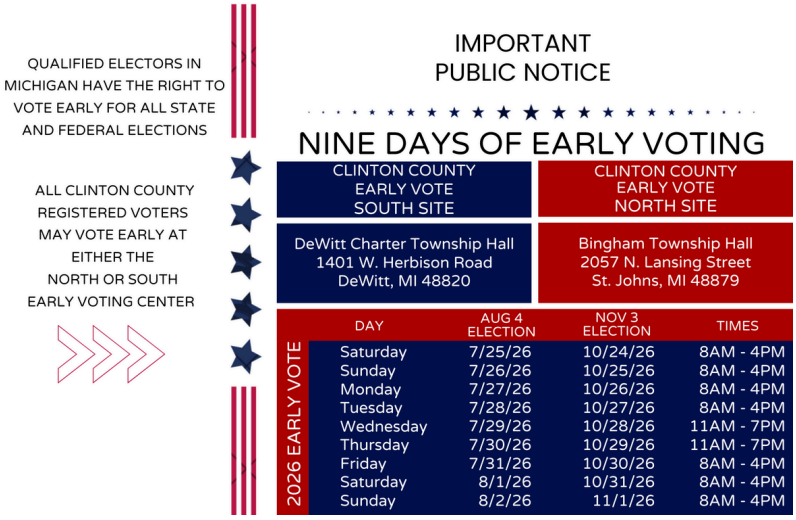
Clinton County Democratic Party Newsletter



October 2026

"This can't be another woulda-coulda-shoulda election. If you're voting by mail, request your ballot now, and send it back as soon as you can. If you vote in person, do it early. Bring a friend…become a poll worker. Most of all, no matter what, vote. And convince everyone you know to vote." - Hillary Clinton

It's All Come Down to the Next Four Weeks

By Kathie Elliott. Welcome to a packed newsletter written with you in mind! With under a month until election day, we poured all our energy into bringing you information you can use to complete and return your ballot. Perhaps more importantly, we hope this newsletter arms you with reasons to

help you persuade voters who haven't decided how they will vote, or who don't plan to vote at all, that they cannot sit this election out.

In particular, we ask you to reach out to those you know between the ages of 18 and 44, a powerful but disenfranchised potential voting bloc. Many of them do not believe their vote matters and they need to hear from people they trust that their votes are critical. A non-vote is essentially a "freebie" vote in favor of Republicans and this administration; whereas votes for Democrats take away from the MAGA column and add solidly to the Democrat side.

And, there is much more at stake here than two years of regret. We are already facing decades or even generations of incredibly focused and difficult work to undo the damage caused to our economy and basic rights just to get us back to where we were before MAGA and Trump. We need to claw back what we had in a world where hate, individualism, and ignorance are allowed and encouraged, swarming through our communities like locusts destroying crops.

But it is because of what has been lost that we must keep working in every way we can to rebuild. We must speak up and fight back this month, using our power at the ballot box, to have any chance of stopping this administration in 2027. Let's not give up or give in, there is too much at stake this November!



Where Can I Drop My Absentee Ballot?

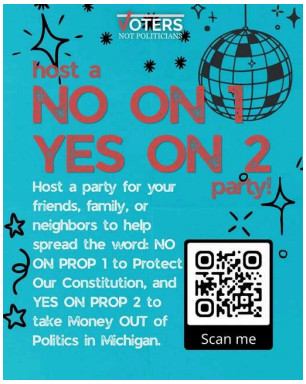
You may be wondering where you can cast your absentee ballot without putting it in the mail. Ballot drop boxes are one of the easiest ways you can cast your absentee ballot. Other ways you may also cast your ballot are handing it to your local clerk or taking it to a polling place and putting it through the tabulator yourself either during early voting or on November 3.

Voters can return their absentee ballot in its signed envelope to the ASSIGNED secure drop box in your city or township. Drop boxes look like postal boxes but are specifically designed to securely store ballots. Local clerks and their staff regularly collect absentee ballots from drop boxes and securely transfer them to the clerk's office, where they are stored until processing begins.

Please note that you must return your ballot to a drop box in your community by 8:00 p.m. on November 3. A ballot returned after the deadline will not be

counted. **To find your local drop box, use this link** and scroll down to "Search for your city/township clerk and drop box location(s)."

