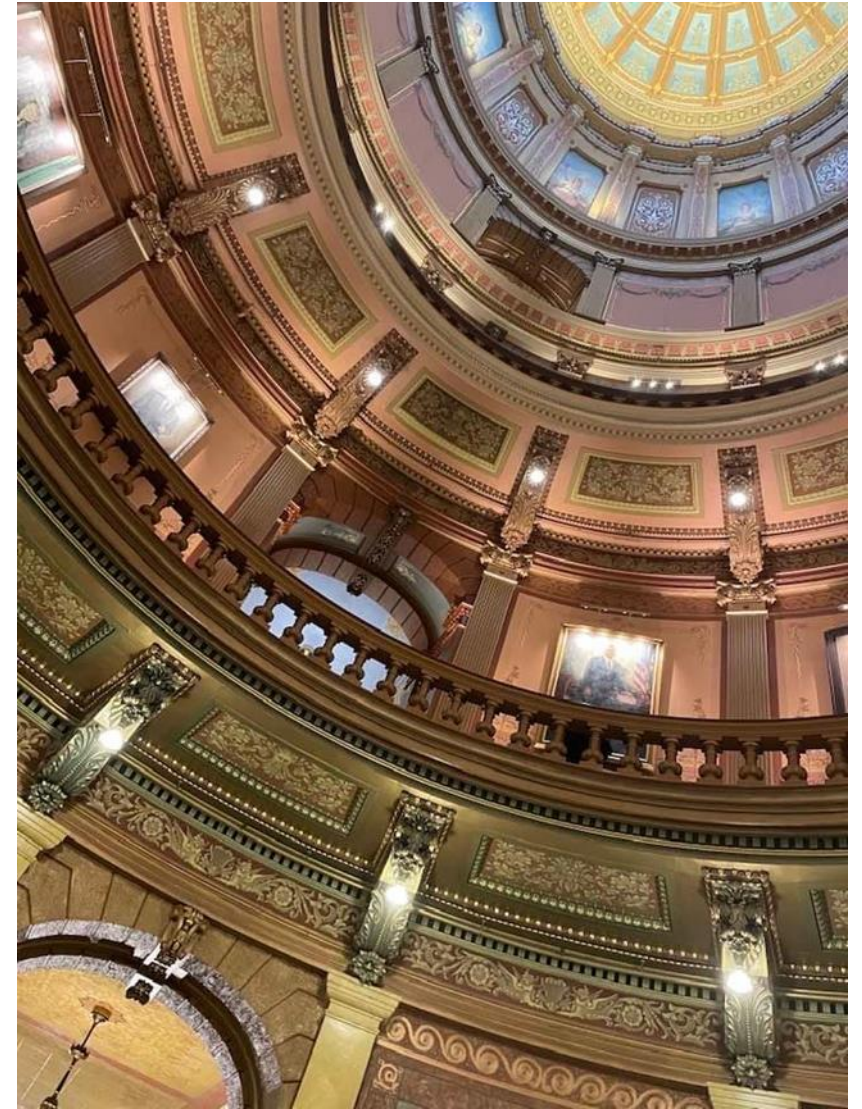


# Update for LWVMI Advocacy Committee

1/1/24 - 3/21/24

LWVMI Advocacy Committee

3/21/24



# Members of the LWVMI Advocacy Committee

1. Tricia Denton – Water/Line 5
2. Judy Karandjeff, Chair - Election Law, Women's Issues
3. Carolyn Madden – Criminal Justice/Juvenile Justice
4. Connie Mitchell – Education/Critical Race Theory
5. Maria Woloson – Abolish Electoral College/Universal Health Care
6. Christina Schlitt – Firearm Safety
7. Sue Smith – National Popular Vote, Redistricting
8. Sandy Sorini Elser – Natural Resources/Environment/Climate
9. Denise Hartsough – Ex Officio
10. Paula Bowman – Ex Officio

# What has happened since the new year began?



# The Legislature

- House is tied with 54 D - 54 R members until special election on April 16 is certified and two new members from Districts 13 and 25 are sworn in.
- Senate still is 20 D and 18 R.



