

**Primary Election: August 7, 2018**  
**Michigan State Senate District 6**  
**Candidates: 1 Republican + 2 Democrats**  
**Vote in one political party's primary only.**

**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.

**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.

## ROBERT L KOSOWSKI, Democrat



**Website:** [electkosowski.com](http://electkosowski.com)

**Facebook:** [http://Robert Kosowski for Michigan State Senate](http://RobertKosowskiforMichiganStateSenate)

**Twitter:** [twitter.com/Kosowski4Senate](https://twitter.com/Kosowski4Senate)

**Occupation / Current Position:** State Representative - Michigan's 16th House District

**Education:** Adrian College; Wayne State University

**Qualifications / Experience:** For the past three legislative terms, I have been the State Representative for Michigan's 16th House District. I have thoroughly enjoyed representing the people of Westland and Wayne, and have been able to successfully bring home thousands of dollars of funding to my district, as well as have 12 public acts signed into law. It is my hope that I will be able to continue this service in the Senate.

### Questions:

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

**A:** 1) Insurance - The rising cost of automobile insurance is out of hand. I have introduced many bills to combat this, including not allowing rates to be based on credit scores. 2) Roads/Infrastructure - Michigan's roads and infrastructure have gotten to the point where they are unsafe for Michigan residents to travel on. I have introduced legislation to allow sports betting in Michigan casinos, which would generate revenue without raising taxes. 3) School Funding - I have introduced legislation that would increase per-pupil funding. It is imperative that our schools get the necessary funding needed.

**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:** Again, I believe properly funding our schools is the core of ensuring our kids get the best education possible. Another important component is recruiting the best teachers possible for our schools systems. I have introduced legislation to increase to per-pupil funding, as well as legislation that would create the Teacher Shortage Prevention Act and allow for students to receive stipends while student teaching.

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

**A:** The recent vote to repeal the prevailing wage law was not good for our economy and Michigan's working families. We need to start from the ground up, and think of ways to motivate and incentivize our children to go into the career tech field. We should be funding all career and technical schools to the maximum amount possible. Another issue is that we cannot expect a single parent to be able to afford child care in today's current economy. We must figure out a way to make this more affordable.

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

**A:** I believe every Michigan resident should have access to voting. We should allow individuals to pre-register to vote as early as 16 (as long as they have proper identification), we should allow for electronic filing of voter registration applications, and we should have no-reason absentee voting as well. Voting is a fundamental right of our citizens, and it should be as easy for people as possible. In terms of campaign funding, I believe more transparency is necessary. We should expand the FOIA law to members of the legislative and executive branches.

**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 several pieces of legislation introduced to address protecting Michigan's drinking water. These include creating a Drinking Water Emergency Loan Fund, revising the definition of lead-free pipes to the level of the Federal Safe Drinking Water Act, testing for lead and other contaminants in nonpublic schools, hospitals, colleges, universities, and veterans' homes, and establishing water quality goals.

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

**A:** Over the past two legislative sessions, I have been one of the lead sponsors on a bill package that addresses juveniles in our criminal justice system. Currently, Michigan is one of just a handful of states that automatically prosecutes a 17 year-old as an adult, and houses them in our prisons. Unfortunately, statistics show African-American youths are arrested at a 3 time higher rate than any other race. This bill package would allow these kids to be housed in juvenile facilities where they would have access to much-needed rehabilitative services, giving them the chance to integrate back into society.

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