



What's Up in Lansing

Presentation by
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For Livonia AAUW, October 17, 2023

AAUW Mission (Purpose of AAUW)

**To advance
gender equity
for women and girls
through
research, education, and advocacy.**

AAUW Public Policy Priorities

The [2023-2025 AAUW Biennial Action Priorities](#) adopted by vote of all AAUW members nationally every odd-numbered year are:

- To support a strong system of **public education that promotes gender fairness**, equity, diversity and inclusivity, and to address the barriers and implicit biases that hinder the advancement of women and girls;
- To achieve **economic self-sufficiency** for all women;
- To guarantee **equality, individual rights, and social justice** for a diverse and inclusive society.

AAUW of Michigan Public Policy Priorities

The [2023-2025 AAUW of Michigan Public Policy Priorities](#) adopted by the AAUW of Michigan Board are:

- To support and strengthen a high-quality system of **public education that promotes gender fairness**, equity, diversity and inclusivity, and to address the barriers and implicit biases that hinder the advancement of women and girls;
- To achieve **economic security** for all women;
- To guarantee **equality, individual rights, and social justice** for a diverse and inclusive society.

AAUW - Non-partisan but Political

- AAUW is non-partisan meaning it does not endorse candidates or political parties.
 - We may do voter education, all-candidate forums, all-candidate questionnaires, have elected officials speak at meetings, etc.
- But AAUW is political – it does support and endorse ISSUES based on AAUWMI adopted public policy priorities - and **advocates** for their advancement or defeat consistent with our Public Policy Priorities.
- Individual members may have their own political party preferences, but AAUW does not.

State of Play in Lansing

- New political maps created by MI Independent Redistricting Commission
- All-fecta sweep for Democrats in November 2022
 - Governor Gretchen Whitmer by 10.5 %points (17 of 83 counties)
 - Attorney General Dana Nessel by 8.6 %points
 - Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson by 13.9 %points
 - Michigan Supreme Court – Result is 4 Dem nominated to 3 Republican nominated
 - All 8 Education Board seats up for election went to Dems
 - Michigan House 56 -54 (one-vote majority; first time Dem majority since 2012)
 - 50.6% of Michigan voters chose a Democrat
 - Michigan Senate 20-18 (first time Dem majority since 1982) * Lt. Gov. breaks ties
 - 50.7% of voters chose a Democrat

Inauguration Day January 1, 2023

Left to right

Senate Majority Leader Winnie Brinks (D-Grand Rapids),

Speaker of the House Joe Tate (D-Detroit),

Governor Gretchen Whitmer (D)

Lt. Governor Garlin Gilchrist (D)

Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson (D)

Attorney General Dana Nessel (D)



CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICTS

7 of 13 Congressional Districts went to Democrats

- Most watched “swing” districts in Michigan
 - Dem pick-up: **Hillary Scholten** (Grand Rapids) in CD 3 by 12.9 points
 - Re-elected **Elissa Slotkin** (D-Lansing) in CD 7 by 5.29 points
 - Re-elected **Dan Kildee** (D-Flint) in CD 8 by 10.27 points
 - In open CD 10 seat, Republican **John James** (R-Bloomfield Hills) won over Democrat Carl Marlinga by 1601 votes (by .49 percentage points)

2022 BALLOT PROPOSALS in effect 12-23-22

State Proposal - 22-1: Constitutional Amendment: Voters for Transparency and Term Limits

	Votes	Percent
Yes	2,830,025	66.32%

State Proposal - 22-2: Constitutional Amendment: Promote the Vote

	Votes	Percent
Yes	2,578,182	59.98%

State Proposal - 22-3: Constitutional Amendment: Reproductive Freedom for All

	Votes	Percent
Yes	2,475,082	56.66%

Michigan Senate – 4-year term (max 12 years)

- **20 Democrats – 18 Republicans** Lt. Governor can break tie votes
- **15 women (40%), 23 men (60%)**
- **12 of 20 Dems are women (60%)**
- 3 African-American women (8%), 0 African-American men
- 1 Asian woman, 1 Asian man (5%)
- 17 (45%) Re-elected State Senators
- 4 New Senators with no prior state legislative experience
- 2 with prior 2-year experience in State House

