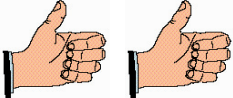


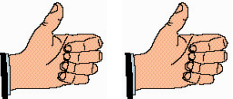
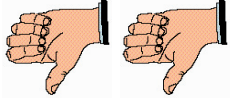



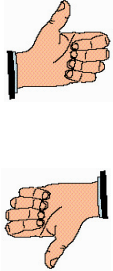

A. Remove barriers to and actively promote citizen participation in the electoral process.

Date	Incident	Comment	Impact
1/10/07	SB 10 was introduced to allow statewide elections to be conducted by mail.	Each of these bills would have made it easier for citizens to register and/or vote.	
1/10/07	SB 12 was introduced to allow for absentee voting without a reason.		
1/10/07	SB 13 was introduced to allow people to register to vote on election day.		
1/25/07	HB 4134 was introduced to allow no-reason absentee voting.		
6/12/07	HB 4910 was introduced to allow people to register to vote on election day.		
9/25/08	The House passed HB 4048 that would allow no-reason absentee voting. Current restrictions would be reimposed following any statewide election in which more than 5% of the absentee ballots were spoiled.		
11/19/08	HB 6657 was introduced to allow statewide elections to be conducted by mail and local elections to be conducted by mail at the discretion of the local clerk.		
12/4/08	<p>The House passed HB 4090 to allow for early voting.</p> <p>The House did not pass HB 4134 or HB 4910. The Senate took no action on its bills or the bills passed by the House.</p>		Introduction of all of these bills indicates a recognition of the importance of encouraging citizens to vote. Nonetheless, the Legislature failed to pass any of the 8 bills.



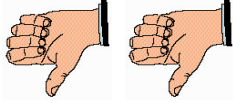
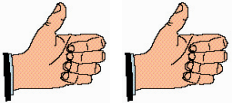


A. Remove barriers to and actively promote citizen participation in the electoral process.

Date	Incident	Comment	Impact
<p>01/24/07</p> <p>2/20/08</p>	<p>The Senate introduced SB 44-46 to provide state ID cards to individuals upon release from prison.</p> <p>The House passed HB 4525-28 and HB 5568 to require the Department of Corrections to assist each incarcerated person to obtain a social security card and the identification documents necessary to secure a state identification card or driver's license when released. It would also require the Secretary of State to accept a prisoner ID card as one form of identification.</p> <p>The Senate never considered SB 44-46 and never acted on the House bills.</p>	<p>An ID card is needed to get a job and to make a smooth reentry into society.</p> <p>Many individuals register to vote when they obtain their state ID card or driver's license. That is complicated when they do not have the documentation needed to get the ID.</p> <p>Despite recognizing the importance of this issue, the Legislature was unable to pass either set of legislation.</p>	 
<p>3/13/07</p> <p>4/19/07</p>	<p>The House passed HB 4239 to require identification of the person who has paid for a telephonic, electronic mail, or other electronic message relating to a candidate. It would also require an indication of whether the message was authorized by a candidate committee.</p> <p>The Senate passed SB 3, SB 284, and SB 285 that would have required that automated telephone communications, printed materials, radio and TV ads, and website ads include the identity of the individual or organization who paid for the ad and whether or not it was authorized by a candidate or ballot committee.</p> <p>The Senate took no action on the House bill. The House took no action of the Senate bills.</p>	<p>This type of advertising can have a significant impact on an election. Information on the source of the ad can aid voters in casting an informed vote.</p>	 




A. Remove barriers to and actively promote citizen participation in the electoral process.

Date	Incident	Comment	Impact
5/2/07	<p>The House passed HB 4628 that would have transferred responsibility for campaign oversight from the Secretary of State to the Director of Elections. In addition, it would have done the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prohibited candidate committees from paying candidates. - Regulated automated phone calls and electronic mail political ads. - Eliminated the need to gain approval for payroll deductions to PACs at least once every calendar year. - Allowed voluntary public employee contributions to PACs via payroll deductions. <p>The Senate never took action on the bill.</p>	<p>Other states have experienced problems related to partisan officials overseeing elections.</p> <p>Regulating campaign practices would enhance faith in the political process and promote more informed voting.</p> <p>Public employees should be allowed to participate in the political process, just as other citizens are.</p>	
5/25/07	<p>SB 542 was introduced to require local units of government that receive campaign statements from candidates for local elective office to transmit those statements to the Secretary of State for posting on the Internet.</p> <p>The Senate took no action on the bill.</p>	<p>Campaign finances can be an important factor in a citizen's voting decision.</p>	
6/14/07	<p>SJR D would have established an independent redistricting commission to determine legislative and congressional districts.</p> <p>The Senate committee never acted on the resolution.</p>	<p>Redistricting can have a significant impact on the outcome of elections.</p> <p>It is disappointing that the Legislature has not considered an option to the current partisan approach.</p>	


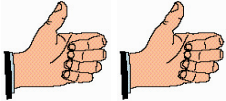
A. Remove barriers to and actively promote citizen participation in the electoral process.