# Proposed Ballot Proposals – LWVMI Positions

- **1-13-24** LWVMI opposes and urges voters to *decline to sign* this petition that aims to overturn legislation passed late last year giving state regulators, not municipal governments, final say over large-scale solar and wind projects. The petition would take power away from the Public Service Commission and return it to local governments on placement of large-scale wind and solar energy projects and energy storage facilities granted under PA 233 of 2023. This is an initiation of legislation and requires 356,958 valid signatures turned in by May 29, 2024.
- **1-13-24** LWVMI opposes and urges voters to *decline to sign* this petition that will nullify red flag laws passed last year. (PA 38 of 2023). The law allows family, police, mental health professionals, roommates and former partners to petition a judge to remove firearms from a person they believe poses a threat to themselves or others. This is a referendum and requires 223,099 valid signatures turned in by 90 days after end of session (March 2025?).
- **1-13-24** LWVMI opposed and urges voters to *decline to sign* this petition that would amend the MI Constitution to eliminate property taxes. This is a constitutional amendment and needs 446,198 valid signatures by July 8, 2024

# LINE 5



- **12-23** Tricia met with and educated Congressional members on Line 5
- **1-18-24** The League sent a letter to our US Congressional Representatives and US Senators strongly urging them to tell the Biden administration that it must revoke the presidential permit for Line 5 and stand with the American people in a huge legal battle pitting Big Oil and Canada against American laws and Tribal sovereignty.
- **2-5-24** The League joined the Oil & Water Don't Mix Coalition in a letter to the US Department of Transportation citing concern that the remaining staff at Enbridge after a sharp reduction in their labor force will have the capacity to protect the pipeline.

# Governor Presented State of the State January 24, 2024

- \$1.4B to build or rehabilitate housing
- free pre-K
- free community college
- \$5000 income tax credit for family caregiver
- finish spending road money
- tax credits for research and development
- revive the Good Jobs for MI program
- rebates for buying a new car



# Reproductive Freedom



- On November 8, Right to Life of Michigan filed a federal lawsuit against the Governor and other officials to invalidate Proposal 3, saying it created an illegitimate “super-right” to abortion. On March 19, the Governor filed a response. *Right to Life v Whitmer*.
- On February 6, Northland Family Planning Clinic, Center for Reproductive Rights and others filed a lawsuit challenging three of the abortion restrictions still in MI law. *Northland Family Planning Clinic v. Michigan*.
- On March 26, the U.S. Supreme Court will hear the case on the use of the abortion pill, mifepristone. *Alliance for Hippocratic Medicine v FDA*.



# Governor's Budget Proposal February 7, 2024

The Governor's budget recommendation totals \$80.7 billion, including a general fund total of \$14.3 billion and a school aid budget totaling \$19 billion. Now the House and Senate will begin their budget process.

- Pre-K program for 4-year-old children
- Free Community College
- 2.5% increase in university and community college funding
- Increase in family planning funds
- Free school lunch



# Freedom of Information Act



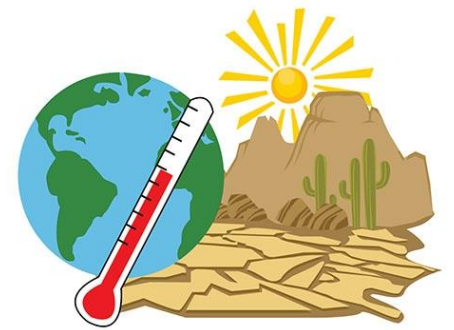
- On 2/7/24 the Senate Oversight Committee had a hearing on **SB 669 and 670** to require open records in the Governor's Office and Legislature. LWVMI supported the bills.
- On 3/13/24 the bills were substituted and reported by the Senate Oversight Committee to the Senate. Action alert was sent on March 15.

