

**PROMOTE**   
**the VOTE**

**A VOTING RIGHTS AMENDMENT TO  
MICHIGAN'S CONSTITUTION**

# WHAT IS THE BALLOT PROPOSAL?

Amends the Michigan Constitution to make:

- A voting system that works for all Michigan citizens
- Voting more accessible
- Ensures votes are secure and counted

*To change the Constitution, a majority of Michigan voters have to approve the proposed amendment. The Legislature cannot change the Constitution by itself.*

# WHAT WILL THE BALLOT PROPOSAL DO?

Amend the MI Constitution to:

- Protect the right to vote a secret ballot
- Ensure military service members and overseas voters get their ballots in time for their votes to count
- Provide voters with the option to vote straight party
- Automatically register citizens to vote at the Secretary of State's office unless the citizen declines
- Permit citizens to register to vote by mail or in person until 15 days before an election
- Allow citizens to register to vote in person with proof of residency within two weeks of and on Election Day
- Provide all registered voters access to an absentee ballot for any reason
- Ensure the accuracy and integrity of elections by auditing election results

# WHO IS SUPPORTING THE PROPOSAL?

A Broad Coalition:

ACLU of Michigan

League of Women Voters of Michigan

Michigan League for Public Policy

Michigan State Conference NAACP

And others

# **THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS SUPPORTS THE PROPOSAL BECAUSE:**

The League of Women Voters believes voting is a fundamental citizen right that must be guaranteed.

LWVMI supports provisions to increase the convenience and accessibility of voting.

# WHY DO WE NEED THIS PROPOSAL?

Most of the reforms exist in other states and have for decades.

Michigan citizens deserve more.

We need to:

- Make voting more accessible and convenient
- Ensure that everyone's votes are secure and counted
- Ensure that everyone's voice is heard

# MI Constitution Article II Elections

## Currently Grants only the Right to Vote

Sec. 1. Every citizen of the United States who has attained the age of 21 years, who has resided in this state six months, and who meets the requirements of local residence provided by law, shall be an **elector** and qualified to vote in any election except as otherwise provided in this constitution. The legislature shall define residence for voting purposes.

*Elector means “a person who has the right to vote in an election.” Age changed with 26<sup>th</sup> U.S. Amendment to 18. Court case ruled 6 months residence requirement too long – now 3 months.*

Our current voting laws were passed by the Legislature and can be changed by the Legislature.

**THESE 8 RIGHTS  
IN THE PROPOSAL WOULD BE  
ADDED TO THE MI CONSTITUTION:**



# 1. Protect the Right to Vote a Secret Ballot

- Amends the Michigan Constitution, Article II, Section 4., saying every citizen who is an elector qualified to vote shall have “the right to vote a secret ballot in all elections.”
- Current MI Constitution says: The Legislature shall enact laws ... to preserve the secrecy of the ballot.

This puts this basic right in the MI Constitution.

## 2. Ensure military service members and overseas voters get their ballots in time for their votes to count

- Current law requires absentee ballots to be mailed 45 days before the election. (MCL 168.759a) This puts it in the Constitution.

Putting this in the Constitution demonstrates its importance.

# 3. Provide voters with the option to vote straight party

- Nine states offer straight party voting.
- Michigan voters approved straight party voting in 1964 and 2002.
- Court injunction allows straight party voting until court decides.

Both Republicans and Democrats choose this option.

## **4. Automatically register citizens to vote at the Secretary of State's office unless the citizen declines**

- This change would automatically register eligible citizens when they renew their drivers license, unless they decline.

This change would increase the number of registered voters in Michigan. Nine states have adopted this change.

## **5. Permit citizens to register to vote by mail or in person until 15 days before an election**

- Currently you must register, either in person or by mail, 30 days prior to the election.
- This proposal would change the 30 days to 15 days prior to an election for registration in person or by mail.

This would increase the time voters can register by mail.

## 6. Allow citizens to register to vote in person with proof of residency within two weeks of and on Election Day

- Currently there is no way to register after the 30 day closing period for registering to vote.
- This language would allow citizens to register from 14 days prior through election day in person and with proof of residency.

This would assure anyone who is eligible to vote is allowed to vote! 15 states and the District of Columbia allow this today!

# 7. Provide all registered voters access to an absentee ballot for any reason

- Currently Michigan law, MCL 168.759, allows absentee voting if you meet certain criteria. (1) expect to be out of town 2) physically unable to attend the polls, 3) tenets of religion, 4) election worker, 5) 60 years of age or older, 6) confined to jail awaiting arraignment or trial) If you lie on the form it is a misdemeanor. Absentee voting starts approximately 45 days prior to the election.
- This new amendment to the MI Constitution would allow anyone to have an absentee ballot within 40 days of the election. It also allows polling places to be open more hours for absentee ballot voting.

This would encourage more people to vote prior to election day. 27 states and D.C. offer “no-excuse” absentee voting.

## 8. Ensure the accuracy and integrity of elections by auditing election results

- Current law states the Secretary of State may audit election precincts.
- Proposal would require that statewide election results be audit-able.
- Voters deserve guarantee that elections are secure and accurate.

Voters deserve to know that elections are valid. In a recent PEW Election Performance Index study Michigan ranked 42 among the states for electoral integrity! 32 states and DC require a post election audit.



# HOW DO WE GET THIS PROPOSAL PASSED?

- Get over 400,000 signatures on petitions
- Submit signatures to the Secretary of State by June 30, 2018
- Get verification of signatures and obtain 100 word summary from the Board of Canvassers for November ballot
- Educate voters about the proposal
- Get Out the Vote
- Win in November 2018 by a simple majority of voters

# WE CAN DO THIS!

## WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- Sign a petition
- Circulate petitions with a local League of Women Voters
- Talk about the proposal to others





**Let's have a  
voting system  
that works for  
all Americans**

**[www.promotethevotemi.com](http://www.promotethevotemi.com)**

# Who is paying for the campaign? Will signature gatherers be paid?

- Organizations and individuals are donating money. Contributors are listed in Campaign Finance Reports filed with the Secretary of State.
- Both volunteer and signature gatherers will be needed. The more volunteers we have the lower the cost of using paid signature gatherers.
- We expect the campaign to cost \$8 million.

# How does this proposal work with the Voter's Not Politicians' Redistricting Proposal?

- The League of Women Voters supports the VNP redistricting ballot proposal.
- Both proposals will make voting fair for everyone.
- They will ensure that every vote counts and everyone's voice is heard.