Date	Incident	Comment	Impact
7/2/07	<p>A coalition of minor political parties began seeking changes to Michigan election laws to improve their access to the ballot in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Measures to make it easier for parties to make the ballot. - Indicate a candidate’s party affiliation (instead of listing him or her as an independent) in the event the party is not listed. - Media coverage and debate participation for minor party candidates. - Instant runoff voting where voters rank the candidates for each seat. (If no candidate receives a majority of first choices, factor in voters’ 2nd, 3rd, or lower choices, as needed, to arrive at a majority.) 	<p>Providing third-party candidates with easier access to the ballot and providing citizens with greater access to those candidates’ views could result in broader policy debates and better decision-making.</p> <p>We are not aware of any official government response to these proposals.</p>	 
7/18/07 9/5/07	<p>The Michigan Supreme Court issued an advisory opinion upholding Michigan law requiring voters to produce a voter ID when voting. Because the state can waive the fee for the state ID, the requirement does not constitute a poll tax.</p> <p>The Secretary of State issued policies to aid with the implementation of the ID requirements. Voters are able to use any picture ID that is issued by any state, the federal government, a tribe or a school. Individuals who are not carrying an ID and who wish to vote may sign an affidavit stating that they are not in possession of a valid card.</p>	<p>The new requirement has the potential to suppress the vote, particularly among the poor and elderly who cannot afford the ID and who mistakenly believe it is a requirement.</p> <p>Due to the Secretary of State’ liberal definition of “ID card” and the use of the affidavit in lieu of ID, no one should be denied the right to vote.</p>	 
7/25/07	<p>The House passed HB 4447 and HB 4448 that would allow an individual to have a different residential address in the voter file from the address that is on his or her driver’s license.</p> <p>The Senate took no action on the legislation.</p>	<p>The legislation would make it easier for individuals with temporary addresses (students, senior citizens, disabled in transient settings, etc.) to vote.</p>	 

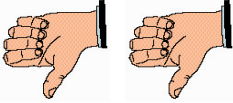
A. Remove barriers to and actively promote citizen participation in the electoral process.

Date	Incident	Comment	Impact
8/29/07	<p>HB 5141 and HB 5142 would have prohibited persons who were more than 12 months late in filing campaign finance reports or paying campaign finance penalties from running for office, opening another campaign committee, or serving as a treasurer or designated individual for a committee.</p> <p>The bills were not reported out of committee.</p>	<p>Campaign finance information is an important element of informed voting. Those reports should be filed in a timely manner.</p>	
9/5/07	<p>The Legislature approved SB 624 to move Michigan's presidential primary to January 15, 2008.</p> <p>The bill contained provisions making the primary closed, giving the Democratic and Republican parties sole access to the list of citizens who voted in their respective primaries.</p>	<p>While this maneuver created considerable frustration, it may have forever changed the landscape of presidential primaries. Since early voting states have such a disproportionate impact on the process, it is unfair to allow the same few states to launch the process each time.</p> <p>It is inappropriate for the state to finance and collect voting information for the sole use of the major political parties.</p>	
10/17/07	<p>The Campaign Disclosure Project announced its findings that Michigan ranked sixth among states in terms of its campaign financial disclosure.</p>	<p>Informed voters should have ready access to such information.</p>	

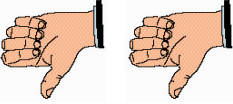
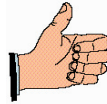
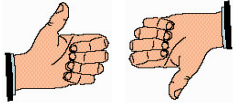
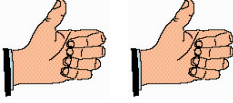
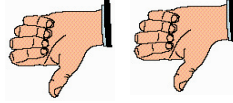
A. Remove barriers to and actively promote citizen participation in the electoral process.

Date	Incident	Comment	Impact
12/3/07	<p>The Ohio State University Moritz College of Law issued its report, “From Registration to Recounts,” evaluating election processes in five Midwest states. Michigan ranked in the middle.</p> <p>- The report criticized Michigan for having close to a million inactive or invalid entries in its Qualified Voter file.</p> <p>- It questioned the training of poll workers.</p> <p>The harshest criticism was aimed at the Supreme Court that may one day have to resolve a contested election. “Until Michigan either develops an alternative process for adjudicating those election disputes that some day will arise over a specific election, or its state supreme court reestablishes to the public its professionalism and neutrality, Michigan will have a weaker system for resolving a statewide or high-profile election contest than it should.”</p> <p>On the positive side, the report noted that, “Michigan has had a balanced, stable and well-run system for years and has been in the forefront in implementing new technologies and systems.”</p>	<p>If there is concern for voter fraud, as reflected in the requirement for picture ID, it is important that the Qualified Voter File be accurate.</p> <p>Well-trained poll workers are critical to a fair and efficient election.</p> <p>Until we change the process of electing Supreme Court justices or develop an alternative method for resolving disputed elections, this will remain a risk.</p> <p>Well-run elections are a critical factor in encouraging participation.</p>	 