# February 13, 2024 Laws Passed in 2023 without immediate effect became law

- Climate Change
- Firearm Safety
- Juvenile Justice
- Reproductive Choice
- Voting Rights



# Climate Change – New Laws – Feb 13



- Recap of the climate bills passed last year:
  - **In November 2023 Governor Whitmer signed 7 new Climate Change Laws effective February 13, 2024.**
  - **100% CLEAN ENERGY STANDARD.** Public Act 235 of 2023 puts Michigan on track to 60% renewable energy by 2035 and 100% carbon free energy by 2040. This new clean energy standard will help protect Michigan’s air, land, and water for future generations.
  - **IMPROVING ENERGY EFFICIENCY.** PA 229 of 2023 improves energy efficiency and waste reduction to drive down energy costs. It will help residents upgrade their homes to save money while ensuring access to reliable power.

# Climate Change – New Laws – Feb 13



- **WORKER TRANSITION TO CLEAN ENERGY JOBS.** PA 232 establishes the Office of Worker and Community Economic Transition. The new office will work with workers and communities to make sure they can take full advantage clean energy jobs.
- **STREAMLINING CLEAN ENERGY PROJECTS.** PA 233 and PA 234 bolster the Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC) by streamlining permitting of large wind and solar projects. The new laws are designed to ensure that local governments and municipalities maintain local control by requiring developers to work with local governments first on project approvals.
- **CLIMATE AND EQUITY IN MPSC DECISIONS.** PA 231 authorizes the MPSC to consider climate and equity in their regulatory decisions. PA 230 protects farmers’ rights to host solar projects on their own land.

# Firearm Safety – New Laws – Feb 13



- **Secure Storage:** Requires individuals to keep unattended weapons unloaded and locked with a locking device or stored in a locked box or container if it is reasonably known that a minor is likely to be on the premises.
- **Gun safety devices:** The costs of gun safety devices will be lowered in an effort to allow easier access to materials needed to safely store firearms.
- **Background checks:** Expands background checks related to firearm purchases to all firearm purchases, from handguns to long guns. Previously, universal background checks were only required when purchasing a handgun in Michigan.
- **Red flag laws:** Establish extreme risk protection order laws, also known as red flag laws. Red flag laws are designed to help prevent a person in distress or crisis from using a firearm to inflict damage on themselves or others. The laws don't seek to take firearms away from gun owners who aren't dangerous or in distress.
- **Domestic violence regulations:** Prohibits individuals convicted of a misdemeanor related to domestic violence from possessing firearms for at least an eight-year-period. Existing Michigan law only prohibited those convicted of felony domestic violence from possessing firearms.

# Juvenile Justice – New Laws – Feb 13



The Task Force on Juvenile Justice Reform, formed by Governor Whitmer and led by Lt. Governor Gilchrist released its report in July 2022 with 32 recommendations for improving Michigan’s juvenile justice system. The Justice for Kids and Communities ACT was signed into law in December 2023.

- Broaden access to diversion
- Eliminates most costs for associated with juvenile legal system
- Raising the \$\$ amount for community based care
- Mandates a risk and needs assessment before disposition for every juvenile

<https://www.miyouthjustice.org/implementation-of-the-justice-for-kids-a>

# Reproductive Health Act – New Laws – Feb 13

- Repeals Michigan’s **TRAP Laws**, which are designed specifically to close abortion providers.
- Repeals an old, **outdated law from 1931** that would have criminalized nurses and doctors for prescribing medication abortion including mifepristone.
- Ensures **students** at Michigan public universities have access to accurate information about all their reproductive health options.
- Repeals the law that forced patients to buy a **separate insurance rider** for abortion.





