

Green Party of Michigan – 2022 Platform

This platform shows how the Green Party of Michigan (GPMI) translates its values into practical policies on major issues. We update it every other year before statewide elections; our candidates promote the positions in it. Of course, events raise new issues and can make old ones crucial again. For the latest information, please visit our website MIGreenParty.org, our Facebook group [*Green Party of Michigan/Partido Verde Michigan*](https://www.facebook.com/GreenPartyofMichigan/), and our Twitter page [*@migreenparty*](https://twitter.com/migreenparty); read our news and share it; and check out our candidates.

The Ten Key Values of the Green Party of Michigan

Ecological Wisdom: We recognize that the land does not belong to us; we belong to the land. Everything is interconnected and interdependent. All of nature, including humanity, is worthy of respect and freedom from exploitation.

Social Justice: We want to replace the worldwide system of poverty and injustice with a world free of all oppression based on class, gender, race, citizenship, age, or sexual orientation.

Grassroots Democracy: We believe in direct participation by all people in the environmental, political, and economic decisions that affect their lives. In practice, we make decisions by voluntary consensus whenever possible.

Non-Violence: We oppose the culture of violence. We promote non-violent resolution of international and domestic conflicts, and work toward lasting community and world peace.

Decentralization: We support rebuilding social, political, and economic institutions away from a system which is controlled by (and mostly benefits) the powerful few to a democratic, less bureaucratic system.

The policies in this platform work together to make what's good for the planet work better for people. For example, to fight the global climate crisis, we aim to shift to a sustainable energy economy and free the 99% who do the literally dirty work of fossil-fuel jobs from dependence on the profiteering 1%. Single-payer universal health care will keep us healthier than job-bound, run-for-profit health insurance – and it'll save us money, too. Guaranteed income will help our families stay in their homes and lives; tuition-free education and training will give workers new skills for new jobs. Increasing the \$8,900 per-pupil school allowance, and investing more in skilled-trades training, will lead to fewer people in prison at \$36,000 a year.

Can we learn to use other tools than violence to resolve conflicts? Can we live within the limits of the natural world, and stop destroying our environment? We can – if we think Green.

Community-Based Economics: We seek an economics based upon the natural limits of the Earth which meets the basic needs of everyone on the planet. We value people over profits, when the two conflict.

Feminism: We acknowledge the importance of both men and women and their unique capacities. Both sexes are critical to creating a healthy, sustainable society. We actively promote cooperation and participation to further our goals.

Respect for Diversity: We believe it is important to value cultural, ethnic, racial, sexual, religious, and spiritual diversity, and to promote the development of respectful relationships across these lines.

Personal and Global Responsibility: We demonstrate a commitment to global sustainability and international justice through political solidarity and in personal lifestyles of self-sufficiency. We believe in the slogan "Think globally, act locally."

Future Focus/Sustainability: We see a need to counterbalance the drive for short-term profits by keeping development, technology, and fiscal policies responsible to future generations.

Democracy and Human Rights

The Declaration of Independence says all people have unalienable rights including life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. But especially since the PATRIOT Act, the government has disrespected our rights. Candidates from both "major" parties show their sameness by ignoring the spirit of the Declaration and the letter of the Constitution. People who have not committed a crime are arrested, jailed, even killed. Powerful people and institutions commit fraud, perjury, and worse with no penalty. But we the people have a right to alter or abolish government that no longer works for us – and to reclaim "liberty and justice for all."

Greens want to give the majority of voters who lack enthusiasm for both Democrats and Republicans something to vote **for**. If you're disenchanted with politics as usual, you don't have to sit on the sidelines and you don't have to waste your vote on either corporate party's candidates. If enough of us register our protest at the ballot box by voting Green, we'll actually see change start – instead of just hoping for it and being disappointed.

Greens believe in rights for people, not corporations. We will overrule the corporate "personhood" which the Supreme Court invented long before *Citizens United*. We back amendments to enforce the truths that corporations don't have the rights of people – and that money is not speech.

No human should be denied rights based on race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or any other discriminatory category. We will defend the full US Bill of Rights and the UN's International Bill of Human Rights – rights for all humans, including immigrants here and refugees worldwide. We support First Nations' struggles for tribal sovereignty, land reform, and treaty rights; the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People; and the world indigenous movement to protect the Earth from plunder and profiteering. Women have the right to choose abortion; they also need the health care and practical ability to make choice real.

Votes belong to voters – not parties or candidates. Voter power depends on guarding each voter's right and ability to cast informed votes, free from long lines or other pressures. Paper ballots (counted by human beings instead of machines), election audits, voting holidays, and other reforms can help all votes count – and be counted. Ranked Choice Voting lets us vote our preferences among all candidates, not settle for one "lesser evil".