A. Remove barriers to and actively promote citizen participation in the electoral process.

Date	Incident	Comment	Impact
2/12/08	<p>SB 1087 was introduced to modify the requirements for circulating ballot petitions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Secretary of State would have to certify and distribute a proposed constitutional amendment to clerks at least 60 days prior to an election (rather than 49 days). • Require that the circulator of a petition that proposes a constitutional amendment, initiation of legislation, or referendum of legislation must be a qualified elector of the state, which includes a local residency requirement. <p>The Senate took no action on the bill.</p>	<p>The legislation would not have addressed the most serious complaints about recent ballot proposals – that circulators misrepresent the content and/or intent of the proposal.</p>	

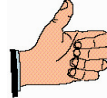




A. Remove barriers to and actively promote citizen participation in the electoral process.

Date	Incident	Comment	Impact
2/12/08	<p>SJR K would have amended the constitution to require that petitions for initiative or referendum be signed by at least 100 registered electors, unless the Legislature required a greater number of registered electors, in each of at least 42 counties of the state and by at least one registered elector in each county of the state. These representation requirements would apply in addition to the current requirements based on the percentage of total votes cast for gubernatorial candidates the last time a Governor was elected.</p> <p>Under the current constitution, the power of referendum does not extend to acts making appropriations for state institutions or to meet deficiencies in state funds. Under the joint resolution, instead, the power of referendum would not extend to general appropriation acts making appropriations that <u>substantially</u> funded one or more state departments or to acts making appropriations to meet deficiencies in state funds.</p> <p>The Senate took no action on the Joint Resolution.</p>	<p>The proposal would make it much more difficult for citizen-initiated proposals, while failing to address some of the abuses associated with well-funded campaigns.</p> <p>The state constitution empowers citizens to reject laws enacted by the Legislature through a ballot initiative. In 2001, the Michigan Supreme Court ruled that an act amending the concealed weapons law was not subject to repeal because it appropriated \$1 million for the implementation of the changes. This proposed change would have allowed a referendum on any law that did not provide substantial funding for a department.</p>	  
02/26/08	<p>The House passed HB 4774 and HB 5739 that would make it easier to register to vote. Individuals would be allowed to register to vote in any clerk's office in the state. Those who register for the first time by mail could present valid identification to any clerk's office prior to an election and be allowed to vote absentee.</p> <p>The Senate took no action on the bills.</p>	<p>The State should do all it can to make it easy for individuals to register and to vote.</p>	 


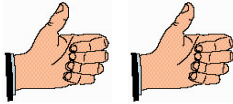
A. Remove barriers to and actively promote citizen participation in the electoral process.

Date	Incident	Comment	Impact
September 2008	Leadership of the Michigan Department of Human Services (DHS) partnered with community groups to register over 5,500 voters in DHS offices around the state.	This is a good example of reaching out to potential voters to encourage them to vote.	

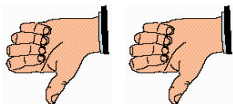

B. Make the government’s workings and decisions visible and accessible to all who wish to participate in democratic self-government.

Date	Incident	Comment	Impact
8/1/07	<p>HB 5083 was introduced to require each school district and public school academy to report its expenditures online.</p> <p>The House took no action on the bill.</p>	Citizens should have access to information on how public money is spent.	 
9/06/07	<p>HB 5166 was introduced to modify the Freedom of Information Act to allow access to the records of the Governor or Lieutenant Governor, the Executive Office of the Governor or Lieutenant Governor or the financial records of the Office of a State Senator or State Representative.</p> <p>The House did not take any action on the bill.</p>	Citizens should be able to access these records.	 
11/19/07	The Corporate Research Project of Good Jobs First issued a report giving Michigan a B+ in terms of information made available on line regarding lobbyists and lobbying activity in the State. Michigan was tied for 10 th among all states.	Citizens should be able to access information regarding the activities of lobbyists in order to have a better understanding of the evolution of public policy. Since term limits have increased the influence of lobbyists, it is even more important.	

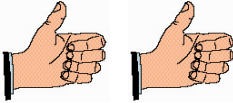
B. Make the government’s workings and decisions visible and accessible to all who wish to participate in democratic self-government.

Date	Incident	Comment	Impact
1/16/08	In a split decision, the Court of Appeals ruled that the Department of Environmental Quality must make public the manure disposal plans filed by concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs).	Monitoring governmental activities is an important role for citizens. That activity cannot be performed well without complete information.	
3/21/08	The Attorney General’s website now includes some information on department spending.	Citizens should have access to information on how public money is spent.	