SENATE LEADERSHIP

- **Majority Leader Winnie Brinks (D-Grand Rapids) [the first woman to serve as Senate majority leader in state history]**
- Assistant Majority Leader **Darrin Camilleri (D-Brownstown Township)**
- Majority President Pro Tempore **Jeremy Moss (D-Southfield)** [first pro tempore position held by member of the LGBT community in state history]
- Majority Floor Leader **Sam Singh (D-East Lansing)** [first Asian Indian American elected to the Senate]
- Appropriations Committee Chair **Sara Anthony (D-Lansing)**
- **Minority Leader Aric Nesbitt (R-Porter Township)**
- Assistant Minority Leaders **Rick Outman (R-Six Lakes)** and **Lana Theis (R-Brighton)**
- Minority Floor Leader **Dan Lauwers (R-Brockway)**

Senate Leader
Winnie Brinks (D-
Grand Rapids),
right and **Lt.**
Governor Garlin
Gilchrist, below



Michigan House – 2-year term (max 12 years)

- **56 Democrats – 54 Republicans; one-vote majority**
2 Dems running for mayor on November 7, 2023, ballot; if elected, would have to resign from House seat; special election to fill vacancy would be called by Governor; likely special primary February 27 and maybe? election in May)
- **45 women (41%), 65 men (59%) – 14th highest % women in USA**
- **32/56 (57%) Democratic Caucus and 12/54 (22%) Republican Caucus are women**
- **54 (49 percent) are entirely new, first-term state legislators**
- **52 percent have local government and/or education experience**
- **80 percent have a college education**

Michigan HOUSE LEADERSHIP

Speaker of the House Joe Tate (D-Detroit) [first African-American Speaker of the House in state history]

- Speaker Pro Tempore **Laurie Pohutsky (D-Livonia)** [first openly bisexual woman to serve as speaker pro tempore]
- Majority Floor Leader **Abraham Aiyash (D-Hamtramck)** [first Muslim to serve in this role]
- Appropriations Committee Chair **Angela Witwer (D-Grand Ledge)**

House Minority Leader Matt Hall (R-Comstock Township)

- House Minority Floor Leader **Bryan Posthumus (R-Cannon Township)**

House Opening Day Ceremony

Oath of Office provided
by new Michigan
Supreme Court Justice
Kyra Harris Bolden

Election of Officers

- Speaker
- Speaker Pro Tempore
- Clerk

Adoption of Rules

Speaker of the House State Representative
Joe Tate (D-Detroit), right
January 11, 2023, scene from the balcony
with guests seated in any open space,
below



Governor's Second-Term Priorities

January 1 Inauguration Speech

- Targeted tax cuts - repeal pension tax and increase EITC
- Repeal outdated laws like abortion restrictions and pass LGBT protections
- Gun safety: red-flag law, universal background checks, safe gun storage
- Address climate change
- Economic growth, make chips, batteries, create jobs
- Infrastructure (roads, bridges, housing, drinking water)
- Education and training expansion, universal pre-K, tutoring, state-supported childcare expansion

State of the State Address

Similar themes as Inaugural speech

- Online at [Michigan.gov/StateOfTheState](https://michigan.gov/StateOfTheState)
- [YouTube](#)

Executive (Governor's) budget introduced February 8; passed in June

- \$81.7 billion, a record
- General Fund total of \$14.8 billion and a School Aid Fund total of \$19 billion.
- The remainder – \$45.2 billion – is restricted federal funding revenue
- Themes: Lowering costs – Targeted tax relief for retirees and working families; \$180 inflation rebate, free universal pre-K for 4-years olds; Education – Getting kids back on track; Public Health – Strengthening families; Rebuilding Infrastructure; Economic Development.

102nd Legislature

- **Committees restructured - 21 House, 17 Senate**
- **110 session days in 2023 planned compared to actual 86 days in 2022 under Republican leadership.**
 - **Immediate Effect** for new laws requires 2/3 vote of each chamber
 - Swift gavel on voice vote in House
 - Roll call vote in Senate permitted
 - With no IE, new statutes become effective 91 days after sine die adjournment of the Legislature for the year.
 - PA 2 of 2023 signed 2/1/23 setting February 27, 2024, presidential primary; Legislature must adjourn in early November 2023 for it to become law.
- **593 Senate bills** introduced as of October 17.
- **1,145 House bills** introduced as of October 13.

