



CLINTON COUNTY DEMOCRATIC PARTY

NEWSLETTER



A Message from the Chairman

*Nearly 67% of Michiganders voted in favor of Proposal 3 in 2018 to increase access to voting in our state. Yet, as Tim Hughes notes in *Under the Dome*, Republicans in Michigan are engaged in organized, strategic, and well-funded efforts to make it more difficult to vote, in effect thumbing their noses at the large majority of Michigan voters who worked for and passed Proposal 3.*



All of us are affected by the way wastes and pollution are handled. We have included information in this issue about a package of bills that will improve the way solid waste is managed in our state.

Be sure to check out Citizens' Corner to learn about ways you can help to keep all of us better informed about the activities of various units of local government from villages to townships to the county commission itself.

We have a lot of work to do. If it sometimes feels like we are fighting a hopeless battle, remember these words by Helen Keller: Alone we can do little; together we can do so much.

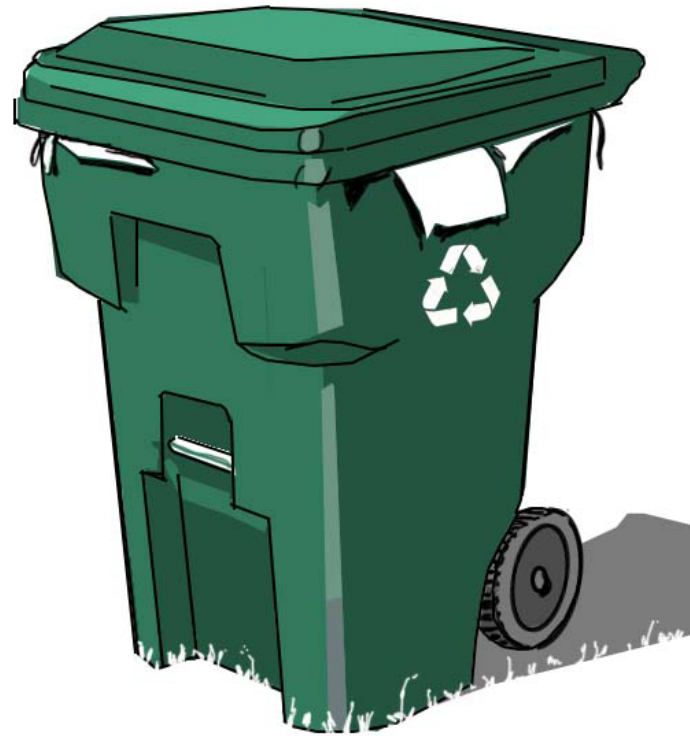
*Yours in solidarity,
Eric Schlenkermann*

A Better Future for our Solid Waste

Ellen Link

Michigan's solid waste law, known as Part 115 and now over 25 years old, has long been in need of repair. It favored expanding landfills over recycling, which languished, and encouraged the import of rivers of trash from out-of-state and Canada. Thankfully, a large number of stakeholders from both sides of the aisle have worked diligently for years to create sensible revisions to the law. As explained by the [Michigan Recycling Coalition \(MRC\)](#), "Since that time we've learned that much of our waste can be managed in more valuable and sustainable ways – through waste reduction, diversion, reuse, recycling, and more."

A package of bills was proposed last year and, with bipartisan support, deemed a sure thing but died on the vine. That legislation (H.B. 4454-4461) has been resurrected, was passed by the House on April 22, and now awaits passage by the Senate.



Among the proposed changes to Part 115 outlined by the MRC are the following:

- Provide a policy framework supporting investment in productive materials management as an economic driver
- Update and broaden the county planning process to encourage sustainable materials management
- Ensure adequate local capacity for managing materials
- Prioritize local control of facility siting and regulation of landfill development
- Require adequate financial assurance for all permitted facilities, including landfills
- Allow for the development of new recycling technologies and facilities
- Establish benchmark standards to ensure access to recycling opportunities across the state
- Support business commitments to a circular economy

Michigan cannot afford to again forego this opportunity to update its solid waste law and thereby procure a more sustainable future for its citizens. According to the MRC, "Michiganders spend more than \$1 billion annually to manage their wastes. While the \$15M now available from Renew Michigan—funding grants for recycling infrastructure, market development, and education—is a significant investment, our State must also adopt policies to fully leverage this funding." This is not something to leave to chance. [Contact your state senator](#) and tell him, Michigan needs this legislation. Please do your duty and help pass it.