# Voting Rights/Transparency New laws Feb 13

- February Presidential Primary
- Secure Drop Boxes
- Early Voting
- Permanent Mail Ballot List
- Pre-registration for 16 and 17 year olds
- Financial Disclosure requirements for elected officials

[www.michiganvoting.org](http://www.michiganvoting.org)

[www.promotethevote.com](http://www.promotethevote.com)



# What legislation might move?

**Spring Recess – March 22 – April 10 – House**

**March 22 – April 9 – Senate**

**Break for Summer - June 27**



# Environmental Bills - Upcoming

- Environmental bills the League supports that are still in Committee:
  - **Community Solar** - Senate Bills 152-153 and House Bill 4464. Bipartisan bills that would allow community solar projects, subscriptions by community members, and credits against subscriber's electric bills for the energy the solar project puts into the grid.
  - **Regulating Septic Systems** - Senate Bills 299 and 300, and House Bills 4479 and 4480. Michigan is the only state in the nation without a statewide septic code. Hundreds of thousands of leaking septic systems foul Michigan waters. The bills would require inspection of septic systems every 5 years and create a fund to help customers pay the cost of inspections and correcting problems.

# Environmental Bills - Upcoming



- **Allowing Local Governments to ban plastic bags** Senate Bill 228 and House Bill 4359. An estimated 22 million pounds of plastic waste end up in the Great Lakes yearly. Plastic bags can break down as microplastics that end up in the human body. These bills would allow local governments to ban or restrict the use of plastic bags.
- **Polluter pay bills** Senate Bills 605-611 and House Bills 5241-5247. This 7-bill package will set more stringent cleanup standards, increase transparency, require businesses that use polluting materials to post an up-front bond to cover any potential cleanup costs, and give people exposed to toxic substances the right to medical monitoring and fairer access to the courts.

# Firearm Safety - Upcoming



- HBs 4127 and 4128, prohibiting firearms in election sites, had a hearing and vote to report in Senate Elections and Ethics Committee, and passed the Senate.
- Now awaiting final approval of Senate changes in the House.
- New office of Community Violence Intervention Services established.
- Michigan State Police New Gun Disposal Program

# Juvenile Justice/Criminal Justice – Upcoming



## **Juvenile Justice :**

- Need to pass House Bill 4630 that supports providing adequate defense for youth. It is on 3<sup>rd</sup> Reading in the Senate.

## **Criminal Justice:**

- SB 321-325, Second Chance Sentencing Act; beginning hearings this week
- SB 119-123, Eliminate Life without Parole for youth under 19
- SB 33, End Prisoner Gerrymandering (other states moving to end, e.g. Montana)

# LINE 5 - Upcoming



- “Bad River” is airing in AMC theaters nationwide, check local listings to see when it will show or request it be shown at your local theater. BAD RIVER is a riveting new documentary about the Wisconsin-based Bad River Band and its ongoing fight for sovereignty.
- On March 21, Attorney General Dana Nessel delivered arguments in federal court in Ohio, to remove Line 5 decision back to state court. Supporters of shut down of Line 5 attended by the bus load in solidarity for State rights to protect the Public Trust.

# Line 5 - Upcoming

- Continue to lobby President Biden to shut down Line 5
- Watch court decisions on Line 5
- Join the LWVUS CIG Water Team Monthly meeting on First Monday at 11:00 a.m.





# National Popular Vote - Upcoming

- LWVMI supports HB 4156 and HB 4440 and SB 126 and SB 295 to join the National Popular Vote Compact
- House Bills on Second Reading in House (6/6/23)
- Senate Bills in Senate Elections and Ethics Committee – League pushing for hearing

