

Michigan State Representative District 91

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)

GREG VanWOERKOM, Republican

Website: www.votevanwoerkom.com

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Occupation / Current Position: District Director

Education: Bachelor's Degree - Calvin College Master's Degree - George Washington University

Qualifications / Experience: District Director for U.S. Rep. Bill Huizenga 7+ years Senior Policy Adviser for U.S. Rep. Pete Hoekstra 8 years School Board President for three terms Muskegon Rotary Member Board Member of United Way of the Lakeshore

Questions:

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

A: Improve Educational Attainment - I will support reforms that give educators & principals the flexibility they need to teach our students. It is time we treat our kids as individuals & stop the "one size fits all" approach written by bureaucrats in Lansing and Washington. Fix Our Infrastructure - I will demand more accountability out of Lansing on the quality of work on our roads when using taxpayers' hard-earned dollars. Environmental Restoration - I have been involved with some of the most impactful environmental restoration projects in Muskegon County. I will continue to work to protect and restore our lakes.

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: One of the main focuses that I will have as State Representative is to improve quality, access and affordability of child care. Having three young children in a dual-income family, I know the difficulty in finding a good child care provider. Many families struggle to find child care that makes it affordable for them to work. Improving child care prepares kids to learn from an early age, and early education studies show the impact that quality care from 0-5 can have on a lifetime of learning.

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

A: As of this writing, the economy is strong. We need to maintain the policies that have been put in place to continue Michigan's comeback rather than creating uncertainty in the marketplace. Here in West Michigan, the only thing holding us back from further growth is the availability of talent. We need to continue to support job training programs and affordability of child care so more people can enter the workforce.

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

A: I am a proponent of transparency in campaign funding and ensuring we have election integrity.

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 involved with some of the most impactful environmental restoration projects in Muskegon County. It will be my goal to work toward removing Muskegon Lake as an environmental Area of Concern and continue to protect the Great Lakes from threats such as Asian Carp. The quality of life on the lakeshore is linked to the quality of our lakes.

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

A: In my work as a board member of the United Way, we work with Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed (ALICE) population to provide them the information and resources that they need to continue to climb the economic ladder. My focus will be on early childhood education and preparation as a quality education is the great equalizer.

TANYA CABALA, Democrat



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

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/Cabalafor91st/>

Occupation / Current Position: Teacher

Education: Grand Valley State University - B.S. Degree/Elementary Education
Teacher Certification, Language Arts

Qualifications / Experience: I served on the Whitehall City Council for twelve years. My assignments included the planning commission, fire & waste authorities, and the 150th anniversary committee. I gained a reputation as a hard worker, who built consensus. I am also an environmental advocate. I removed toxins from White Lake, developed a beach cleanup and trail tour, and consulted with businesses regarding green practices.

Questions:

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

A: Affordable healthcare is one priority. Michigan has the fifth highest cost of prescription drugs in the country. Working families should not need to choose between paying their medical bill and covering basic expenses. I support the development of an independent board to prevent price gouging. Promoting economic opportunity is another priority. Michigan's Legislature should reduce the tax burden on working families. It should also fix the roads, invest in alternative energy, and adopt a living wage. Education is my final priority. Public schools require far greater investment, and teachers deserve better treatment.

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: Properly funding our public schools is key. An independent, bipartisan group called the School Finance Research Collaborative found that the base cost to educate a regular student in grades K-12 is \$9590, not including food, transportation, or capital costs. Many students require even more resources to be successful. Despite this clear need, Michigan's per-pupil spending has fallen by \$663 since 2000, while the U.S. average increased by more than \$1,400 per student. Without funding, class sizes will remain large and fewer individuals will go into teaching. It's critical that we invest in our children's success.

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

A: Prioritizing working families is important. Legislators should invest more in roads and public education. They should also reduce taxes for the middle-class, while ensuring that corporations pay their fair share. Protecting labor matters a great deal. Recently, Michigan's Legislature repealed prevailing wage, which ensured fair pay for construction workers on public projects. Right-to-Work laws also harmed unions. It is vital that we empower unions to provide adequate pay, benefits, and workplace conditions. Adopting a livable wage would help, too. No one should have to work two or three jobs to make ends meet.

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

A: Campaign funding needs reform. Super Political Action Committees should not be allowed to make unlimited campaign contributions. Politicians should be required to disclose their personal income, while lobbyists should disclose their expenditures. A cooling-off period of five years should be required before lawmakers can become lobbyists. All citizens deserve to vote in a secure, modern way. It is time for Michigan's Legislature to expand voting access by allowing people to register to vote online. Legislators should not restrict voters based on their form of identification, specifically municipal IDs.

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: Clean water access should be considered a right. We must invest more in our state's failing water infrastructure. We must also reduce the privatization of services that lead to the crisis in Flint. Michigan should gradually reduce its reliance on fossil fuels. This transition can be accomplished by increasing renewable energy standards for energy companies. Enbridge Pipeline 5 should be removed to protect the Great Lakes. Recently, 550 gallons of coolant leaked into the Straits of Mackinac, which shows the risk. It is vital that we keep our natural resources and our fishing and tourism industries safe from harm.

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

A: Mass incarceration harms Michigan's communities. Michigan's prisoners serve the longest average sentences in the country. Taxpayers pay \$2 billion to house almost 60,000 people. Children with parents in prison are more likely to drop out of school. It's time that we rethink our criminal justice system. I support a number of key reforms. These reforms include eliminating the Cash Bail System, raising the age of Juvenile Court Jurisdiction to 18, and passing sentencing reform for non-violent crimes. It would also help to develop a record expungement system, vocational programs, and incentives to hire former inmates.

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