Under the Dome

Legislative Update for Clinton County Democrats



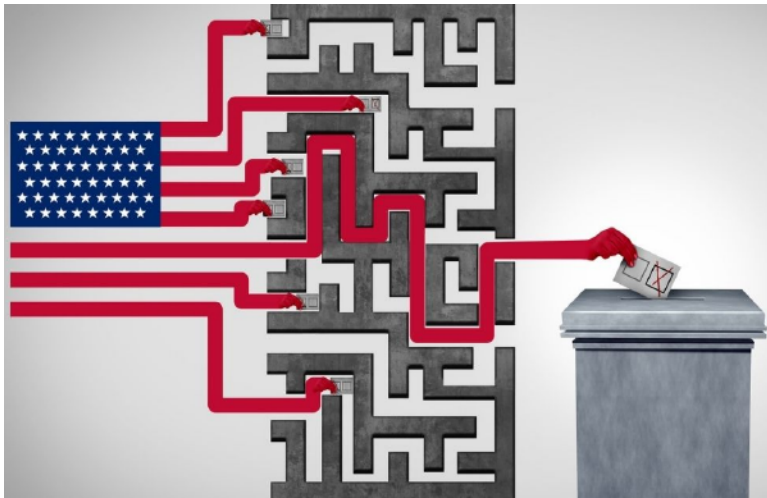
Senate and House Republicans Pass Bills To Make It Harder To Vote

Tim Hughes - June 24, 2021

Legislative Republicans have passed SB 303 and SB 304, legislation that will make it harder for Michigan voters to cast their ballots in future elections.

Under SB 303, voters would only be able to cast a provisional ballot if they don't present required ID at the polling place, such as a drivers license, state ID or passport, or if their signature doesn't match the digitized signature in the electronic poll book. Under current law, a voter without ID can sign an affidavit of identity, certifying their name and residence. The bill would require the electronic poll book to include digitized signatures. A tie-barred bill, HB 5077, would eliminate fees for getting or renewing a state ID card.

SB 304 would require voters casting a provisional ballot to provide proof of ID and residence to their local clerk within 6 days of the election for their vote to be counted.



The Senate also approved SB 285, which would require voters applying for absentee ballots to present state-issued photo ID with their application or other personal identifying information, like their driver's license number, the last four digits of their Social Security number, or a copy of their ID. That bill was not taken up by the House and appears to be stalled in the House Elections and Ethics Committee. All three bills passed on party line votes in both legislative chambers, with Republicans in favor and Democrats opposed.

Art from [Michigan Policast](#)

Governor Gretchen Whitmer said she will veto the bills if they make it to her desk. "Any piece of legislation that seeks to take away a person's right to vote or creates barriers to voting is a non-starter," she said.

In an attempt to end run a Whitmer veto, the state Republican party is also working on plans for a petition drive to implement the proposals without putting them before voters or Governor Whitmer. The Republicans plans to circulate initiative petitions to enact the package into law. If they gather enough signatures, about 340,000, the proposal would go to the legislature, who could enact it into law without requiring a signature from the Governor. If the legislature does not pass the package, it would go before voters at the next general election.

A law enacted by the legislature this way could be amended by future legislatures by a majority vote and a signature from the Governor. If such a proposal was approved by voters on the ballot, future amendments would require approval by three fourths of the legislature and a signature by the Governor.

The bills are part of a 39 bill Republican package that include a ban on mailing absentee ballot applications to voters, close election drop boxes at 5 pm the day before Election Day and ban pre-paid postage for returning absentee ballots.

Voters really don't see a need for the Republican package, according to a recent poll sponsored by the Greater Detroit Chamber of Commerce. It found that voters think Michigan elections are "fair" by a margin of 65-29. They think it should "easier to vote" in Michigan by a 52-25 margin. And 71% never heard of the Senate Republican package.