We seek to end the influence of money in politics. Democracy means rule by the people – all the people, not just the rich and

powerful – in an open and verifiable "one person, one vote" system. Fair ballot access for those of any party (or no party) is vital; making access meaningful would take grassroots public financing, fair chances for all ballot-qualified candidates to be in public forums and media, and truly non-partisan redistricting (or proportional representation as appropriate). Other needed reforms would ban corporate donations to politicians, parties, PACs, or lobbyists – and pause political ads in a set buffer period before elections.

People-centered election reforms can democratize government. Taxpayer-funded primaries for the "Big Two" political parties marginalize the alternative ideas voters want. Fair funding and coverage of all parties' nominating processes will let people judge if they're worth supporting. And let's make legislators spend more time in-district hearing from constituents, unfiltered – not just from politicians, lobbyists, and donors.

Our people need high-quality education for all, and the state must provide it. We will work for fair and full funding of schools that are fully open to the public, and that "profit" us by helping students become solid citizens, lifelong learners, and critical thinkers. We must pay teachers (and librarians and school nurses) attention, respect, and good salaries and benefits. Early education with child care and literacy must be available for all. Wraparound services are needed to support attendance and attention. Arts, music, sports and after-school programs support good behavior. "Discipline" must be positive, and not discriminatory.

We reject the national security secrecy culture that has corrupted our government. From Julian Assange, Chelsea Manning, and Edward Snowden, we know how far beyond Constitutional limits the US police state is. GPMI calls for immediate repeal of the PATRIOT Act, which intelligence agencies abuse to claim excessive powers of surveillance and investigation. We demand real transparency in government – no more secret budgets, secret prisons, unwarranted data searches, or prisoner abuse. To end such atrocities, we must curtail secrecy and police power and restore the rule of law.

Greens also support Net Neutrality – to help keep anyone from controlling the Internet with restrictions on content, platforms, transmission speed, or equipment. If FCC and courts will not enforce this democratic concept under current law, we call for new laws to make sure people have fair, full, and equal access to information online – and to each other, to share it.

We will stop Michigan getting Fs for public integrity. The people of this state were promised transparency in 2013; what we got instead was more influence for secret money in elections and doubled fat-cat contribution limits (redoubled by a law that also limited public talk on ballot issues). We will repeal those laws and more: an anti-worker “Right-to-Work” law, abortion deleted from standard insurance coverage, the voter-rejected but re-animated Emergency Manager law. We will also reinforce FOIA and Open Meetings laws, disclose officeholder/lobbyist finances and conflicts, bar secrets about special-interest tax breaks, end “referendum-proofing”, and ban fracking.

We will work to end prison-system injustices, including the “new Jim Crow” and the financial incentives set up by prison privatization and the “War on Drugs”. The US leads the world in percentage of citizens in prison, most for non-violent drug offenses. A disproportionate number are people of color due to racial profiling, though drug-use rates are evenly spread across racial and ethnic

lines. We will “ban the box” to ease hiring discrimination against those with records. We will move immediately to expunge marijuana convictions for actions no longer illegal in Michigan, democratize the now-legal growing and sale of cannabis, regulate any uses proven hazardous, and get jobs and other benefits from industrial hemp. Bail reform, restorative justice, and making more offenses punishable by a ticket not a prison term are also needed.

We call for democratic control of all law-enforcement officers (LEOs) and agencies – anyone who enforces laws, at any level – to make sure that justice is real and works for the people . . . and that Black Lives, and all “civilian” lives, matter. We will require that any legitimate proceeds of LEO seizures and judicial forfeitures go into a government's general fund; this would cut corruption by stopping a law-enforcement agency from becoming a self-financing entity outside the budget control of elected officials. We will institute elected Citizen Control Boards with the power to oversee law enforcement – the power to fire LEOs, limit special rights in “LEO Bills of Rights” or contracts, end abusive practices and procedures, and prosecute criminal acts so immunity won't outrank accountability.

Utilities and other essential community services should be in the hands of the community, not privatized for corporate profit. Local governments should support time banks, community gardens, transition towns, and similar non-profit efforts to build their own communities. GPMI also supports community involvement in schools, literacy programs, and shelters for battered women, men, and children. Training in non-violent conflict resolution should be a regular school program, for both students and parents.

Workplace democracy can help workers in all fields and trades defend their rights and roles in their working lives. Both adults and students should get training and practice in the tools of democracy and justice: voting systems, due process, debates, and non-violent conflict resolution such as mediation and arbitration.

If you believe that democracy at all levels should mean that decisions affecting the lives of the people are made **by** the people and **for** the people . . . you're thinking Green.

