

Oxford resident to kick off campaign for state House

By [CJ Carnacchio](#) on February 14, 2019



Oxford resident Jody LaMacchia will officially announce her candidacy for the 46th District seat in the state House at HomeGrown Brewing Co. on Feb. 21. Photo by C.J. Carnacchio.

Working for Oakland County Friend of the Court, Jody LaMacchia encounters many parents battling over custody and visitation issues.

“I’m meeting with people that are yelling, crying. It’s very dramatic,” said the 47-year-old Oxford Township resident.

But by the time they leave her office, LaMacchia said the parents have usually come to an agreement “because I helped them to focus on what’s best for their kids.”

Now, she’s hoping to put her 17 years of experience as a family counselor and conciliator to work in Lansing, settling disputes and formulating solutions for the state.

On Thursday, Feb. 21, LaMacchia, a Democrat, will officially announce her candidacy for the 46th District seat in the Michigan House of Representatives. She will do so during a gathering at HomeGrown Brewing Company in downtown Oxford from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. The public is welcome to attend.

“I feel that if I’m able to help these parents, (who are going through) the worst time of their lives, resolve their differences, then I can help with the gridlock in our state Legislature as well,” she said. “That is one of the strengths that I bring to the table.”

Her campaign slogan is “Bridging the Divide.”

To LaMacchia, being a state legislator isn’t all that different from being a family counselor.

“You have to be able to bring people together to get things done,” she said.

In order to do that, she said a legislator should tackle issues from a “common sense” perspective and “not be so rooted in party ideology.”

“That’s what I intend to do,” LaMacchia said.

Over the last couple years, she’s spoken with “a ton of voters” from “across the (political) spectrum” in the 46th District and found there’s a “common thread” among them.

“Most people feel that our political system is broken and that our politicians are too focused on party ideology and bickering instead of working on issues that actually affect them,” she said. “They want common sense and compromise.”

The 46th District includes Oxford, Addison, Brandon, Orion and Oakland townships as well as the villages of Oxford, Leonard, Ortonville and Lake Orion.

LaMacchia’s lived in the district since 1999 when she called Lake Orion home. In 2001, she moved to Oxford where she continues to reside with her wife Samantha and son Cameron, a 15-year-old freshman at Oxford High School.

LaMacchia is no stranger to the local political scene. She is the chairperson of the North Oakland Democratic Club and founder of North Oakland Women – Making a Difference, a group that encourages women to run for office and provides them with grassroots support once they do.

Founded eight years ago, North Oakland Women – Making a Difference now has more than 600 members, both women and men. LaMacchia admitted its members are “probably overwhelmingly” Democrats, but noted the group welcomes Republicans, conservatives and moderates as well.

“I’ve actually been surprised (by) all of the Republicans that have joined us. It’s cool,” she said.

Although the group’s focus is grassroots political activism, LaMacchia said it’s evolved over the years into “a very tight-knit community” of people who share interests and goals while forging friendships. The group also works to help local charities.

LaMacchia realizes it may seem a little early to announce a candidacy for 2020, but she wants to get a jump on things in an effort to better understand the people she’s hoping to represent.

“What I really want to do is . . . talk to everyone in the district,” she said. “I’m hoping to talk to as many community leaders and as many constituents as possible to find out what their concerns are and what matters most to them . . . I feel like I need two years in order to get to know everybody.”

Based on the discussions she’s had with people so far, the top three issues are schools, infrastructure and access to health care and prescription medications.

“I think there’s a lot of issues, but those are the ones that I’m hearing most about right now,” she said.

LaMacchia believes education needs to be given “the proper attention and funding it deserves.”

She cited a Michigan State University study released last month that found the state “ranks dead last” in total education revenue growth. “After adjusting for inflation, Michigan’s education revenue in 2015 was only 82 percent of the state’s 1995 revenue,” the study reported. “No other state is close to a decline of this magnitude. In 48 states, 2015 education revenue was higher, often much higher, than in 1995.”

“I think most of the people that I’ve talked to find that to be unacceptable,” LaMacchia said.

As far as infrastructure is concerned, LaMacchia said “everybody knows” it’s “a disaster here.”

“The roads are terrible,” she said.

Thanks to “humongous potholes” that are sometimes “hard to spot,” LaMacchia said she’s had to replace three tires over the last year.

“Our roads and bridges need repairs,” she said. “We can’t just let our state crumble around us. Something needs to be done.”

Access to health care and prescription drugs is a “huge issue” on people’s minds these days, according to LaMacchia.

“People can’t afford their prescription drugs. People are fighting with their insurance companies to have coverage for things that should be covered . . . We need to rein in the cost of health care and prescription drugs and hold pharmaceutical companies accountable for their price gouging,” she said.

To LaMacchia, these three things “aren’t partisan” issues, they’re people issues that “transcend politics.”

“Not having to hit a pothole on your way to work isn’t a partisan issue. Or being able to afford the medical device that your child needs to live – that’s not a partisan issue,” she said. “Having safe drinking water or good schools that are adequately funded – these really aren’t partisan issues.”

Given the 46th District seat is currently held by state Rep. John Reilly (R-Oakland Township) and northern Oakland County has traditionally been a GOP stronghold for many years, LaMacchia knows she’s in for a tough fight.

But she’s encouraged by the gains Democratic candidates made in the November 2018 election and she doesn’t believe any incumbent can consider themselves untouchable.

“I think everybody is vulnerable at any time and we’ve seen that with elections across the country – people that were in ‘safe seats’ (lost) their seats. That happened repeatedly in 2018,” she said.

“I don’t think anybody can take anything for granted now,” LaMacchia added. “People want change and people want their politicians working together to affect change and to improve their districts and their state and the country.”

LaMacchia intends to put forth maximum effort when it comes to her campaign.

“I just plan to leave it all on the field,” she said.

To learn more about LaMacchia, visit Jody2020.com.