Remember, every vote matters! Share this information with family and friends and make your voting plan today!



No on Prop 1, Yes on Prop 2

By Sue Barrick. Ballot proposals always take a little bit of research to make informed choices. To assist, CCDP is echoing calls for voters to "Vote No on 1 and Yes on 2." Ballot Proposal 1 calls for a convention of elected delegates be convened in 2027 to draft a general revision of the State Constitution, and Ballot Proposal 2, put forth by Michiganders for Money Out of Politics, would prohibit regulated electric and gas utilities, as well as contractors with over $250,000 annually in government contracts, from making direct or indirect campaign contributions to those who run for or hold offices that impact them. It would also expand laws requiring disclosure of and regulating spending on political communications.

Measures to reopen the State Constitution have been soundly defeated each of the three times it has been presented to voters since the current constitutional revision was adopted in 1963. Currently, only two Republican legislators are on record endorsing Prop 1, GOP House Speaker Matt Hall, who dislikes that “they stuff so many things in this constitution,” and wants to see it simplified, and GOP State Senate Minority Leader Aric Nesbitt, who relishes the potential for many possible changes, among them to the selection of university boards and state superintendent of education. Prop 1 is opposed by labor, business, civic, environmental, and good government organizations. Passage of Prop 1 could threaten rights recently amended to the 1963 constitution such as abortion, same-sex marriage, stem-cell research, and affirmative action. **A "NO" vote on Prop 1 is crucial to protecting the progressive momentum embodied in the current Michigan constitution.**

Michiganders for Money Out of Politics fielded Prop 2 as a fundamental initial step to meaningful campaign finance reform. Jocelyn Benson, Eli Savit, Abdul El-Sayed, Garland Gilchrist II, Clean Water Action, Climate Cabinet, Community Change Action, Detroit Action, Michigan League of Conservation Voters, Michigan United Action, MOSES Action, Progress Michigan, and Voters Not Politicians have joined in supporting the measure. Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan PAC and the Michigan Chamber of Commerce through Protect MI

Free Speech oppose Prop 2, asserting that the proposed ban on contributions violates the free speech rights of contractors, regulated utilities and connected organizations and individuals. That view is in step with the U.S. Supreme Court ruling that corporate money spent on candidates is protected political speech.

Essentially, Blue Cross Blue Shield, DTE, and Consumers Energy have created the appearance of a pay-to-play culture in Michigan's legislature. According to **Michigan League of Conservation Voters research**, 60 to 82% of lawmakers received support from the two regulated utilities last year, not including untraceable nonprofit dark money expenditures. Energy committee members in both houses were favored recipients. **A "YES" vote on Prop 2 is important to end obvious sources of pay-to-play and to increase transparency so voters can tell the sources of candidate and campaign funding.**



Younger Voters Can Swing U.S. Senate and CD-7 Races - Reach Out to Those You Know

By Mary Rouleau. November's hoped-for blue wave depends on the turnout of younger voters (18-44 year-olds), especially in Michigan's U.S. Senate and CD-7 races. Last week, *The New York Times* r**eported** that Abdul's "modest" lead in its poll was "because of a strong advantage with younger voters."

While this preference by younger voters is really not a surprise, what is not widely known is that this demographic, Gen Z and GenY/"Millennials", is expected to be the majority voting bloc by 2028 — **if they show up**. Drilling down even further into the 18-29 cohort, in 2026, Michigan is the 3rd ranked state for the potential impact of those voters and our CD7 race is the **top-ranked Congressional district** in the country where the youth vote could swing the election.

We need to encourage young voters to participate and help them understand their power. The Abdul and Will campaigns are putting heavy effort into young voter turnout by using relational canvassing. Young voters trust those they know more than a campaign and are more likely to vote if someone they know reaches out to them. REACH is a voter turnout app to help with that, and there are **daily trainings** if you'd like to try it out. You can also point students to "students for" groups on campuses which are supplemented by College Democrat groups and other organizations. You can also remind younger voters

to check out social media. Abdul and Will have targeted messaging via platforms like Instagram and TikTok which they are using to great effect.