Republican Led Committee Finds No Evidence of Election Fraud

Ironically, on the same day the House passed the voter suppression bills, supposedly designed to fight election fraud, the Senate Oversight Committee issued a 55- page report saying, "This Committee found no evidence of widespread or systematic fraud in Michigan's prosecution of the 2020 election."

The Committee, comprised of 3 Republicans and 1 Democrat, unanimously approved the report, which said, "Our clear finding is that citizens should be confident the results represent the true results of the ballots cast by the people of Michigan."

The report recommends that the state Attorney General consider investigating those who used false information about a tabulation error in Antrim County to "raise money or publicity for their own ends." "All compelling theories that sprang forth from the rumors surrounding Antrim County are diminished so significantly as for it to be a complete waste of time to consider them further," the report said. "I'm pleased Republicans in Michigan are finally and definitely putting an end to 'The Big Lie' perpetuated by the former president." said Democratic committee member Senator Jeff Irwin of Ann Arbor. "The 2020 election has long been over, and the results were definitive — President Joe Biden received more votes in Michigan and every vote was counted, yielding a clear victory."

[A complete copy of the report can be found here.](#)

Some facts related to voter suppression

Republicans currently control both chambers of [30 state legislatures](#). The push to restrict access to voting was accelerated after the 2020 elections.

According to the [Brennan Center for Justice](#), as of June 21, 17 states have [enacted 28 new laws](#) that restrict access to the vote. [See BC's Voting Laws Roundup here.](#)

The involvement of national Republican groups such as Heritage Action for America, FreedomWorks, and the Susan B. Anthony List show that efforts to restrict voting in dozens of states are organized, strategic, and well-funded.

As of April 21 in Michigan, [39 bills](#) had been introduced that would restrict citizens' right to vote.

Clinton County Citizens' Corner

"The federal government of the United States (U.S. federal government)[a] is the national government of the United States, a federal republic in North America, composed of 50 states, a federal district, five major self-governing territories and several island possessions. The federal government is composed of three distinct branches: legislative, executive, and judicial, whose powers are vested by the U.S. Constitution in the Congress, the president and the federal courts, respectively. The powers and duties of these branches are further defined by acts of Congress, including the creation of executive departments and courts inferior to the Supreme Court."

~ Wikipedia https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Federal_government_of_the_United_States

Wow, that's overwhelming! It seems nearly impossible to have any kind of impact on the final decisions that go into running the business of our country when thinking of the various governing bodies that affect our daily lives. Often governing is best left to its own devices, right? And, what good can one person do anyway?

Well, we're here to tell you that as a cog-in-the-wheel of American politics, each person can make a difference. And furthermore, the significance of being part of our Federal Republic in North America is to consider it part of our duty as an American to get involved. I know, I know, there are too many other things "taking us away" and "we're too busy" and why should we care anyway? After all, it's pretty messy right now stepping into the political arena. Believe me, I totally understand why so many of us feel this way. It just seems like way too much. Well, we have some good news for you!

Here's the idea: Maybe we can bring our focus to city and township meetings being held throughout Clinton County. Public meetings at the local level can have a great impact on our lives and often just as much impact as the state and federal decisions being made.

One goal of the Clinton County Democratic Party (CCDP) is to have more county Democrats interested and involved in the local level political process. We have 16 townships in our county, two city councils (St. Johns, DeWitt), and are part of four other city councils (Lansing, East Lansing, Ovid, Grand Ledge), since parts of these cities are in Clinton County.

We are interested in knowing about issues that will impact us for better or worse. The effort should take minimal time. CCDP is a small group of actively dedicated Democrats whose numbers will not allow us to cover all the townships in the county and it is important for these local elected officials to hear from us. As we know, Republicans are in the majority here and their voices speak volumes.

If this is a goal you can get behind, we would like to talk with you. You can get involved by attending some of your local city or township meetings and then sharing with us information that you feel would be important to the residents of Clinton County. Our phone number is 517-512-9555, or you can email me at ccdemschairs@gmail.com.

Thank you for your consideration!

Theresa Kidd

Upcoming Meetings

Clinton County Democratic Party will meet at
St. Johns Rotary Park Pavilion,
107 E Railroad St, St. Johns

THURSDAY, July 8, 2021 AT 7 PM EDT
THURSDAY, August 5, 2021 at 7PM EDT