The Environment

Some politicians talk of “balancing” economic and environmental goals. Others want to end all environmental protection. Both are wrong. Sacrificing the environment in the name of jobs and growth is short-sighted. It threatens our long-term survival. What we need is an ecologically sustainable economy which protects our environment. We must create a wiser relationship with the natural world, ending the fossil-fuel economy in order to limit and eventually reverse climate change and ocean acidification.

Clean, accessible water is a basic human right and a public trust. The right and trust were violated in Flint and Benton Harbor (lead poisoning) and in Detroit (mass shutoffs instead of an affordable water plan). Hydraulic fracturing pollutes the water supply, and must be banned. We must also revoke the sulfide-mining permit for the Eagle mine, which will drain acid into the Yellow Dog Watershed and Lake Superior. We oppose Canada's proposed nuclear waste dump on the shores of Lake Huron.

We must develop renewable energy such as wind and solar power, in Michigan and nationwide – clean power creating local jobs – and go beyond even efficiency to cut energy use generally. As the Fukushima disaster shows, nuclear power poses long-term risks to all life on Earth. GPMI opposes new nuclear plants, and calls for phasing out existing reactors. Fossil fuels bring their own disasters, including the Enbridge pipeline spill in Marshall. We also oppose Enbridge's Line 5 which puts the Great Lakes at risk, tar-sands oil, offshore oil drilling, and coal.

Michigan's renewable electricity requirement should be much higher than 10%. Michigan can economically generate electricity from wind power in many areas. We have much more sunshine than Germany – which generated almost 40% of its electricity from renewable sources in 2019, without using any nuclear power. Solar panels work well in Michigan at any scale, large or small, and the cost is approximately the same as electricity from the power grid if not less. Sunlight is also useful for direct and hot-water heating of well-

designed buildings. But we will not make rural areas bear the impacts of power production for big cities. GPMI supports decentralized power generation when feasible – and giving local communities power to decide whether to accept large energy projects in their areas.

We call for sustainable, long-term road repair/maintenance funding and building a good network of efficient public transportation while minimizing use of destructive road salt. With any fuel, our internal-combustion engines pump carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. Efficiency can help – but only if we do our necessary travel by fuel-efficient means, and don't waste fuel on unnecessary trips.

GPMI opposes concentrated animal feeding operations, factory farms, GMOs, and suburban sprawl. We back revitalized rural communities and small-scale, organic agriculture as remedies for unsustainable, petrochemical-dependent agribusiness. Our rich legacy of forests and lakes has a value beyond timber or tourist dollars. We should halt over-logging on state forests, provide more non-motorized lakes and campgrounds, outlaw wolf-hunting, work to set aside more wilderness areas, and protect more of our Great Lakes shorelines from development.

We must protect the environment more effectively – for its own sake and ours. To fight big business's capture of regulatory agencies, we will empower citizens to defend themselves and their communities against more kinds of pollution and other health risks. We will also protect the rights of ecosystems, and prosecute ecocide as the crime it is.

Building a sustainable society to enhance the environment, not degrade it, will be a lot of work. That work will mean plenty of jobs for Michigan's people for years to come – with peace, democracy, and social justice built in. If you agree . . . you're thinking Green.

Resource Wars

Today, wars are largely about controlling the world's limited and diminishing reserves of fossil fuels, farmland, and other resources. Unless we change course, tomorrow's wars will be the same. These are wars nobody can win. War cannot restore depleted resources; rather, it uses them up faster. We need to use and recycle resources peacefully and effectively.

All the non-renewable energy sources on which our industrial civilization depends – petroleum, coal, natural gas, uranium for nuclear power – will run out in a century or less if we keep using them as fast as possible. Today, our machines depend on fossil fuels for about 85% of their energy. As the availability of those fuels declines, the machines must stop and become useless. Energy per capita has been declining for at least three decades, and the rate of decline is increasing. We must understand these facts, and adapt to them.

Greens oppose wars for oil, wrongly glorified as wars against terrorism. Like his predecessors, Biden attacks legitimate, non-violent opposition to his policies as support for “enemies” or “terrorism”. Such attacks merit opposition – and impeachment.

Greens oppose individual terrorism – and state terrorism, authorities using force and violence for political purposes. This includes US “Shock and Awe” bombings and drone strikes; Israel's oppression of Palestinians by walls, settlements, and one-sided wars; unaccountable police killing of citizens; and the threat that anyone can be accused of terrorism (or the “treason” of whistleblowing or journalistic “espionage”), stripped of rights, and sent to prison or assassinated. We call for repeal of the “PATRIOT Act” and all similar violations of human rights.

