

MUSKEGON COUNTY DEMOCRATS

Muskegon County Dems Launch Quarterly Newsletter

EXCITING NEWS...MORE NEWS!

Join us in celebrating the launch this April of a Muskegon County Democratic Party newsletter, which promises relevant news and interesting features from around Muskegon County and beyond.

The quarterly newsletter will be distributed in print form and by email, and will be uploaded to our website. Watch for issues in April, July, October, and January. We invite you to sign up and state your preferred delivery method on our website at <https://mkgdems.org/>.

Our news crew are Editor Linda Ritz White and Graphic Designer Amy Gustin, both retired journalists, and Website Administrator Heather Woodworth. All are Democrats and live in Muskegon County.

Your leadership team is thrilled at the opportunity our newsletter presents, not only in getting the word out, but in getting *your* word out. Muskegon County is diverse, and we intend to ensure everyone has a voice. Diversity, equity, and inclusion are central values in the Democratic Party. In that vein, we will reach into nooks and crannies as needed, to ensure everyone feels seen, valued, and empowered.

That's where you come in. We are keeping our ears open, but we are not everywhere. We need you to think of us when your community wants to publicly address a serious subject. Make general suggestions,

or inform us about specific situations. Be sure also to watch for Republican red alerts, i.e. book banning efforts. Contact our news crew by email at mkgdemsnews@gmail.com. Please be patient, as all are volunteers.

We will also be looking to profile some of our county's most interesting, pertinent, and impactful residents. Again, we invite your suggestions. And of course, we will be introducing candidates for political offices in Muskegon County.

Look for snapshots of timely events and situations around Michigan and the country. We've already assembled a long list of topics we want to address, including extremism, gun control, women's rights, gay rights, Republicans' scare tactics, news sources, and so on.

It's not all serious, of course. Think

of us also when you want to get the word out about community news and events, and we will do a Roundup. Plan ahead and remember our publication schedule.

Interested in being a contributor? We are seeking good writers to represent your communities.

We may also occasionally ask you for feedback through surveys or polls.

Now that the word is out, watch for our first full-length issue in July. We will take an in depth look at Republicans' alarming (if you're not alarmed, you need to be) Project 2025, Donald Trump's related Agenda 47, and also related, a secret men-only society and their agenda, which should frighten every woman.



The Muskegon County Democrats want you, and we're betting you want us too!

We believe in livable wages, workers' rights, affordable housing, affordable health care, environmental protection, safe communities, safe schools, strong schools, equal opportunity, social justice, human rights, gun safety, the rule of law, and fair elections.

If we are echoing your values, come find us!

- » Drop in and say HI at our office any Friday between 1 and 4 pm.
- » Join us for our **MONTHLY MEETINGS** on the 2nd Thursday at 6:00 pm.
- » Prefer to start lighter? Come out for **DRINK BLUE**. Drink Blue is an open invitation to join us for a drink and light banter at a local bar each 4th Thursday evening of the month. Check our Facebook page or website for the location, which changes monthly. Watch also for details on a plan in the works for Summer Picnics, family fun in our outlying communities.



Democrats Deliver!

It's difficult sometimes to enjoy the music amid loud, persistent, obnoxious noise. Republican lies and fear mongering will continue. And Democrats will continue to deliver. It's time we got loud too, about all our successes over the past 3 years.

American Rescue Plan

Joe Biden took office amid a raging pandemic, economic crisis, and climate crisis. He and the Democrats changed the course of the Covid-19 pandemic and jumpstarted our economic recovery through the American Rescue Plan. The plan ultimately got 79% of American adults vaccinated. It got schools reopened. It helped child care providers stay open. It helped small businesses stay open. It provided direct benefits to families, and much more.

Jobs

Nearly 11 million jobs have been created since 2021, including 750,000 manufacturing jobs. Our unemployment rate is the lowest in 50 years, and we have been enjoying the two strongest years of job growth in the history of our country. More people are working today than at any point in American history, and wages are the highest they have ever been.

In Michigan, the "Right to Work" law has been repealed, allowing unionized workplaces to require all employees to pay union dues and fees.

Manufacturing

The Biden administration and Democrats have been working with manufacturers to bring back supply chains from overseas. In the past 2 years, companies have committed to developing nearly \$300 billion in technologies of the future. The Chips Act especially benefits Michiganders. Michigan legislators have been bringing in good-paying, high quality battery and semiconductor manufacturing jobs, including union jobs, and jobs that don't require a 4-year degree.

Infrastructure

Biden worked his magic with congress, and came away with a bipartisan Infrastructure Law. Workers are

rebuilding our roads, bridges, ports, and airports, upgrading public transit and rail systems, replacing lead pipes to provide safe clean water, cleaning up ages-old pollution, bringing affordable high-speed internet to everyone, and building a national network of EV charging stations. These and similar projects are underway in all states, territories, and tribal nations.