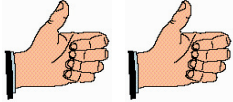
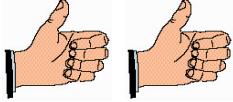
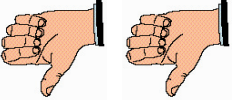
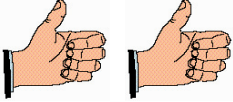
C. Welcome citizen input and empower all officials, elected and otherwise, to interact directly with the citizens and residents they are to serve.

Date	Incident	Comment	Impact
7/25/07	The Michigan Supreme Court ruled that citizens cannot sue to protect the environment unless they can prove personal injury in the form of recreational, aesthetic, or economic interests.	For 37 years, citizens had been able to file such suits under the state’s Environmental Protection Act. As noted by former Governor William Milliken, suits kept “the government honest and our environment clean by providing a route for citizens to take action on behalf of the state’s paramount public concern for our environment, as declared by the Constitution, when agencies won’t.”	
7/28/07	The State’s Civil Service Commission ruled that the state could not temporarily lay off state employees covered by existing contracts without a 30-day written notice. The layoffs had been contemplated as a potential element of a government shutdown in the event that budget negotiations had not been successful.	The fact that policy makers were unable to solve the budget crisis should not serve as justification for ignoring provisions of employee contracts.	

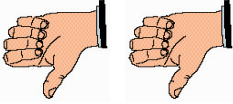
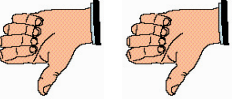
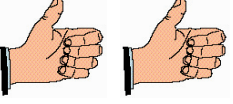
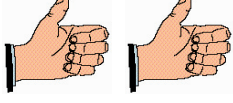
C. Welcome citizen input and empower all officials, elected and otherwise, to interact directly with the citizens and residents they are to serve.

Date	Incident	Comment	Impact
11/19/08	The Secretary of State announced a pilot program at 10 branch offices to provide sign language interpretation between clerks and customers by video conferencing.	This is an excellent example of attempting to make government services accessible to more citizens.	

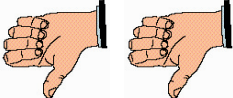

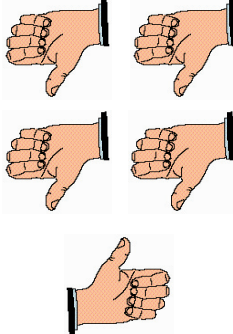
D. Provide timely, accurate, and complete information about the current and proposed actions of governments, elected officials, and government employees.

Date	Incident	Comment	Impact
1/16/07	The website of the Department of Labor and Economic Growth now includes a statewide listing of information on services ranging from babysitting to help writing a resume. The information is designed to enhance workforce development in the state.	Inclusion of this information is a novel way to assist citizens.	
1/17/07	The Department of Environmental Quality website now includes maps of potential or approximate boundaries of wetlands, by county, designed to aid in planning.	This information is an important tool to foster protection of the state's wetlands.	
6/6/07	The Supreme Court ruled that information that was labeled "preliminary" at the time of its creation is exempt from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, regardless of its status at the time of the FOIA request.	This ruling could serve as a shield for public bodies not wishing to disclose information. It amounts to a decision that "labeling is everything."	
6/14/07	The Department of Community Health now has on-line comparative price listings for 150 commonly prescribed drugs.	This information can be helpful to citizens wishing to help control their health care costs.	

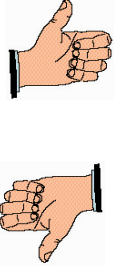
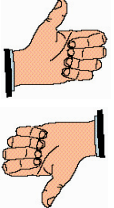
D. Provide timely, accurate, and complete information about the current and proposed actions of governments, elected officials, and government employees.

Date	Incident	Comment	Impact
6/28/07	The State Auditor General reported that, despite strides toward strengthening its oversight, the Michigan Gaming Control Board failed to issue reports on the majority of its Detroit casino audits over a two-year period. In addition, the Board has not implemented procedures to ensure compliance with about one-third of its minimum control standards.	It is impossible for the public to assess the impact of the Board's work when the majority of audits are not documented. It is also difficult to demand compliance without written procedures.	
11/19/07	The Corporate Research Project of Good Jobs First issued a report giving Michigan an F in terms of information made available on line regarding economic subsidies awarded by state agencies (and by local governments as allowed and regulated under state law) to encourage the growth of business activity within their borders. Michigan scored 0%.	Economic subsidies often involve large sums of taxpayer dollars. Citizens should have ready access to information regarding the subsidies and their impact.	
4/23/08	The Department of State began posting its quarterly spending on its website. The information includes details of all payments, including contracts and employee travel.	Citizens should have access to information on how public money is spent.	
1/09/09	The Governor signed SB 674 and HB 6036 to strengthen the oversight of cemetery operations and prevent the manipulation of trust funds.	Identification of problems could prevent loss of funds.	

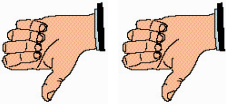
E. Act at a pace and in a deliberative manner that provides everyday citizens with as much opportunity to influence and respond to government proposals as registered lobbyists.