We will get US troops and drones out of all countries. Military aid, and all foreign aid supporting state terrorism, props up a US Empire which threatens our security and ideals, and should not exist. We support a boycott, divestment, and sanctions against the Israeli government until it stops denying Palestinian history, ends the occupation and discrimination against Palestinians under Israeli control, and lets displaced Palestinian refugees return to their homes.

We need to drastically reduce use of imported energy – first and foremost by reducing energy use generally, not increasing

extraction of extreme energy from tar sands, methane hydrate, and shale. Bringing US troops home from the 85 countries where we perform active and surrogate combat, air and drone strikes, military exercises, and counter-terrorism training would be a good start. US armed forces are now our biggest single consumer of energy – and they emit more greenhouse gases than many whole countries. Conservation and higher efficiency will also help. We will create millions of jobs rebuilding cities with walkable neighborhoods, public transportation, and community gardens – and rebuilding the countryside with low-energy farming for local consumption.

A fossil-fuel carbon fee-and-dividend system, with all fees returned in equal shares to the people of the United States, will reduce energy use generally while giving the poorest households the means to cope with higher prices for energy. That will help us get ahead of fuel depletion and cut carbon-dioxide emissions at the same time. Higher Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) standards are good, but insufficient.

Greens will develop and expand truly renewable energy: wind, geothermal, and solar power, not industrial biofuels. We will require energy-efficiency standards for all new buildings and encourage retrofitting of existing buildings. Annual energy audits for all government facilities and programs should become part of the annual budget process.

If you believe with Martin Luther King, Jr. that “the giant triplets of racism, materialism, and militarism” make us and our world poorer . . . you're thinking Green.

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Jobs and the General Welfare

In the US, the link between economic growth and prosperity for the people is broken. Real wages have been flat or falling for decades. Unwinnable wars take ever more of our dwindling resources. The economy was bad for the 99% in the 2008 financial crisis – and it's worse now: no security in our jobs, pensions, health, homes, or communities. In short, business and politics as usual are failing us. Democrats, Republicans, and the Federal Reserve System only stimulate the economy from above. They bail out banks and promote the stock market, but cut programs that help people – education, social services, environmental protection, even the Post Office.

No matter what corporate-funded politicians say, the purpose of government is not economic growth; it is promoting the general welfare. If the economy needs stimulating, stimulate it from the bottom up – for instance, as the WPA hired people to do public works.

All workers have rights that must be protected: the right to strike, and unionize for mutual benefit; the right to fair, livable pay and benefits; safe workplaces; fair rules fairly enforced; and more. We support all workers – hourly, salaried, piece, gig, and contract – and corporations should know that abusing workers' rights is the root of the "Great Resignation".

In particular, we would stop human-rights abuses of sex workers: rape, murder, police brutality, trafficking, extortion, harassment, arbitrary arrest and detention, forced eviction, discrimination, exclusion from health services, forced HIV testing, and lack of legal redress. We neither support nor condemn commercial sex; our goal is to protect all workers' rights.

Health care is a right for all, not a privilege reserved for the rich. COVID-19 has made this even clearer. Single-payer universal health care ("Improved Medicare for All") can cover everyone and save hundreds of billions annually (out of insurance-company profits). And VA and Workers' Compensation must continue their specific health protections.

It is time to end the War on the Poor and rebuild our shredded social safety nets. All work should pay at least a fair, living wage; unemployment benefits should last as long as unemployment. Workers who work (or stay home) for the public good need "everyday-life support" COVID relief. We call for good public education for all, funded fairly – and free, at least up to a bachelor's degree or equivalent trade training – and forgiving all college loans.

If you support these fair, common-sense measures to promote the general welfare and restore the social and economic dignity of jobs for all . . . you're thinking Green.

We reject weakening Social Security or Medicare. Ending the cap on income taxed for Social Security would fully fund the system with no benefit cuts or increases in retirement age. (If full-retirement age went back to 65, there would be more jobs.) And we must not let Wall Street profit off our retirement by privatizing Social Security.

We support a simple, progressive, fair tax code taxing all kinds of income the same: wages, salaries, gig-work payments, capital gains, dividends – with fair exemptions, and few if any loopholes. There should be no tax on income below the poverty level, and a higher Earned Income Credit. Top-bracket tax rates for millionaires should rise to 80%.

We will make Michigan a no-recourse state. That means foreclosing on a family's home would settle the whole mortgage debt. We will also require proof in court before a foreclosure – and block home foreclosures and utility shutoffs when unemployment is high.

We will create a financial system that puts people ahead of profits and stops private banks from creating money as debt. Congress will reclaim its sole Constitutional authority to create money, and will spend that money into the economy for public purposes: health care, education, climate needs, energy, transportation, localized food production, and infrastructure. 25% of all new money would go to states and municipalities, for them to decide its use. The national debt will also be paid off gradually with newly created money.