

Michigan State Representative District 31

2 Candidates on the November 6, 2018 ballot

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

Qualifications: State Representatives may serve a maximum of three full terms. They must be at least 21 years of age and a registered voter in their district. There are 110 State House districts which are re-apportioned after each census.

Term: 2 years **Vote for ONE (1)**

LISA VALERIO-NOWC, Republican



Website: pending www.lisa4MI31.com

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Occupation / Current Position: Librarian

Education: B.A. English Wayne State University M.S. Library Science Wayne State University

Qualifications / Experience: As a librarian I have worked in the private and public sector honing my skills in research and management of small libraries. I have also been involved in professional and political organizations where I have been elected to serve on executive boards.

Questions:

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

A: As a candidate for the State House of Representatives my top three priorities are Roads, affordable auto insurance and educational excellence for K-12. It is past time to overturn Public Act 51 and begin making our roads in Michigan safer. Auto insurance is too expensive. Auto insurance should be "market" driven by allowing the consumers to decide how much additional health insurance they want to have through their auto insurance plan. Educational excellence is lacking as it has been demonstrated by low reading scores. To combat this I suggest early literacy programs as well as re-instatement of school libraries.

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: I am in full support of parents/caregivers' rights to choose what educational model works best for their child. Michigan students ranked 35th in fourth grade reading skills, although this is an improvement it is still unacceptable. Testing is not enough to ensure a rise in reading skills. Reading programs and support must be put in place by the schools to encourage independent reading. Public and School libraries can play an important role in filling in the gaps to support reading programs. It is important to support teachers with opportunities to gain new skills to adapt to the changes in education technology.

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

A: Much of the struggles faced by employers today is the lack of skilled workers. Vocational education is one of the first steps towards employing and retaining workers in our states. Companies wishing to expand in Michigan should be given incentives to do so.

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

A: As with every voter, I believe that the integrity of the vote is important and should not be tampered with in any way. Therefore I do not believe it would be too much of an inconvenience to ask the voter when they come to vote to provide proper ID. Campaign funding should be transparent. At this time I do not see the laws needing to be changed drastically. I believe safety measures are put in place to ensure the transparency of all campaigns.

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: It is important to explore ways and means to supplying energy without destroying or harming the environment. I am in favor of alternate energy if it's a reliable, cost effective and sensible choice. Having said that, the Enbridge Pipeline 5 must comply with transparency on when inspections are done as well as ensuring that oil leaks are avoided. We must do everything we can to ensure the Mackinac Straits remain pristine and oil free.

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

A: As a society it is important to pursue the ideals of "equality for all" regardless of our culture, race or religion. I believe that identity politics is divisive. We are all humans. We should all be treated equally under the law as the Constitution states.

WILLIAM J SOWERBY, Democrat



Website: www.billsowerby.com

Facebook: <http://vote4sowerby>

Occupation / Current Position: State Representative, District 31

Education: Wayne State University, B.A. Degree - 1978; Lake Shore High School, St. Clair Shores, MI - Diploma, 1974; St. Gertrude Elementary, St. Clair Shores, MI

Qualifications / Experience: State Representative, District 31 - 2017 to present; Treasurer, Charter Township of Clinton - 1996 to 2016; County Commissioner, Macomb County - 1989 to 1996; Automotive Sales - 18 years

Questions:

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

A: Increasing wages and reducing income inequality. People are working harder than ever but they are not seeing their wages rise significantly. People feel that the economy is rigged against them. Improving our public education system. We need to increase education funding and ensure that teachers and schools have the resources they need to successfully prepare our students for a 21st Century economy. We also need to better protect our natural resources. We should be valuing clean air, water, and land more than we currently do.

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: I introduced legislation to ensure that all children attend kindergarten so that every student has a strong educational foundation. I have voted against education budgets that do not adequately fund our children's education and have voted against legislation that attacks the teaching profession, which makes it harder to attract our best and brightest to this career. Career tech education must be an option for students and higher education also must be more affordable. The best way for Michigan to turn around its economy and create more jobs is through our investing in our education system.

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

A: I support the creation of a graduated income tax that will provide a tax cut to a large majority of workers, but also ensure that the wealthiest are paying their fair share in income tax. I also support the repeal of the senior pension tax and the restoration of the Earned Income Tax Credit and the Homestead Property Tax Credit. Michigan must improve its quality of life factors to attract out-of-state corporations and graduates, including investing more in infrastructure. People want to live in a welcoming state that provides good public services.

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

A: I have co-sponsored legislation to create a citizens redistricting council that will reduce gerrymandering and create more fair legislative districts. I support no-reason absentee voting and automatic voter registration for residents, as long as they meet all required laws. We should not be making it harder to vote or erecting voting barriers. Lastly, there is far too much money in politics. No one thinks that we need more money in politics. We need less money and more accountability and transparency. I also co-sponsored legislation that requires personal financial disclosure for legislators.

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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 have been a strong defender of our environment and natural resources. I am the Minority Vice-Chair of the House Natural Resources Committee. I have introduced legislation that doubles the fines for polluting our waterways for petroleum spills and legislation that provides more community oversight of fracking operations. I oppose Nestle's increased water withdrawal application and voted against a bill that allows invasive species to more easily enter the Great Lakes. I believe that alternative solutions must be found to remedy the serious environmental concerns of the aged Enbridge Line 5 pipeline.

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

A: I serve on the House Judiciary Committee and everyone deserves equal treatment under the law. Our criminal justice policies can be improved being smart on crime and on taxpayers. I voted for legislation that reforms the parole process while still maintaining public safety. I also voted for legislation that reforms the civil asset forfeiture system to require a conviction before certain property can be forfeited from a private citizen.

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