Please reach out if you'd like to get more involved in helping young voters connect with these campaigns, find voter resources, and make a difference in November!



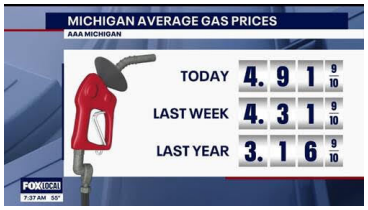
Don't Forget About School Boards Elections & Bond Proposals

By Ann McCulloch. Voters in jurisdictions across the county will need to make choices on who sits on local school boards and how those schools are maintained. We urge all Clinton County residents to educate themselves on the candidates and bond proposals that may be on your ballot. Investing in the care and maintenance of school buildings and infrastructure in a fiscally responsible way enhances the quality of education that our children receive. That is a civic responsibility, just like maintaining police or fire services, and bonds to support our schools should be supported. Notably, **St. Johns** and **DeWitt** have bond proposals on the ballot. Supporting these school districts with a "yes" vote makes fiscal sense and offers the best opportunity for students to learn and grow.

Who sits on local school boards is also critically important to ensuring academically rigorous and positive spaces that enable students to thrive. Finding information on school board candidates can be challenging. The Michigan Education Association has shared its **endorsements** for races up and down the ballot, including school board races. For the DeWitt school board race, MEA has endorsed Janelle Brezinski and Kyle Smith. While there is not as of this writing endorsements mentioned for St. Johns, the website notes that further endorsements will be shared on the page. For now, a good place to start with candidate research in St. Johns may be the Clinton County Republican Party, which has endorsed Chris DeLiso, Melissa Dennis, and James Sills. If the views of those candidates do not match your own, you may wish to look into the other candidates that are running in that election. Do not forget these important races as you are completing your ballot!

It's the Economy, and the GOP Is Not the Answer

By Monica Goble. The economy is overshadowing Michigan's 2026 midterm elections, reflecting voter frustration over rising costs, tariffs, and high fuel



prices. Fallout from the ongoing Iran war and its pressure on gas and energy prices are weighing heavily on the electorate. Many see the economic impact of Trump's tariffs, especially those imposed on neighboring Canada, as a major liability for the GOP. Recent polling highlighted by **Michigan Public** shows more Michiganders trust Democrats over Republicans on economic management and gas prices as we head towards November.

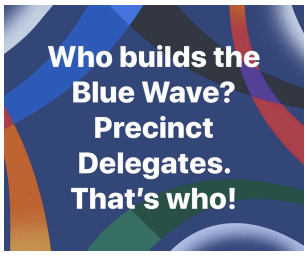
Fuel prices, which Trump repeatedly promised while running for president to bring down to $2 a gallon or less, are clearly overshadowing the upcoming midterms. The pain continues at the pump as Michigan gas prices hovered close to $5 per gallon (regular unleaded gas), or about $1.75 more than this time last year. Rising gas prices highlight the continued volatility of the global oil market since the start of Trump's Iran war. For those with a car or truck that runs on diesel, the costs are even higher, with some stations passing the $7 mark. This year's energy price surge could deliver a second hit to inflation as costlier oil becomes embedded in downstream goods and services in the coming year.

Especially relevant for Michiganders, Trump's tariffs have put jobs, businesses, and consumers in the middle of a trade fight with Canada that they didn't ask for. The **federal government** says over a third of all Michigan exports go to Canada, accounting for about $21 billion last year. This makes Michigan uniquely susceptible to a trade war. The **Michigan Smart Trade Alliance** has launched a tracker estimating that Michigan households have incurred more than $26 billion in tariff-related costs since January 2025, or about $6,419 per household.

Lastly, one can't ignore the ongoing impact of healthcare costs on our economy and on our residents. In the U.S., we pay over 50% more for healthcare than other developed nations. Every product and service here has a higher cost burden because of our healthcare costs.

