

Michigan State Senate District 14

3 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)

RUTH JOHNSON, Republican



Website: <https://www.ruthforsenate.com/>

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/RJ4SEN14/>

Twitter: twitter.com/RJ4Sen14

Occupation / Current Position: Former small business owner of print shop; Former social worker at Children's Village, Pontiac, MI

Education: Oakland Community College - Associate degree; Oakland University - Bachelor in K-9 Education; Wayne State University - Master of Social Work

Questions:

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

A: My top 3 priorities would be: 1) To continue fighting waste, fraud, and abuse in all of its forms. I fought fraud and corruption in the Oakland and Genesee county Intermediate School Districts (ISD's) as a State Representative where money that was meant to help our children was being squandered and used personally by some dishonest administrators. 2) I will continue to fight to protect quality of life, including clean air and drinking water, and infrastructure improvements such as our roads. 3) Work to ensure that there are multiple pathways for our youth to receive a solid education so they can secure good jobs

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: My background is actually in K-9 education (bachelor's from Oakland University) and I went on to obtain a Master's of Social Work at Wayne State University and to work at Children's Village with disadvantaged and troubled youth. I support programs for at-risk youth, such as Head Start, because there is conclusive evidence that they have a large, positive impact on outcomes for these children. In the post-secondary area, I feel strongly that we must have multiple pathways for children to reach their potential. This includes traditional college-track programs, but also learning opportunities in the skilled trades.

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

A: Michigan has been named by the Pew Center as "the comeback state of the nation". Our unemployment has fallen from 14.9% in 2009 to 4.0% in September 2018. I think this is an underreported story! Michigan's Gross Domestic Product or "GDP" (a measure of economic activity, i.e. making and selling stuff) went from DEAD LAST in the country to the top quarter! To remain competitive as our economy improves and we have additional resources available, we must invest in our infrastructure such as roads and bridges, as well as education so that we continue to have top skilled workers. Learning is the best path to good jobs.

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

A: I have always supported - and will continue to support - 100% transparency of all campaign funds. During my time as Secretary of State I fought for new laws which increase disclosure requirements for candidates and PAC's, as well as increase penalties for those who violate campaign finance law (Safe and Fair Elections initiative). If elected to the State Senate, I will continue to work for transparency in campaign financing. In regard to voting rights, I am extremely proud that during my time as Secretary of State, Michigan was named #1 in the country by USA Today for getting eligible people registered to vote!

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: I got my start as a citizen activist fighting a hazardous and toxic waste dump that would have polluted our local drinking water and air. The Great Lakes are a jewel of our state and are vital to life, recreation, commerce, and tourism. One-fifth of the world's fresh water is in and around Michigan. I share the concerns many have voiced about Enbridge Pipeline 5. I am committed to listening to my constituents and to the experts on the best course of action to protect our Great Lakes if elected to the Senate. As a mother, I agree we must protect our quality of life for future generations.

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

A: Our economy must work for everyone. All residents deserve the opportunity to excel and to meet their full potential in life. Education I feel is the most important piece of this puzzle. Your zip code should not determine your access to quality education. As Secretary of State, we partnered with Big Brothers Big Sisters and driver's education vendors to provide access to students who otherwise could not afford to get a license which is so important to having access to many employment opportunities. If elected to the State Senate, I will continue to work to reduce disparities in opportunity for residents of our state.

RENEE WATSON, Democrat



Website: <http://www.renee4senate.com>

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Occupation / Current Position: Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce -Procurement Counselor and Shared Services Coordinator

Education: Masters of Public Administration, Central Michigan University Bachelors of Science in Family Science, Central Michigan University Mayo Clinic Medical School Wellness Coach Reiki Master Teacher

Qualifications / Experience: Grand Blanc Community Schools Board of

Education/Treasurer May 2009-July 2011 Michigan Certified Board Member 2010 Campaign to Elect Rick Snyder for Michigan Governor, Regional Director Genesee County Poll Watcher and Election Challenger Precinct Delegate

Questions:

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

A: My top three priorities for Michigan and for District 14 are Education, Infrastructure and Economic Development. I support providing an education in which all students have the resources needed to thrive in the classroom. Infrastructure improvements are at a critical time. My experience working in Flint, driving down any road and crossing crumbling bridges, we demand results. In Michigan, companies are having difficulties finding skilled employees. As State Senator, I will foster an environment where businesses can grow and families will thrive. Citizens are demanding better results.

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: In areas of reading, Michigan is below proficiency, ranking last in reading and math. In 2015, 4th grade students ranked 41st in the United States. As a previous school board member, I support public education and a shared vision. Schools are underfunded and are subjected to a broken system. Student-teacher ratios are high while the K-12 investment is low. More student and teacher/staff support is needed for the proficiency ranking to improve in our state. I support individual learning, professional development and additional support in the classroom.

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

A: Investing in education is key to economic development. That includes providing access to quality public schools from preschool through university, community college, or skilled training programs. It is time to tackle the large skills gap that Michigan is currently experiencing. Educational opportunities are the path to good-paying jobs that will allow families to stay in Michigan, entice companies to develop and graduates to flourish.

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

A: I take great pride in having the ability to vote and exercise my right to vote. I promote civic engagement and am dedicated to engaging voters in the process. I support get out the vote efforts and policies that engage voters in having the right to vote.

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: I support policies that offer reliability, safety, and affordability to protect Michigan's water, air and land for future generations. I will provide a framework that allows utilities to prepare and invest for our collective future. Rates need to be determined in a fair and balanced manner that offer a healthy environment to maintain the beauty of Michigan. Our citizens deserve to live in a state that doesn't damage or destroy. The renewable energy sector in Michigan didn't exist in any meaningful way until it was mandated. Sometimes government has a role to push the industry down the right path.

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

A: We need to create an environment that is welcoming to all people in Michigan and District 14. This includes investing in public goods and programs that make Michigan a desirable state to live that ensure equal protection under the law for all Michiganders. We must update our civil rights laws and provide protections to all citizens. I support the enforcement of workplace safety and anti-discrimination laws, as well as ensuring equal pay for equal work.

JESSICIA SMITH, Green



Website: jessiciasmithgreen14.com jessiciasmithgreen14.org

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Occupation / Current Position: Clinician, Lindamoodbell learning process

Education: Mott college Current Oakland Community College in Winter for sign language interpreter.

Qualifications / Experience: Every job I've had has been in Human services. Waitress, daycare, etc. I have always want to help people, and go out of my way to try. This is just the next step in trying to make the world a better place.

Questions:

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

A: Supportive the legalization of Marijuana on the ballot this fall, and also expunge those charges from the records of current and past incarcerated people. Expand the bottle deposit to include all 1 use drinking containers (water bottles, etc) and increase the recycling program. Encourage legislation that would mandate a uniform gun purchasing process nationwide, with standard background checks.

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: Better pay, training, and materials for teachers and schools.

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

A: Solar energy, Wind energy, clean water protections. They are fast growing in both in constructions and engineering fields. Offer current employees in coal/oil/nuclear fields the first classes/training to switch fields to reduce/eliminate job lose.

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

A: Everyone should have the right to vote. I have been an election worker for about 10 years now. Automatic voter registration and no limit absentee ballot voting.

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: Focusing on solar, water, and wind energies. I want to avoid building new and encourage the phasing out all pipelines.

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

A: Work to reduce sentencing on non violent and drug crimes, Promoting research and legislation to eliminate the wage gap between the genders and races. Push for a percentile based fine system for offenses.

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