



2025 All Voting Pro-Voter Agenda: Michigan

Our Vision for the Future of Voting in the Great Lakes State

All Voting is Local Michigan

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Introduction

During a time when voting rights are increasingly under attack, All Voting is Local Michigan is building a future where every eligible Michigander can vote freely, safely, and without unnecessary barriers. While Michigan recently expanded voting access with the passage of Proposal 2, new threats to democracy are emerging. Our work centers on protecting and advancing fair elections, and we are committed to a democracy that includes everyone, especially communities that have historically been excluded.

We urge election officials, lawmakers, and stakeholders to exercise their authority to make voting more accessible, transparent, and equitable. This agenda outlines our state-level vision and priorities for protecting and expanding the right to vote for all Michiganders.

Since our country's founding, the structure of our democracy has been intentionally designed—and actively maintained—to exclude people from participating fully, especially people of color and other marginalized communities. At All Voting is Local, our guiding principle is a democracy that welcomes people in, rather than one built on the notion that people should be kept out—bold by design, as we aim to transform the systems that govern our democracy to include everyone. This commitment to building an inclusive, accessible, and equitable democracy drives both our long-term vision and our day-to-day work.

That's why we've launched All Voting is Local's National and State Pro-Voter Agendas—a long-term affirmative vision for voting that calls on state and local election officials to use the broad authority they already have to expand access to the ballot. The Pro-Voter Agenda was created as a tool to be implemented by those decision-makers while centering Black, Brown, Native American, and other historically marginalized communities.

Our agenda outlines actionable solutions to ensure the following:

- Every American can get on the rolls and stay on the rolls.
- Every American can vote when, where, and how it works for them—in under 30 minutes.
- Partisan interference in vote counting and certification is stopped.

The path forward requires vigilance and action. We must resist anti-voter laws, support election officials (and push back on them when necessary), and advocate for policies that make it easier—not harder—for every voter to participate in our democracy. The stakes couldn't be higher. The fight for voting rights is not a relic of the past—it's a fight for our future.

The power of American democracy lies in the hands of the people—and the officials who are responsible for ensuring the voice of the people is heard through free and fair elections. As All Voting continues advocating for policies that expand access to the ballot, this agenda will serve to clearly and accurately define our positions and our priorities—across our eight states and across the country.

—Hannah Fried, Executive Director, All Voting is Local (Spring 2025)

Who We Are

All Voting is Local (“All Voting”) is a nonpartisan organization that fights on the ground in eight states for free and fair elections. In a moment of unprecedented threat to our democracy, All Voting advocates state and local officials for policies and practices that ensure the American people choose their leaders, not the other way around.

All Voting works year-round with our partners to prevent partisan interference in our elections, advance fair and inclusive rules on voter registration, and remove barriers that make it more difficult for people to vote—particularly for Black, Brown, Native American, and other historically marginalized communities. As a multistate organization with a national presence and resources, we build connections between state and national advocacy groups so that local voices and perspectives inform the national conversation around voter access.

All Voting is Local is on the ground in Arizona, Florida, Georgia, Michigan, Nevada, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin. During the 2024 cycle, All Voting programs expanded access for over 13 million voters.

Voter Registration Practices & Policies

Every American can get on the rolls & stay on the rolls

Automatic Voter Registration (AVR)

All Voting MI believes in easy and accessible voter registration by mail, online, or in person, through all federal, state, and local government agencies, such as the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV). We support strengthening Automatic Voter Registration in Michigan by improving backend data sharing between state agencies and local clerks, expanding the opt-out registration option, and reducing administrative burdens for voters.

As of 2024, Michigan's AVR implementation could reach more voters through improved agency coordination. A recent report by the Brennan Center revealed that AVR can increase registration rates by up to 9 percent.

Same-Day Voter Registration

All Voting Michigan supports investments to ensure same-day registration at early voting and election day sites is efficient, accessible, and uniformly available statewide. We believe that voters should be able to update their registration information and/or register at any time, while also allowing them to choose to vote in person at the polls during early voting or on election day. Voters should be able to do so without additional ID requirements, provided they affirm their identity and place of residence by signature. Same-day registration has been shown to increase turnout by 5 to 7 percent, especially among young, low-income, and Black and Brown voters. Voters should not be required to register at their local election offices and then return to the polling place to vote, as that unnecessary burden often leads to voter attrition.