What to do? Vote. The November midterm elections are rapidly approaching. How we get out the vote will be vitally important to the future well-being of Michigan. Nationally, Democrats seem likely to flip the House, but that depends on races like ours in the Congressional 7th, where we need to work hard to ensure a Will Lawrence win over Trump enabler Tom Barrett. Since being elected to Congress in 2024, he's been a loyal vote for Trump's most damaging ideas. To gain a Senate majority in the midterms, Democrats need to keep the seats they currently hold and flip four GOP seats. We need to ensure that Abdul El-Sayed defeats Mike Rogers, a toe-the-line Trump supporter who is out of

touch with Michigan voters. The stakes are high, and we need to vote accordingly!



Tales from a Precinct Delegate

By Bill Povalla. As a precinct delegate, I have been knocking on doors throughout my precinct. I represent East Lansing, Ward 8, a largely Democratic constituency, so my reception has been very positive. I utilize a plus/minus tabulation. Those voters who indicate they are voting Democrat are rated as a plus, those who indicate they are voting Republican are rated a minus. Many voters at the door are reluctant to say how they plan to vote, which is understandable.

I try to speak about some of the down-ballot races such as the Secretary of State, Attorney General and the various University Board of Trustees and Regents. I might not get a vote for a high profile race, but I might be able to get a down-ballot vote by having a dialogue.

I have a large number of apartment dwellers in the precinct, which makes it difficult to reach them in person. Many of these voters are students! I hope to send postcards to these voters to try and increase their participation rate. Here are a few more of my takeaways:

- I have received thanks for what I am doing. I have heard that people appreciate being spoken to in person. So many people have indicated they hate YouTube and TV commercials and appreciate a positive approach.
- I have heard that people are angry with both political parties. This election cycle, I hear over and over that the Republicans need to be punished for not standing up on certain issues, but they have also said the Democrats have to deliver, otherwise they will abandon Democrats in 2028.
- The major issues that people are talking about are inflation, gas prices, AI, data centers, corruption, tariffs, and health care. None of these are really surprising.

For a newly elected Democratic Precinct Delegate, campaigning has been a positive experience. It has allowed me to meet many of my neighbors and has caused me to appreciate the diversity of my community.





Upcoming Events

October 9 - Clinton County Democrat Canvassing: 11:00 a.m., 105 W. Railroad Street, St. Johns. Join Representative Penelope Tsernoglou, Candidate Dr. Rashida Harrison (Senate District 28), and Candidate Stephen Schlaack (House District 71) at the CCDP office for canvassing.

October 10 – Serenity Hope Meet and Greet Bonfire: 6:00 - 8:00 p.m. at a private home in Elsie. **Contact us** for location information.

October 13 - Save the Seat Fundraiser with Dr. Rashida Harrison: Red Cedar Spirits, 2000 Merritt Road, East Lansing, 5:30 - 7:30 p.m. **RSVP here**.

October 13 – Will Lawrence Town Hall: 6:00 p.m., St. Johns. More details to follow.

October 16 – Virtual Coffee Hour with Sen. Singh: 8:00 - 9:00 a.m. **Register here**.

October 17 - No Kings Rally at Clinton County Courthouse: 10:30 - 11:30 a.m., 100 E. State Street, St. Johns.

October 17 - No Kings Rally at State Capitol: 12:00 noon - 2:00 p.m., West Lawn, 100 N. Capitol Avenue, Lansing.

October 24 - Greater Lansing Food Bank Drive-Thru Food Distribution, St. Johns: Southpoint Mall, 1023 South Old US 27. Volunteers are welcome at 8:00 a.m. Distribution runs from 8:30 - 9:45 a.m. or until all food is distributed. If you or someone you know needs a little extra food, you do not need to show proof of need, nor do you need to reside in Clinton County. You can pick up food for up to five families.

November 5 - CCDP Monthly Meeting: County Courthouse, Commissioner's Room, 100 E. State Street, St. Johns. Social hour begins at 6:30 p.m. with the meeting beginning at 7:00 p.m.

November 15 - CCDP County Convention: CCDP Office, 105 W. Railroad St., St. Johns, time TBD.

December 3 - CCDP Monthly Meeting: Location TBD, celebratory gathering and also election of officers for next year. Social time begins at 6:30 p.m. with the meeting beginning at 7:00 p.m.

Join CCDP/MDP or Renew Your CCDP/MDP Membership

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