Date	Incident	Comment	Impact
<p>10/1/07</p> <p>10/25/07</p>	<p>The Governor signed HB 5198 to impose a tax on a select set of services. Passage was followed by considerable public criticism centered on which services were to be taxed and which were not. Critics also complained that the bill was adopted in the middle of the night without public hearings.</p> <p>In response to the criticism, SB 845 was introduced to delay collection of the service tax. It was later amended to prohibit collection of the tax. By 12/11/07, the Governor had signed the bill into law. The revenue was replaced with a surcharge on the business tax.</p>	<p>Public input should be not only permitted, but also encouraged, when significant changes are being made to current laws and/or policies.</p>	
<p>10/17/07</p>	<p>The House Insurance Committee gave near-unanimous approval to HB 5284-85, extending to individual health insurance some of the market reforms adopted the previous year for small groups.</p> <p>A number of parties present objected to the speed of the action, arguing that there were problems with the proposal and that more time was needed to understand the content and ramifications of the bills.</p>	<p>Public input should be not only permitted, but also encouraged, when significant changes are being made to current laws and/or policies. Rapid action prevents public input.</p>	
<p>4/15/08</p>	<p>The Senate held a vote on SJR L 30 minutes after it had been initially introduced.</p> <p>The Joint Resolution would have required a super-majority of the Legislature to approve any sales taxes on services.</p> <p>The Senate did not pass the measure.</p>	<p>This bill did not address an emergency situation. As such, it deserved adequate deliberation.</p> <p>Super-majorities often lead to paralysis.</p>	

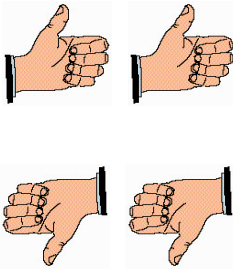

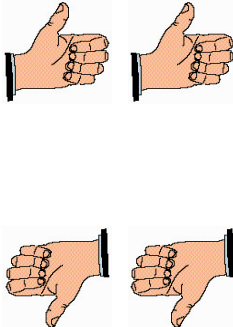
F. Ensure that all government contracts worth more than a nominal amount are awarded only through a genuinely open and unbiased competitive bidding process.

Date	Incident	Comment	Impact
6/13/07	The House adopted HR 92, urging any state department or agency seeking to privatize any state services to conduct a pre-privatization cost-benefit analysis and submit it to the House and Senate Appropriations Committees beforehand.	<p>A decision to privatize a government service should be done with careful study and deliberation.</p> <p>The requirement for a cost-benefit analysis should be enacted into law, rather than adopted as a non-binding resolution.</p>	
7/25/07	<p>The House passed HB 4533 that allows collective bargaining units to participate in a school's decisions to privatize non-instructional support services.</p> <p>No action was taken in the Senate.</p>	Engaging employees in problems solving can lead to creative solutions and/or more support for decisions to privatize.	

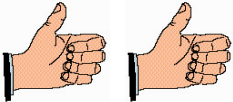


G. Preserve accountability to the public whenever government functions are contracted out to private business.

Date	Incident	Comment	Impact
11/19/07	The Corporate Research Project of Good Jobs First issued a report giving Michigan a D+ in terms of quantity and quality of information made available on line regarding state government procurement, contract awards, and private contractors providing those public goods and services. Michigan was tied for 45 th among all states.	Monitoring governmental activities is an important role for citizens. That activity cannot be performed well without complete information.	


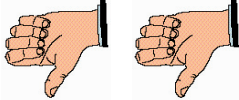
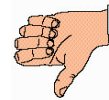
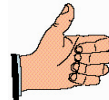
H. Ensure that all persons have access to justice.

Date	Incident	Comment	Impact
<p>1/31/07</p> <p>2/26/08</p>	<p>SB 128 was introduced to provide public funding for judicial candidates.</p> <p>HB5799 (identical to SB 128) was introduced in the House.</p> <p>Neither chamber took action on the bills.</p>	<p>Public financing would prohibit large contributions for participating judicial candidates, which would reduce the potential for bias in rulings.</p>	
<p>2/10/07</p>	<p>The Civil Service Commission confirmed an earlier decision by the Employment Relations Board that an individual who had served as administrator in the Department of Consumer and Industry Services was unfairly laid off when the duties of that position were essentially transferred to the newly created Director of Workers' Compensation.</p> <p>The board recommended the individual be returned to the position and provided with back pay.</p>	<p>The state should not dismiss Civil Service employees by renaming their jobs.</p>	
<p>5/8/07</p>	<p>The House Labor Committee approved HB 4625-27 that would have required equal compensation for work of comparable value in terms of composite skill, responsibility, effort, education or training, and working conditions. The bills would have created a Commission on Pay Equity to develop definitions of comparable wages.</p> <p>The bills received no action in the House.</p>	<p>Individuals doing comparable work should receive the same compensation, regardless of religion, race, color, national origin, age, sex, physical disability, height, weight, or marital status.</p>	

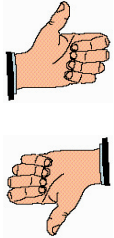


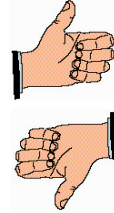
H. Ensure that all persons have access to justice.

