Michigan State Representative District 54
2 Candidates on the November 6, 2018 ballot

Duties: The Michigan House of Representatives shares responsibility with the Michigan Senate to enact new laws and amend or repeal existing laws.

Qualifications: State Representatives may serve a maximum of three full terms. They must be at least 21 years of age and a registered voter in their district. There are 110 State House districts which are re-apportioned after each census.

Term: 2 years   Vote for ONE (1)

COLTON A CAMPBELL, Republican
Did Not Respond in Time for Inclusion

RONNIE D PETERSON, Democrat
Website: peterson4rep.com
Occupation / Current Position: State Representative, District 54
Education: Bachelor's degree in Community Development/Public Administration from Central Michigan University
Qualifications / Experience: State Representative, 2017 to present; Washtenaw County Commissioner, 2001 to 2016; former member, Ypsilanti City Council

Questions:

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

A: I am committed to improving public education for Michigan residents from Head Start to technical and post-secondary opportunities. I believe all Michigan citizens are entitled to an affordable, quality education. I am steadfast and committed to bringing good paying jobs, new businesses and economic development to the greater Ypsilanti community. I believe public safety can be improved through law enforcement community engagement programs and investing in measures to reduce poverty. While these are my top 3 priorities, I am also committed to protecting retirement, pension and health benefits for our senior citizens.

2. EDUCATION: What measures do you support/propose to achieve improved educational outcomes and accessibility for Michigan students from early childhood through post-secondary education?

A: In Lansing, I have strongly opposed using School Aid Fund dollars for higher education. School Aid monies should go exclusively to K-12 education. I supported and achieved a 2% increase for the higher education budget in fiscal year 2018-19. At home, I am working closely with Washtenaw Community College and Eastern Michigan University to provide after school tutoring for our K-12 students. I have begun a mentorship lecture series to encourage our youth to think big and pursue their dreams. So far, the President of the University of Michigan and the Director of the Michigan State Police have spoken, with more to come.

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

A: Economic development is one of my main focuses, and I am very hands-on in this area because economic development brings good-paying jobs to our region. I take pride in my participation in ongoing projects to bring an Amtrak train station to Ypsilanti; renovate Peninsular Park; redevelop the Thompson Block building; expand the Huron Valley PACE senior healthcare facility; expand the American Center for Mobility and improve the surrounding business corridor. These developments and many others are examples of public private partnerships that leverage relatively small public investments for the benefit of our community.

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

A: I believe in transparency and accountability where campaign finance and government operations are conducted with true openness. I support the ballot proposal to end gerrymandering and put redistricting duties in the hands of a nonpartisan commission. I support no-reason absentee voting, automatic voter registration, Election Day registration, and pre-registration for 16- and 17-year-olds. Voting is a right and responsibility for all of us. We need to do everything we can to expand voter participation and civic engagement.

5. ENVIRONMENT & ENERGY: What actions or policies do you support to protect Michigan's water, air and land for current and future generations, while meeting the state's energy needs? Explain how those actions or policies would affect the future of Enbridge Pipeline 5.

A: I believe in economic development but not at the expense of our most precious resources. I support expanding renewable energy and investment in public transportation to reduce carbon emissions and create a sustainable environment. I have voted to fund removal and replacement of lead service lines to avoid future catastrophes like the Flint water crisis. I voted against the expansion of corporate water withdrawals. I cosponsored a resolution to urge the Governor to shut down Line 5. To ensure public health, quality of life and economic prosperity we must take our role as stewards of the environment very seriously.

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

A: My position is simple; I believe in equal rights for everyone. In May of this year I invited the Michigan Civil Rights Commission to Ypsilanti to hear testimony on racial inequity in our public schools. While the Commission's conclusions are still pending, I have already begun drafting legislation that would direct additional resources to schools adversely affected by poverty and racial imbalance. In June, I brought the Director of the Michigan State Police to Ypsilanti High School to encourage students to pursue careers in law enforcement and increase diversity among state troopers. Education and jobs are the key!