ACA and Affordable Medicine

With more than 16 million people enrolled in the Affordable Care Act (ACA), our uninsured rate is historically low at 8%. In fact, 4 out of 5 people covered under the ACA are saving on average \$800/year on their health insurance. President Biden ordered a \$35/month cap on insulin for Medicare recipients. Drug manufacturer Eli Lilly followed suit, also setting a \$35 cap for insured purchases, saving diabetics \$500-\$805 monthly based on state residence. The cost of hearing aids is slashed from



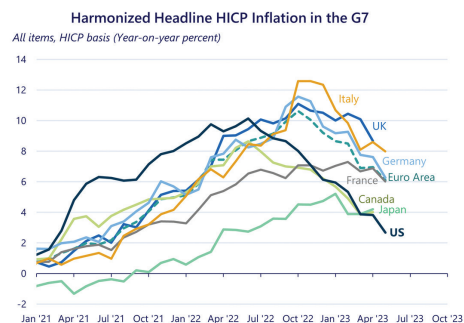
thousands to hundreds of dollars since the Biden administration ordered them available over the counter. Meanwhile, Michigan has codified the Affordable Care Act into Michigan law.

Inflation Reduction Act/Climate Change Bill

Work slowdowns and crippled supply chains spun the whole world into recession during the Covid-19 pandemic. The adjacent chart is evidence that although we are still working through it, the US has fared best of all the G7 industrialized countries. The bill was passed by a Democratic majority as all Republicans voted against it.

One of its objectives is to combat climate change while investing in the American economy. The US is already enjoying an investment and manufacturing boom, especially in disadvantaged communities.

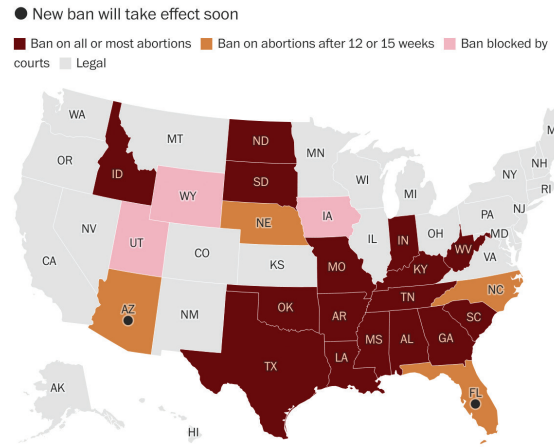
The act tackles the climate crisis head on. With economic opportunity at its core, the plan is to build a green energy—wind and solar power—economy. Companies have committed more than \$115 billion in investments. Manufacturers building electric vehicles, batteries, etc. have been strategically concentrated in communities with higher unemployment, lower income, and lower education. Among its other benefits, it gives Medicare power to negotiate drug prices and bring down insurance premiums.



Council of Economic Advisers
Sources: Eurostat, ONS, BLS, Statistics Canada, MEI, CEA analysis.
Note: Euro Area: HICP; UK: CPI; US: R-HICP-U; Canada: CPI ex. Mortgage Interest, Replacement Cost, & Property Taxes; Japan: CPI ex. Imputed Rent.
As of June 20, 2023 at 6:00pm.

Reproductive Rights Enshrined in Michigan's Constitution

States around our nation will continue to attack reproductive rights until congress acts. Michigan isn't waiting around, but repealed its own draconian 1931 law, and enshrined a new one in its constitution. "Every individual has a fundamental right to reproductive freedom, which entails the right to make and effectuate decisions about all matters relating to pregnancy, including but not limited to prenatal care, childbirth, postpartum care, contraception, sterilization, abortion care, miscarriage management, and infertility care."



Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act

Michigan has enhanced the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act which went into effect in 1977 prohibiting discrimination on the basis of religion, race, color, national origin, age, sex, height, weight, familial status, or marital status in employment, housing, education, and access to public accommodations. A ruling by the Michigan Supreme Court in 2022 expanded the scope of the law to include LGBT people. Also added were pregnant workers, workers who seek abortions, and hair style and texture.

Student Debt Relief

Using existing student loan forgiveness programs, the Biden administration has authorized the cancellation of \$153 billion in student loan debt for almost 4.3 million working class and middle income people. That's more than 9% of all outstanding federal student loan debt over several rounds, with another expected in the fall. It's not outright forgiveness, but a reduction by half by changing the interest formula. Republicans in 18 states are currently suing the Biden administration to prevent their own constituents from benefiting from the program.



