Michigan State House and 1 term in the Michigan State Senate, where, among other issues, he had led the fight for ethics in government and affordable housing; and

**WHEREAS**, Jeremy Moss has received many honors for his legislative work, including being named "Democratic Legislator of the Year" by, among others, the Michigan AFL-CIO, Michigan Municipal Leagues, MIRS News and Michigan Townships Association; and

**WHEREAS**, Jeremy Moss has accomplished all of this before his 40th birthday;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Michigan Democratic Party salutes Jeremy Moss for becoming the first gay person to serve in this high position; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Michigan Democratic Party commends the members of the Michigan State Senate Democratic Caucus for making this choice.

## Resolution to Salute Abraham Aiyash

**WHEREAS**, The State House Democratic Caucus recently selected Representative Abraham Aiyash of Hamtramck and Central Detroit to be the next Majority Floor Leader of the Michigan State House of Representatives; and

**WHEREAS**, The Michigan Democratic Party fully supports diversity and equal opportunity; and

**WHEREAS**, Abraham Aiyash earned a Bachelor's Degree in Political Theory and Constitutional Democracy from Michigan State University; and

**WHEREAS**, Abraham Aiyash got his start in politics by being a community organizer for Barack Obama's first campaign for U.S. President in 2008; and

**WHEREAS**, Abraham Aiyash served as Statewide Training and Political Leadership Director for the grassroots group, Michigan United; and

**WHEREAS**, As a State House Legislator, Abraham Aiyash has focused on remediating racial and economic disparities, diversity, and environmental challenges; and

**WHEREAS**, Abraham Aiyash has accomplished all of this before his 30th birthday;

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Michigan Democratic Party salutes Abraham Aiyash for becoming the first Arab and Muslim to achieve such a high-level legislative position anywhere in the United States; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Michigan Democratic Party commends the members of the Michigan House Democratic Caucus for making this choice.

## Resolution to Salute Joe Tate

**WHEREAS**, The State House Democratic Caucus recently selected Representative Joe Tate of the Eastside of Detroit to be the next Speaker of the Michigan House of Representatives; and

**WHEREAS**, The Michigan Democratic Party fully supports diversity and equal opportunity; and

**WHEREAS**, Joe Tate played football for 4 years at Michigan State University and two years in the National Football League, while still earning a Bachelor's Degree in Public Policy; and

**WHEREAS**, Joe Tate served honorably as an officer in the U.S. Marine Corps; and

**WHEREAS**, Joe Tate received 2 Master's Degrees from the University of Michigan (an MBA and one in Environmental Policy and Planning); and

**WHEREAS**, Joe Tate has already served 2 terms in the Michigan HOuse and was appointed Democratic Vice Chair of the House Appropriations Committee where he became an expert on the Michigan State Budget; and

**WHEREAS**, Joe Tate has achieved all this by his 42nd birthday;

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Michigan Democratic Party salutes Joe Tate for becoming the first ever African American Speaker of the Michigan House of Representatives; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Michigan Democratic Party commends the members of the Michigan House Democratic Caucus for making this choice.