Preregistration for 16- and 17-year-olds

All Voting MI is in support of full implementation of preregistration programs in high schools, including partnerships with school districts to conduct regular registration drives and civic education efforts. Data shows that states with preregistration see significantly higher turnout among young voters aged 18 to 24.

Accessible Registration for Students and Tribal Communities

We advocate for proactive outreach and registration support for college students and Native American voters, including on-campus and on-reservation registration options. For students, this means increasing awareness of early voting and absentee voting options, which are often underutilized. Many students wait until election day to register, leading to long lines and administrative delays at polling places near college campuses. We support targeted campaigns and campus partnerships to increase early voting participation and streamline the same-day registration process to reduce bottlenecks.

In addition, with 12 federally recognized tribes in Michigan, it is of the utmost importance to address barriers to the ballot for tribal communities. Barriers such as a lack of physical addresses and limited access to government offices disproportionately impact Native voters.

Responsible List Maintenance

We support responsible and transparent voter list maintenance to ensure Michigan's voter rolls remain accurate and up to date. This means complying with federal law, including the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA), and using best practices that notify voters before removal, allow adequate time to respond, and minimize wrongful purges.

At the same time, we strongly oppose legislative efforts, such as House Joint Resolution B (HJR-B) and similar proposals that mirror the federal "SAVE Act," which would require documentary proof of citizenship, such as a birth certificate or passport, to register to vote. These measures disproportionately impact naturalized

citizens, students, and rural voters. Michigan’s elections have consistently proven to be free and fair, and there is no evidence to suggest that ineligible voters have been able to cast ballots in the state.

The Michigan secretary of state’s office’s current use of cross-agency data verification and its partnership with the Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC) are processes that help ensure responsible list maintenance. These systems already prevent double voting and ineligible registration while protecting the rights of eligible voters. Legislation requiring unnecessary and burdensome documentation would disenfranchise thousands of legal voters.

Voting Methods, Opportunities, & Policies

Every American can vote when, where, & how it works for them—in under 30 minutes

Expanded Language Access

All Voting MI believes every voter should have equitable access to the polls, regardless of the language they speak. We advocate for translated election materials, in-person language assistance, and accessible machines at every voting site in compliance with ADA and VRA standards. We believe that individuals with both limited English proficiency and/or the inability to read or write should also receive additional levels of support, separate from expanded language access, through accessibility provisions that allow for telephonic and other forms of assistance, which are not currently provided uniformly throughout the voting process. Speaking a language other than English or not having proficiency in English should not be a barrier to voting. Support should be provided or accessible for voters where there is a need for language assistance.

Use of Paper Ballots

All Voting MI believes that a paper record of each ballot ensures the most reliable and replicable election results. Hand-marked paper ballots are the best method for recording votes, securing our elections, and accurately reflecting the will of the voters in every race. Paper ballots are widely recognized by experts as one of the most important election security measures that states can adopt. All Voting is Local supports the availability of ballot marking devices or other tools so that all voters, regardless of physical ability, can cast their ballots privately and independently. When selections are recorded on paper, voters can easily verify that their ballot accurately reflects their choices. Paper ballots also facilitate post-election risk-limiting audits, where election workers can check the paper records against electronic vote totals to confirm that voting machines are working as intended. All polling locations that use electronic voting machines should be required to have a supply of backup paper ballots, amounting to 20% of voters in each precinct, in case of a technological issue with their machines.

Expanded Access for Voters With Disabilities

All Voting MI supports ample and accessible opportunities for everyone to register and/or vote, regardless of physical ability. The assistance provided for in-person registration options and the designated voting and/or registering locations must comply with the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA). However, having a voter-assist terminal is not enough. Many voting sites across Michigan are still physically inaccessible to voters with disabilities. These issues include a lack of designated handicap parking, the absence of ramps or elevators for voters using mobility aids, inaccessible doorways, and limited poll worker training. Over 1.3 million adults in Michigan report having a disability, and many face structural barriers to accessing polling places. We call for a statewide audit of physical accessibility at all polling locations and a mandate to bring all voting sites into full ADA compliance.