**National Popular  ote!**

# Voting Rights - Upcoming



- **SBs 603 and 604** – clarifying recounts in Michigan had a hearing on March 6 and came out of Senate Elections Committee on party line vote on March 20<sup>th</sup>.
- **SBs 401-404**, MI Voting Rights Act, have been introduced and assigned to the Senate Elections and Ethics Committee. We anticipate hearings and substitutes in the spring
- Republican National Committee filed a **lawsuit** alleging that Michigan is not in compliance with the National Voting Rights Act that requires the voting registration rolls must be clean.
- New **financial disclosure information** is available on Secretary of State's Website [Personal financial disclosure \(michigan.gov\)](https://www.michigan.gov/personal-financial-disclosure)

# What is happening with Redistricting?



# Court Ruling on MICRC Maps

- 12/2023 – Federal District Court ruled Seven House Districts and Six Senate Districts unconstitutional under 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment of U.S. Constitution, “Equal Protection Clause”
- Court: race was major factor when MICRC drew maps of those districts.
- Court: not necessary to rule on the VRA districts because of ruling on 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment claim

# Court Scheduling Orders

- 1/8/24 Court issued Scheduling Orders for redrawing House map
- 3/1/24 – deadline for MICRC to submit final House map to Court
- 3/1/24 – deadline for Court appointed Drawing Special Master to submit House map to Court, used only if MICRC map rejected by Court
- 3/8/24 – deadline, Plaintiffs file any objections to MICRC map with Court

# Court Scheduling Orders - continued

- 3/15/24 – deadline, MICRC file responses to Plaintiff’s objections with Court
- 3/15/24 – deadline, Court appointed Reviewing Special Master submit review of Commission’s final map to Court
- 3/20/24 – deadline, both parties to file briefs on the Reviewing Special Master’s Report
- 3/29/24 – deadline, Court approve “remedial House redistricting plan”

# MICRC Actions



- 2/21 and 2/22, 2024 – MICRC held Court ordered Public Hearings in Detroit on 10 draft proposed maps
- 2/28/24 – MICRC voted to submit Motown Sound FC-E1 House map to the Court, meeting the Constitutional requirement: a yes vote by majority of Commissioners present including at least 2 R, 2D and 2 I.
- Vote was 10/3: 2/4 Republicans, 4/4 Democrats, and 4/5 Independents

# Potential Impact on House Districts

The Commission's map would impact 14 House Districts, including that of Speaker Tate.

- **April 23 – filing deadline**
- **August 6 - primary**
- **November 5 - general election**



# Court Order Regarding Senate Districts

- Court Ruling: Six Senate Districts must be redrawn, #1, 3, 6, 8, 10 and 11, plus adjoining districts as necessary
- 4/12/24 – Timeline for redrawing Senate maps must be submitted jointly by both parties to the Court
- Final Senate map must be submitted to Court for approval, according to timeline and the Court's order
- Map will take effect in the 2026 Senate election

# What are LWVMI Educational Networks doing?



# Environmental Network

## Sandra Sorini Elser



- Meets on 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of each month at 11 a.m.
- 60 members from 20-25 Michigan Local Leagues.
- We share ideas for what our local Leagues can do to fight Climate Change and preserve our Natural Resources and Environment.
- All League members are welcome! Learn more on the LWVMI Webpage <https://lwvmi.org/environment/>

Next meeting: April 18 – Carol Gagliardi of Wild Ones will speak about how to create native habitats to support pollinators and other native species.

# Firearm Safety Network

## Vicki Paulissen and Christina Schlitt

- Meet the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m. Webpage on LWVMI
- Plan to educate about new laws
- Meetings
  - January 10 – Adolescent Targeted Violence Prevention Program, MSU
  - February 13 – Firearm Prevention Institute, U of M
  - Next Meeting is April 9 at 7 p.m.
  - Recordings available LWVMI website

# WHAT CAN YOU DO NOW?

TAKE  
ACTION!

- Action alerts are emailed to every member
- Action alerts are on LWVMI website under the Take Action Button
- Take Action now to support passage of Freedom of Information legislation, SB 669 and SB 670

# QUESTIONS???

Look up bills at [www.legislature.mi.gov](http://www.legislature.mi.gov)