Date	Incident	Comment	Impact
11/20/07	The Department of Community Health has begun electronic sharing of records with the Department of Human Services to reduce denials of claims for medical services to the poor. Recent changes in federal law require a picture identification and birth certificate to establish eligibility for Medicaid. The cost of acquiring those documents is often out of reach for poor families. Sharing electronic birth records avoids families having to pay \$29 per person for a copy of that record.	This is an excellent example of using technology to solve problems cost effectively and to extend assistance to citizens needing access to programs.	
11/21/07	The Governor issued Executive Directive 2007-23 to require the Department of Environmental Quality to establish a plan that guarantees environmental justice. Environmental justice ensures that there is not a concentration of polluting industries in low-income areas.	Government should be taking steps to reduce discrimination.	
11/21/07	The Governor issued Executive Directive 2007-24 to outlaw discrimination against applicants for state jobs on the basis of gender identity or genetic makeup. The directive also outlaws harassment against individuals on the basis of gender identity, or genetic information along with religion, race, color, age, national origin, sexual orientation, marital status, height and weight, physical disabilities or political partisanship.	Government should be taking steps to reduce discrimination that is not justified by the requirements of the job.	

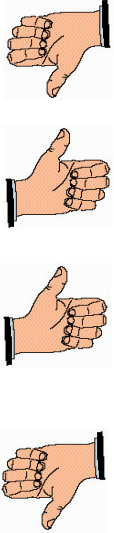
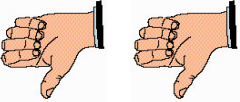
H. Ensure that all persons have access to justice.

Date	Incident	Comment	Impact
2/1/08	A jury awarded 10 female prisoners more than \$15 million for sexual abuses suffered at the Scott Correctional Facility.	The courts have taken steps to compensate the women for the harm they suffered.	
11/12/08	<p>A jury awarded 8 former female inmates \$8.45 million for rapes and sexual harassment by guards at Crane Correctional Facility in Coldwater. Five hundred female prisoners have joined the class action suit.</p> <p>The Department of Corrections defended themselves by claiming they did not know about the offenses. In 1993, the Michigan Women’s Commission reported an alarming level of sexual abuse and harassment by prison guards. In 1995, the U.S. Department of Justice found pervasive sexual abuse of female prisoners in Michigan. In 1996, Human Rights Watch released a report documenting rapes and a “highly sexualized and excessively hostile” environment in Michigan prisons.</p> <p>The state is appealing the verdicts in the cases.</p>	<p>Given the number of reports of abuse from a variety of sources, it is impossible to believe the state did not know about the abuses.</p>	
1/7/09	The Attorney General’s office said they would not pursue allegations raised by women involved in the lawsuits.		
1/8/09	The Attorney General’s office reversed itself, saying it would coordinate having someone look at each criminal complaint raised. (The office cannot handle the cases, because they defended the state against the lawsuit, and handling the cases would constitute a conflict of interest.)		




H. Ensure that all persons have access to justice.

Date	Incident	Comment	Impact
3/4/08	<p>HJR RR was introduced to propose an amendment to the state Constitution to specify when a Supreme Court Justice must disqualify himself or herself from considering a case.</p> <p>The House took no action on the resolution.</p>	<p>Judges should disqualify themselves if there is any reason to suspect they may not be impartial in a case.</p>	
4/3/08	<p>The governor signed HB 5287-5291 and SB 826-833 to require the registration of loan officers, provide oversight of loan officers, and outline restrictions on the activities of loan officers.</p>	<p>The oversight will hopefully prevent inappropriate or abusive practices by loan officers.</p>	
5/7/08	<p>The Supreme Court ruled that the State’s constitutional amendment banning same-sex marriages, adopted by voters in 2004, prohibits governments from providing health insurance benefits to same-sex partners of employees. Justices ruling in the majority claimed that, “the people of this state could hardly have made their intentions clearer.” Dissenting justices argued the intent was not clear, because campaign literature by proponents of the proposal argued the proposal was limited to marriage and would have no impact on issues such as benefits.</p>	<p>It is inconceivable that the court could believe the intention of voters was perfectly clear when proponents of the measure consistently argued that it would not impact benefits. The court continues to ignore the problems related to the misrepresentation of ballot proposals.</p>	
6/18/08	<p>The House passed HB 5294-5297, HB 5299-5303, and HB 5307-5308 that would have outlawed abusive home loan practices by mortgage lenders and brokers.</p> <p>The Senate never considered the legislation.</p>	<p>The bills would have protected borrowers from a variety of predatory lending practices.</p>	



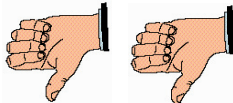
H. Ensure that all persons have access to justice.