Additional policies that can improve access for voters with disabilities include, but are not limited to these:

- Wherever applicable, online registration and election websites should meet accessibility standards to help voters with disabilities find the information they need to register.
- The Help America Vote Act's (HAVA) requirement for one accessible voting machine at each voting location is the bare minimum. Election offices should be aware of the needs in their community and make plans accordingly to

ensure that voters who need to use accessible voting machines do not experience longer wait times or greater burdens than other voters.

- Voting sites should be pretested for potential barriers that may affect voters with disabilities.
- Increased training for poll workers on voting with a disability should be provided to ensure that disabled voters are permitted to have privacy while voting and bring an authorized person to assist them in the voting process.
- Barriers to voting by mail should be reduced by allowing caretakers, family members, or other individuals to assist with and return ballots on behalf of voters.

Early Voting Access and Uniformity

All Voting MI supports full implementation and funding of Proposal 2's nine-day early voting requirement with equitable site distribution across rural, urban, and tribal communities. We believe that Michigan voters have a constitutional right to exercise their right to vote, and voters should be afforded the opportunity to participate in elections in ways that do not require voters to wait in long lines or sacrifice existing familial or work obligations. The passing of Proposal 2 with 60 percent voter approval in 2022 was a testament to the broad support for expanded early voting access.

Voting by Mail

We support postage-paid absentee ballots, permanent absentee voter status, and expanded access to drop boxes in underserved areas. Research has shown that states offering no-excuse absentee voting and drop boxes experience higher participation and voter satisfaction.

Equitable Voting Access for Justice-Impacted Voters

All Voting MI supports policies and practices that ensure individuals who are currently incarcerated, but not convicted of a crime, retain and can exercise their right to vote. Michigan law allows individuals in jail, either pretrial or for misdemeanor convictions, to vote; yet, many are unaware of this right, and as a result, many are unable to access the process. Roughly 41,000 people are incarcerated in Michigan at any time, with thousands legally eligible to vote but often disenfranchised through confusion or lack of access.

We call for stronger partnerships between clerks, jail administrators, and voting rights advocates to provide voter education, ballot access, and registration services in local detention centers. Additionally, formerly incarcerated individuals should be given clear guidance and support to restore and exercise their voting rights upon reentry.

Protections for Voters

All Voting MI believes all voters should feel comfortable when casting a ballot via whatever method they choose and be able to do so free from intimidation. Federal regulations, such as the Voting Rights Act and the Civil Rights Act of 1965, protect against intimidation. States can enforce and strengthen these regulations to ensure that all voters feel safe, whether they are putting their ballot in a drop box or going to a voting site. Election offices should enforce and strengthen regulations that protect voters from intimidation by poll watchers, state and local law enforcement, or anti-democracy groups.

Voters should also be protected from unwarranted challenges to their eligibility and, if removed from the rolls, should be given ample notice and enough time to reregister ahead of any upcoming elections. The influx of citizen-led mass voter challenges is part of a widespread effort to undermine confidence in elections. These challenges are being used to bog down local election offices with a high volume of erroneous challenges to voters' eligibility, and they divert resources and valuable time from election officials.

Election Official and Election Worker Protections

All Voting MI supports legal protections and state-level investments to prevent harassment and retain experienced election workers. Over 77 percent of local election officials report experiencing threats or fearing for their safety since 2020, contributing to widespread staff departures. Supporting and retaining skilled, experienced election workers is an urgent need for Michiganders. We believe that since we entrust election officials to uphold our democratic systems, they should, in turn, be able to trust that they can do so safely and without fear, intimidation, or threats of violence. In recent years, election officials, staff, and poll workers have been subjected to threats, accusations of crime, and leaked private information

(doxing) at historically high rates. As a result, some states have enacted legislation specifically to protect election officials, staff, and poll workers.

Ballot Tracking and Voter Confidence Tools

We support expanded ballot tracking notifications and voter education to improve transparency and confidence in the voting process. States like Colorado and California have successfully utilized ballot tracking to reduce voter anxiety and increase trust; we believe that similar policies implemented in Michigan can help build upon the progress created by Proposition 2.

Vote Count & Post-Vote Procedures

Partisan interference in vote counting & certification is stopped

Notice & Opportunity to Cure

All Voting MI believes in a robust notice-and-cure program that gives voters at least eight days from the time an error on a ballot is discovered and they are notified to cure the issue. This process should also provide the same amount of time for a voter to provide identification that would allow a provisional ballot to be counted as a normal vote. The term “cure” refers to the process of fixing or remedying the perceived error(s) on a ballot.