550 bills tracked for AAUWMI as of October 13

- **55 Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, Human Trafficking bills**
- **108 Economic Justice bills**
- **63 Education Equity bills**
- **83 Employment - Economic Security bills**
- **56 Family bills**
- **86 Firearms bills**
- **15 LGBT rights bills**
- **95 Reproductive Justice bills**
- **114 Voting Rights, Campaign Finance, Ethics, Lobbying bills**

Big First Day Bill Intros That Became Law

House

- [HB 4001](#) Retirement/Pension Benefits
- [HB 4002](#) Income Tax Credit
- [HB 4003](#) ELCRA - LGBT Rights
- [HB 4004](#) Collective Bargaining
- [HB 4005](#) Collective Bargaining
- [HB 4006](#) Abortion
- [HB 4007](#) Prevailing Wage

Senate

- [SB 1](#) Retirement/Pension Benefits
- [SB 2](#) Abortion
- [SB 3](#) Income Tax Credit
- [SB 4](#) ELCRA- LGBT Rights
- [SB 5](#) Collective Bargaining
- [SB 6](#) Prevailing Wage

Pension Tax Repeal (& EITC Increase)

- January 26 morning - Senate passed SB 1 (pension tax repeal) with two amendments – no 4-year phase-in and update the pension and retirement exemption amount to reflect inflation (my amendments introduced on the floor for another client!).
- January 26 afternoon, the House discharged from committee their version, HB 4001, and then substituted language that combined retirement tax relief over 4 years, expansion of EITC, a \$180 rebate for all tax filers, movement of money to an economic development fund, and other earmarks.
- Although it passed, there were not enough votes for IE in the Senate.
- **Governor signed on March 7. Effective 91 days after sine die adjournment. (Note to tax filers for 2023 tax year!)**

Restoring Union Rights

- HB 4004 would permit collective bargaining agreements to require employees, as a condition of employment, to pay to an exclusive bargaining representative dues uniformly required of all the representative's members. **Repeals “Right To Work law” passed in 2012.**
- HB 4005 restores the **prevailing wage** law.
- Each bill also would appropriate \$1.0 million for implementation making the measures **referendum proof.**
- **Governor signed PA 8, 9, 10 on March 24, 2023. Effective 91 days after sine die adjournment.**

Reproductive Rights

- By a vote of 58-50, the Michigan House on March 1 passed HBs 4006 (S-1) and 4032 to **repeal Michigan's 1931 abortion ban and penalty laws.**
- **Two Republicans**, Rep. Thomas Kuhn (R-Troy) and Rep. Donni Steele (R-Orion Township), both RTL endorsed, voted with all 56 Democrats. Proposal 3 passed in both of their districts. RTL subsequently removed its endorsement of the two Republicans.
- The Senate Health Policy Committee reported similar bills on March 2, along with legislation dealing with contraception and medication abortion. The bills were SBs 2, 37, 38, 39, and 93.
- **Governor signed PA 11, 12, and 13 on April 13, 2023. Effective 91 days after sine die adjournment.**

LGBT rights

- Michigan Senate Democrats joined by three Republicans passed SB 4 on March 1 to expand Michigan's civil rights law to include **protections against discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity or expression** in employment, housing, education, public service, or public accommodations.
- Michigan House Democrats joined by **8 Republicans** passed SB 4 on March 8 with Immediate Effect.
- When returned to Senate for concurrence, IE motion was defeated.
- **Governor signed PA 6 on March 16. Effective 91 days after sine die adjournment.**

Firearms

- MSU shooting on February 13 caused Dems to run their **11-bill gun safety package** earlier than planned, SBs 76 through 86 and HBs 4138 through 4148 in March 2023.
 1. Universal background checks
 2. Safe storage requirements to help prevent a child's access to guns
 3. Extreme risk protection orders (also called Red-flag laws) that would allow someone to petition a judge to have a person's firearms confiscated, at least temporarily, if that person is a danger to themselves or others.
- **Governor signed PA 14 – 19 on April 13, 2023. Effective 91 days after sine die adjournment.**

Michigan Reproductive Health Act Background

- During the *Roe v Wade* era, abortion opponents passed laws in Michigan making access to an abortion difficult and even impossible in some cases.
- Michigan voters adopted a constitutional amendment assuring Reproductive Freedom For All in November 2022.
- By repealing Michigan's outdated, unconstitutional, and medically unnecessary abortion restrictions, the Michigan Reproductive Health Act will ensure that people are free to make their own health care decisions without political interference.