Date	Incident	Comment	Impact
September 2008	<p>A State Police preliminary audit of the Detroit crime lab identified an error rate of 10% in 200 firearms cases it reevaluated. In addition, access to the firearms unit was unrestricted and evidence could have been contaminated because it was allowed to overflow into office and work areas. Detroit Mayor Ken Cockrel, Jr. and Police Chief James Barren then shut down the entire lab.</p> <p>As a result, several cases of potential wrongful convictions have been identified, and 20,000 cases must be reviewed.</p> <p>The workload has been transferred to the state crime lab, creating backlogs there. In 2006, DNA testing was completed in 95 days; the added workload has increased that time to 207 days.</p>	<p>Courts increasingly rely on technological analyses of crime scene evidence. Inaccurate analyses are a serious threat to justice.</p> <p>It is encouraging that the audit was thorough enough to reveal the problems.</p> <p>Authorities are to be commended for taking immediate action to review the impact and prevent future problems.</p> <p>The limited capacity of the crime lab is likely to delay justice for many defendants.</p>	
12/22/08	<p>The Michigan Supreme Court ruled that the U.S. Supreme Court's 2005 decision that Michigan must appoint counsel on guilty plea appeals should not be applied retroactively. Dissenting justices argued that it should be applied retroactively, because the appointment of appellate counsel is part of the process of correcting errors and is required for "fair application of fundamental rights."</p>	<p>Since the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that Michigan was wrong to deny court-appointed attorneys in the first place, anyone who was unfairly denied counsel should be provided one.</p>	

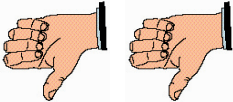
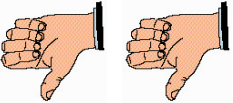
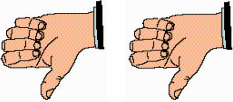

I. Encourage citizen respect for and ownership of government, leading to greater oversight and participation.

Date	Incident	Comment	Impact
2/1/07	HB 4192 was introduced to prohibit a legislator from voting on bills when they have a substantial conflict of interest. It would also prohibit a legislator from chairing a legislative committee meeting when the committee is dealing with one or more bills in which the legislator has a substantial conflict of interest.	Such reporting could expose any conflicts of interest that may impact an office holder's performance.	
3/22/07	The House passed HB 4315 that would prohibit state legislators from voting on bills when they have a substantial conflict of interest.		
9/24/08	<p>The House Committee on Ethics and Elections reported HB 4142 from committee. The bill would have required an individual holding elective office to report contributions or subsidies for travel received by the office holder and/or his or her immediate family members.</p> <p>The Senate took no action on HB 4315. The House took no action on HB 4142 or HB 4192.</p>		
4/10/07	The Office of Auditor General released a report indicating that the Department of Information Technology needs to improve some aspects of its information security framework.	The state has an obligation to ensure that its information network is secure. This is especially important in view of the increasing reliance on technology.	



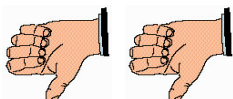
I. Encourage citizen respect for and ownership of government, leading to greater oversight and participation.

Date	Incident	Comment	Impact
8/3/07	<p>Senate system servers blocked access to a liberal-based blog that has been sharply critical of Michigan Republicans. Initially, staff for the Republican Senate Majority Leader explained that, “It was fairly clear that this blog had access to Senate information off Senate servers. If this is something that is up and being used at taxpayer expense, that’s not right.” It was soon discovered that the blogger was not a senate employee and was writing the blog from her home with material gathered from newsletters and press releases.</p> <p>Later explanations were that the site is of “questionable political matter” and “overtly political.” However, access to conservative blogs such as RightMichigan were not blocked.</p>	<p>Despite the explanation, this smacks of one-sided censorship. That is inappropriate.</p>	
8/7/07	<p>Access was restored after complaints from conservative bloggers and the Senate Minority Leader.</p>		
9/20/07	<p>Lobbyists reported that House Democrats and administrative officials have asked lobbying firms to help set up meetings between legislative Democrats and Republicans in an effort to facilitate negotiations, One lobbyist questioned, “They’re asking lobbyists to get their work done for them?”</p>	<p>This is one example of the negative consequences of term limits. Legislators no longer develop the relationships needed to resolve problems and work together to serve the citizens of the state.</p>	