Gun Reform

Congress passed the first meaningful gun safety legislation in 30 years, the bipartisan Safer Communities Act. The legislation requires enhanced background checks on 18-21-year-olds, and implements a "red flag" law preventing individuals who show signs of being



a threat to themselves or others from purchasing or possessing a firearm. It also narrows the "boyfriend loophole" to keep guns out of the hands of convicted dating partners. It invests in mental health in our communities and in our schools, has tightened gun dealer laws, and makes gun trafficking a distinct federal crime. Michigan passed its own gun safety laws in 2023, including an Extreme Risk law and a secure storage law. State law already required a permit for handgun purchases. That requirement has been extended to long guns.

Michigan Education

Michigan passed a bipartisan education budget for 2024 that makes the highest state per-student investment in Michigan history, ensuring that all public schools get free breakfast and lunch, and took the first step toward free pre-K for all 4-year-olds. The budget makes Michigan one of the lowest-cost states to become a teacher through a series of perks for educator students.

Michigan Tax Credits and Retirement Tax

More than 700,000 Michigan families will receive tax rebate checks averaging \$550, part of \$1 billion in tax cuts implemented starting this tax year. The Working Families Tax Credit was quintupled from 6% to 30% of the federal credit. In 2023, Michigan began a 4-year phase-out of its retirement income tax. Pensions and income from 401(k) and IRA withdrawals will be fully exempt from state income tax by 2026.

Respect for Marriage Act

Congress passed bipartisan legislation that provides federal recognition of same-sex marriages and interracial marriages, affording them the same federal benefits as heterosexual couples. It bars states from rejecting the validity of out-of-state marriages on the basis of sex, race or ethnicity. The Supreme Court had in 1967 declared prohibitions on interracial marriage unconstitutional, but the 1996 Defense of Marriage Act still stood.

Border & Immigration Legislation

Sadly, Democrats and Republicans were about to pass the most sweeping border and immigration legislation in almost four decades last month when Trump ordered Republicans to kill the bill so he could campaign on the problems at our border. What a bipartisan team put together over four months took 4 days to crumble. It remains top of the agenda for Democrats.

CIO Union Headquarters
490 W. Western Avenue
Muskegon, MI 49440



Where to Find **TRUSTED** News Sources

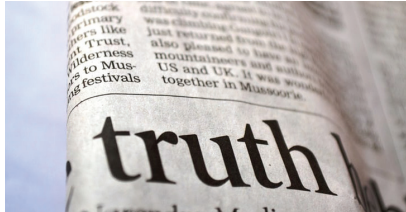
Journalist Suri Crowe walked away from network television after three years at a Sinclair-owned TV station. She describes being criticized and disciplined over her coverage of white nationalism, climate change, and guns. She was told to be more balanced.

“There is no both sides to racism, fascism, and hatred,” she said as she left legacy media, and moved to an online pro-democracy network.

The Sinclair Group is the largest owner of TV stations in the United States. The group is not only affiliated with the Fox network, but many others. They own or operate 40% of all local TV stations, including NBC, CBS, and ABC affiliates.

The company has received widespread criticism for forcing stations to carry pro-Trump “must-run segments”, and instructing anchors to read statements touting Republican talking points.

So if we can't trust network television to tell us the truth anymore, where do we turn? There are many credible sources online. Here is a list of channels and podcasts you can find online by a simple search.



- Associated Press
- Reuters
- NPR
- PBS
- The Damage Report
- The MeidasTouch Network
- Rebel HQ
- Brian Tyler Cohen
- Let's Talk Elections
- Pondering Politics
- Michael Moore Rumble
- David Pakman Show: Political news and opinion
- Now This News/Now This Impact: founded by The Huffington Post co-founder and former staff
- Pod Save America: hosts former Barack Obama staffers
- The Hill covers the U.S. Congress, the presidency and executive branch, and election campaigns
- Political Voices Network
- More Perfect Union
- The Stephanie Miller Show
- The Majority Report
- Democracy Now
- Haaretz (English Edition) for Israel/Gaza news

Volunteer Wish List

Volunteer Coordinator A volunteer coordinator tops our wish list. Duties include helping to recruit volunteers, maintaining our volunteer database, and placing volunteers in roles based on interests, qualifications, and need.

Social Media Coordinator

A dedicated social media coordinator would improve our efficiency and consistency. Duties are to collaborate with the publicity team in the creation and uploading of posts to our Facebook and Instagram accounts. We older volunteers are in general not so savvy on social media, so we'd love a couple of younger democrat recruits to help spread our good message.

Technical Coordinator Make our day. We would love a dedicated tech coordinator who could take charge of setting up equipment at our monthly meetings and other events. They would also occasionally set up Zoom meetings. Recording and photography skills would be a bonus.

Parade Coordinator You would be surprised how many parades there are across Muskegon County. Our goal is to have a presence at every one of them! A parade coordinator would organize and maintain records of parade schedules, sign us up, and organize assigned volunteers.

“If one morning I walked on top of the water across the Potomac River, the headline that afternoon would read: ‘PRESIDENT CAN'T SWIM.’” -Lyndon Johnson