Michigan Reproductive Health Act Background

- As states across the country continue to criminalize abortion care, the Reproductive Health Act is critical to ensuring both Michiganders and patients traveling from out of state can get the care they need.
- Several areas of Michigan law that hinder access to reproductive health need amendments such as the School Aid Act, the Public Health Code, the Code of Criminal Procedure, the Pregnant and Parenting Student Service Act, the Occupational Code and several others.

Michigan Reproductive Health Act

The RHA bill package encompasses **11 bills in the House** and **six in the Senate** introduced on September 7, 2023. The bills will:

- Repeal laws that require a **24-hour delay** before patients can access abortion,
- Remove the inaccurate **“informed consent”** requirement
- Remove discriminatory barriers to **funding** for abortion providers,
- Repeal laws limiting **insurance coverage** of abortion,
- Remove medically-unnecessary **TRAP** (targeted regulation of abortion providers) laws that are designed to limit access to procedural abortion, and
- Ensure abortion is treated like all other health care, with regulations that reflect **current medical standards**.
- **Omits** a bill addressing repeal of parental consent law for minors seeking abortions.

Michigan Reproductive Health Act

- The bills are **HB 4949-4959 and SB 474 – 479 and SB 593.**
- **House Committee reported out 6 of the 11 HBs on 9-30-23**
 - Rep. Karen Whitsett (D-Detroit) voted NO.
 - Her district voted 67% for Prop 3.
 - She has concerns about removing the 24-hour waiting period, removing the required screening for coercion, removal of freestanding surgical clinic structural standards, and Medicaid funding.
- **Senate Committee hearing on four of the six Senate bills on 10-10-23; reported them and SB 593 out on 10-17-23.**
 - No hearing on the two bills about Medicaid and private insurance funding.

Success At Last!
End Child Marriage Bill Signing Ceremony,
September 28, 2023



Many other issues

- Numerous **election law bills** passed and in the works that AAUWMI supported in Committee.
- Some Republican lawmakers have filed suit saying Prop 18-3 and Prop 22-2 are unconstitutional because only **legislators, not voters, can change election laws.**
- Paid leave and minimum wage 2018 **“adopt and amend” legal challenge** at MSC ; AAUWMI is on two amicus briefs.
- Board of State Canvassers may approve on **October 20** petition signatures from 2022 by Raise the Wage MI, attempt to raise the minimum wage to **\$15/hour by 2027**
- **Pay equity package** hasn't been introduced yet but promised soon.
- No Dem bills yet on **lawmaker financial disclosure** to implement Prop 1 of 2022.
- **Redistricting challenge** in federal court for racial gerrymandering in SE Michigan.
- Prosecution of **16 fake electors** ongoing.
- Three prominent Republicans charged with **ballot tabulator tampering scheme.**

Many other issues

- **Subsidized childcare** is now a legitimate business growth and Ee recruitment issue. Tri-share program working.
- **Axe Mi Tax** is a proposed constitutional amendment ballot issue seeking approval to circulate petitions to abolish the property tax on which local governments (education, etc.) rely.
- **Paid leave proposal in SB 332 and 333** for small MI employers financed through Er and Ee payroll taxes drawing cheers and jeers.
- **Michigan's new universal free breakfast and lunch** for school children will save parents \$850/year for each child and provide good nutrition for growth.
- **Universal pre-K** for 4-year olds will save parents big \$\$\$ and give kids a great start in Michigan.
- **More gun safety bills** in works like banning those convicted of felony or misdemeanor DV of owning or possessing firearms.

Resources

- www.legislature.mi.gov - **Legislative Web site** has bills, committee information, find your legislator, Constitution, current statutes, links to watch legislative hearings and session, and much more
- www.aauw.org – **AAUW national Website**; search for Public Policy Priorities, Equal Pay, Student Debt
- www.aauwmi.org – **AAUWMI Website**; click on the Public Policy tab
- **AAUW Virtual Lobby Corps** - meets most months on the third Thursday at 7 p.m. Discussion of latest relevant national and state news about AAUW public policy issues. Sign up with me at pollockm@comcast.net for notices of Zoom/teleconference meetings
- **AAUWMI Lobby Corps Facebook private group** –get daily public policy news at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/aauwmilobbycorps>

**Thank you for your membership in
AAUW of Michigan**

Thank you for your interest in AAUW Public Policy