

Michigan State Senate District 6 2 Candidates on the November 6, 2018 ballot

Duties: The Michigan Senate shares responsibility with the Michigan House of Representatives to enact new laws and amend or repeal existing laws.

Qualifications: State Senators may serve a maximum of two full terms. They must be at least 21 years of age and a registered voter in their district. There are 38 State Senate districts which are re-apportioned after each census.

Term: 4 years Vote for ONE (1)

BRENDA JONES, Republican

Did Not Respond in Time for Inclusion

ERIKA GEISS, Democrat



Website: <http://www.electgeiss.com>

Facebook: <http://facebook.com/electgeiss>

Occupation / Current Position: State Representative, HD12

Education: Brandeis University, B.A. 1993 (Developmental Psychology); Tufts University, M.A. 1998 (Art & Architectural History)

Qualifications / Experience: Visit <https://www.electgeiss.com/erika-s-bio> for bio/list of qualifications.

Questions:

1. PRIORITIES: What are your top three state legislative priorities and how would you address them?

A: 1: Increased Education funding. We need to make sure that public education dollars stay in our public schools, improve our student to school counselor ratio, decrease class sizes and pay teachers like the professionals that they are. We also need to ensure equity and access for students of all backgrounds. 2: Economic Equity. We need to close the wage gap for women and minorities, mandate earned paid sick time, have stronger pregnancy work protections and establish state-funded universal pre-k, repealing "Right to Work" legislation and reinstate the prevailing wage. 3. Civil Rights: See answer below.

2. EDUCATION: What measures do you support/propose to achieve improved educational outcomes and accessibility for Michigan students from early childhood through post-secondary education?

A: a. State-funded universal Pre-K b. Equitable funding for public schools so that all students have access to an excellent education regardless of ZIP code or demographics. c. Shrinking the student to counselor ratio d. Decreasing class sizes e. Paying teachers like the professionals they are to keep young talent motivated and in the state. f. Better funding for mental health g. Expanded access to teen health groups and medically accurate sex education. h. Improving standards and regulations for charter schools. i. Better integration of career-technical education options and college-bound options

3. ECONOMY: What policies do you support to increase jobs and help Michigan residents improve their economic positions?

A: a. Eliminating the gender and minority wage gap b. Eliminating the pension tax c. Mandating earned paid sick time and earned paid family leave d. Reinstating prevailing wage

4. ELECTIONS: What state policies do you support regarding campaign funding and voting rights?

A: a. Getting rid of Michigan's Citizen United legislation. We need to level the playing field for all candidates and not allow millionaire special interests to sway elections and misinform districts. b. I support the Voters not Politicians initiative to create a bipartisan group of people to draw district lines in an attempt to end the party favored gerrymandering that plagues our states. We need to favor community interests, not partisan interests. c. I have co-sponsored legislation that would lower the voting age to 16. d. I support no-reason absentee voting.

(continued)

5. ENVIRONMENT & ENERGY: What actions or policies do you support to protect Michigan's water, air and land for current and future generations, while meeting the state's energy needs? Explain how those actions or policies would affect the future of Enbridge Pipeline 5.

A: a. Protecting our Great Lakes from invasive species, corporate interests and pollution. b. Expand citizen oversight of our Department of Environmental Quality and the Department of Natural Resources. Citizen oversight could allow for the people to override business interests and close down or replace Pipeline 5 for good. c. Mandating lead testing for kids 0-4 and for small pets. d. Reinstate revenue sharing so that local governments can upgrade and eliminate outdated lead pipes. e. Stronger policies to promote environmental justice, limit fossil fuel infrastructure and improve our renewable energy portfolio.

6. JUSTICE: What policies will you pursue to promote social and racial justice in our state?

A: I sponsored HB 4728, to create a non-profit fund to assist legally people faced with the prospect of deportation. In 2016, I voted against legislation that restricts the ability of LGBTQ citizens from adopting children in foster care. I am a member of the Michigan Legislative Black Caucus where I have authored a legislative Racial Equity Score Card that ideally will be used in the future to examine critical legislation through an equity lens, and establish an African diaspora civil rights commission in LARA. I believe in using an intersectional equity lens when it comes to crafting policy and legislation.

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