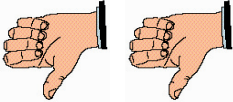

I. Encourage citizen respect for and ownership of government, leading to greater oversight and participation.

Date	Incident	Comment	Impact
9/21/07	House members were unable to pass legislation that would avoid a potential budget crisis. House leaders had reached an agreement that each side would deliver enough votes to avoid either side being accused of delivering the critical 56 th vote. When that did not happen, votes were withheld to prevent passage.	Due to term limits, legislators are not in office long enough to develop the relationships that are essential to collaborative problem solving. It is also apparent that legislators are more interested in party politics than in what is best for the citizens of the state.	
10/15/07	The House Minority Floor Leader resigned, saying he lost the support of his caucus when he voted for a tax increase as part of the 2007-08 budget agreement. In explaining his decision, he reported that the job had changed once the GOP became the House minority: “That job is to obstruct; my temperament is to solve problems.”	Term limits have caused legislators to value their allegiance to party over their service to the citizens of Michigan.	
10/26/07	The Michigan Report solicited the views of a number of individuals regarding the year’s budget negotiation. Observers expressed frustration over decisions made at crisis point, limited public involvement and inadequate vetting of policies with those affected, and a concentration of decision-making at the top. Many high-profile issues were marked with lack of trust and appearance of renegeing on deals.	This is another example of term limits having caused legislators to value their allegiance to party over their service to the citizens of Michigan.	
10/31/07	The Governor signed HB 4348 (the Department of Corrections Appropriations bill) that required the department to eliminate the commission it was receiving on phone calls placed by incarcerated persons. Fees for phone calls are to be generally the same as comparable calls in the free world.	After years of paying exorbitant rates for phone calls, the families and friends of incarcerated persons can now afford to maintain telephone contact.	


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Date	Incident	Comment	Impact
11/16/07 11/19/08	Former House Speaker Bobby Crim observed, “One of the worst things to happen to this state is term limitations. You can’t expect people without any experience, without any background hardly, to come in and solve the problems of a state like this.” The system also guarantees problems in reaching consensus and solutions, because lawmakers have no time to develop trust among each other. Former Governor William Milliken cited term limits as a major reason for divisive politics in the state, suggesting that they endanger the state’s future. “I know of no other line of work where inexperience is considered an asset.”	It is significant that two leaders from opposing parties are willing to speak up, taking currently unpopular positions on this issue. In doing so, they demonstrated the leadership that encourages citizen respect for government.	
11/16/07	Lt. Governor John Cherry announced creation of the Michigan Transfer Network that will make it easier for community college students to transfer credits to four-year universities. The network will operate for free.	This is an excellent example of serving the needs of citizens while promoting a government objective: a better educated citizenry.	
11/28/07	House Democrats walked out of negotiations over a bill to repeal the service tax, going into session to pass a version of the bill to eliminate the tax before adjourning for five days. The Senate rejected the measure without debate. The tax, which was unpopular with business, was to take effect December 1, so the maneuvering created a chaotic situation.	This is but one more example of the negative consequences of term limits. Each party is so focused on winning elections and making the “other side” look bad, that they are losing sight of their role in establishing policy and governing the state.	

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Date	Incident	Comment	Impact
12/12/07	The state’s Office of Financial Management received the Government Finance Officers Association certificate of achievement for excellence in financial report for Michigan’s Comprehensive Annual Financial Report. It marks the 20 th consecutive time the state has won the award.	Consistent excellent performance does promote confidence in government.	
2/29/08	<p>The Lansing State Journal reported that lobbyists spent \$32 million in Michigan in 2007 (up 8% from the previous year). Commenting on the lax ethics rules in the state, the newspaper reported the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lobbyists can buy pricey meals for public officials. - Lobbyists can provide gifts – up to \$53 a month – to public officials. - Lobbyists can pay for lawmakers’ trips and hotel rooms. - Lawmakers and lobbyists can engage in financial transactions with each other, such as loans or property purchases. - Lobbyist spending does not have to be itemized; disclosure is minimal. - Michigan stands nearly alone as a state that does not require lawmakers to report their financial interests. 	It is difficult for citizens to have confidence in their elected officials if there are few limits on lobbyist’s efforts to influence policy.	
3/3/08	The Government Performance Project conducted by the Pew Center for the States ranked Michigan with a B+ grade, the highest ranking among Midwest States and lower than just three other states. The group noted that despite economic problems, the state showed surprising “strength and suppleness” in its management. They praised the state’s efforts to provide information, especially the state’s website. The state also got high grades on infrastructure and on working with people.	The award is a significant achievement in light of the budget challenges of the past few years.	

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Date	Incident	Comment	Impact
03/07/08	<p>A State Auditor General’s report found that the Department of Human Services is misspending millions in assistance dollars and losing millions more in potential federal sanctions and lost incentives. The problems are apparently related to overworked and under-trained staff, a seriously restricted budget, complicated policy instructions, and poor use of existing technology.</p> <p>At the same time, the state has made strides, saving more than \$18 million over three years through improvements.</p>	Without adequate funding there is no apparent solution for these problems.	
10/2/08	<p>In protest to being left out of discussions and being given inadequate explanations on bills, Democrats in the Senate refused to vote on motions for immediate effect on several bills. In response, Republicans pulled five bills from the floor, returning them to Committee. Senate Republican leaders then adjourned the session, turning off the microphones prior to statements being made. Democrats then refused to attend committee meetings conducted after the session.</p>	When the state is faced with such serious problems, it is incomprehensible that the Legislature engages in such silliness.	