We support the following:

- Requiring election officials to notify voters within two days of reviewing the ballot if any discrepancies exist.

- Requiring election officials to contact voters by automated phone, text, email, or mail within 24 hours of identifying any errors on their ballot. Within 48 hours, if the issue remains unresolved, a staff member should contact the voter.
- After a voter is successfully notified, they should be allowed up to three weeks (and no less than eight days) to fix any perceived error.
- Specification by the election offices of the documentation required to correct the error and the deadline for submitting it, to avoid delays in certification.

Certification as a Ministerial Duty

We support legislation and legal action clarifying that vote certification is a ministerial act, not a discretionary one, to prevent political interference. After the 2020 election, some Michigan counties faced pressure to delay certification, highlighting the need for clearer protections. Certification—the written statement attesting that the tabulation and canvassing of the election is complete and accurate—must be completed in accordance with the process and timelines set out in federal and state law. The powers of state officials in the certification process must be clearly defined and limited, and those responsible for certifying federal elections should not be allowed to rely on any information other than the election returns themselves. The job of a state official reviewing election returns for certification is to make sure the math is correct and nothing more. A state official who fails to abide by their duty should be subject to immediate removal and other penalties as applicable under state law.

Post-Election Audits and Security

We support risk-limiting audits and full transparency in the audit and certification process, while opposing efforts to discredit results through sham audits. Michigan has piloted risk-limiting audits since 2021, and the National Association of Secretaries of State recommends them as the gold standard.

Conclusion

All Voting MI believes that the policies laid out in this Pro-Voter Agenda are a powerful step toward a thriving democracy that enfranchises voters in local, state, and federal elections. These measures—from automatic voter registration to expanded language access to additional ways to vote in person—foster inclusivity, accessibility, and representation, empowering citizens to actively participate in our electoral processes for a more equitable American democracy. We believe that these policies go beyond just the 2026 and 2028 elections and that there is still more work to be done for our country to truly achieve a democracy that works for us all. Our Pro-Voter Agenda is a milestone in advancing a better future for voters that is absolutely within reach, enfranchising millions and moving our country forward.

Appendix

Automatic Voter Registration

Automatic Voter Registration, a Summary

Brennan Center for Justice

<https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/research-reports/automatic-voter-registration>

Pre-Registration for Youth

Preregistration for Young Voters

National Conference of State Legislatures

<https://www.ncsl.org/elections-and-campaigns/preregistration-for-young-voters>

Same-Day Registration

Same-day voter registration

Ballotpedia

https://ballotpedia.org/Same-day_voter_registration

Native American Voting Access

Native American Rights Fund (NARF) Voting Rights Project

Native American Rights Fund

<https://narf.org/cases/voting-rights/>

Proposal 2 and Early Voting

Proposal 2: Michigan Secretary of State's Office

Michigan Department of State

<https://www.michigan.gov/sos/resources/news/2023/06/28/secretary-benson-statement-on-passage-of-proposal-2-implementation-bills>

Vote by Mail and Drop Boxes

Stanford-MIT Healthy Elections Project
<https://healthyelections.org/>

Language and Disability Statistics

U.S. Census Bureau – American Community Survey Data
<https://data.census.gov/>

Ballot Tracking Tools

National Association of State Election Directors (NASED)
<https://www.nased.org/>

Certification Issues in 2020

Michigan election officials face pressure over vote certification
Detroit Free Press
<https://www.freep.com/>

Risk-Limiting Audits

The State of Risk-Limiting Audit Implementation
National Association of Secretaries of State
<https://www.nass.org/sites/default/files/2023-02/VotingWorks-White-Paper-NASS-Winter23.pdf>

Threats to Election Officials

Election Officials Under Attack
Brennan Center for Justice
<https://www.brennancenter.org/>

Incarcerated and Justice-Impacted Voter Access

Michigan Profile – Prison Policy Initiative

Prison Policy Initiative

<https://www.prisonpolicy.org/profiles/MI.html>

Proof-of-Citizenship Laws

Why Proof of Citizenship Laws Are Bad for Voters

Brennan Center for Justice

<https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/analysis-opinion/millions-americans-dont-have-documents-proving-their-citizenship-readily>