

A publication of the Michigan League of Conservation Voters

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TURNING ENVIRONMENTAL VALUES INTO COMMUNITY PRIORITIES | WINTER 2009

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## Electing the Future of Michigan

BY BILL KIRK

The general election cycle of 2008 was simultaneously exhausting, exhilarating, promising, and transformative. From the office of President of the United States to county Drain Commissioners, Change was the theme, not only in the message of the candidates elected but in the future of state and federal policy. National economic woes, changing foreign policy, and an uncertain future for the nation have reinforced the notion that “who we elect matters”. This idea resonates at all levels of

government, especially here in Michigan at a time when the state faces some of the greatest challenges in our history. Thankfully, in 2008, the citizens of Michigan elected candidates at all levels of state government

who are poised to lead Michigan into the 21st century and restore the quality of life in this state.

The Michigan League of Conservation Voters (LCV) endorsed a total of 33 candidates this year, including candidates for the State House of Representatives and selected County Boards of Commissioners. Overall, 28 of our endorsed candidates were elected, signaling solid strides towards greater protection of our natural resources and improved conservation of our most valued natural places. While Michigan’s citizens and elected officials must remain constantly vigilant in order to adequately protect our State, current developments at the state, national, and global level have created an additional need for innovation and creative leadership.

With a new administration arriving in Washington that will begin immediately implementing policies to stimulate the economy, it is critical that Michigan is poised and positioned to maximize these opportunities. It is imperative that our elected officials are prepared to enact policy at the state level that can take full advantage of a federal economic stimulus package. Specifically, this is an opportunity for Michigan to emerge as a leader in energy policy, both in the areas of renewable energy development and energy efficiency.

Michigan LCV and many other groups recognized this opportunity as the election cycle unfolded, and that is why we are so proud to have supported individuals like

Representative-Elect Dan Scripps (HD 101 – Northport), Representative-Elect Tim Bledsoe (HD 1 – Grosse Pointe), Representative-Elect Lisa Brown (HD 39 – West Bloomfield), and Representative-Elect Sarah Roberts (HD 24 – St. Clair Shores). All of these candidates expressed their intentions to go above and beyond current conservation and energy policy in order to bring Michigan to the forefront on these issues. Not only does this mean that Michigan can continue to move into the future of energy policy, but with new faces and innovative leaders in state government, the state is ready to move quickly and efficiently in partnership with the Obama administration to make Michigan a leader on energy issues and get our state’s economy back on track. ■



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# Seeing Clearly Through the Storm



The weather in our beautiful state has been anything but predictable this winter: blinding snowstorms one day and thunderstorms and high winds the next. Children have been left woefully holding their new snowboards as they watch the waters rise in the streets, the hillsides turn to mud, and listen to the roar of winds so

strong they sound like airplanes landing on our rooftops.

I was caught in one of those whiteout snows along I-96 on December 20. If it hadn't been for a semi looming large in front of our car, we would have been traveling completely blind. I couldn't see anything but "the box"; not the lines on the road, not the cars ahead or behind, not the exit ramps, not the trees, not even Michigan's ever-present and ever-obnoxious "outdoor advertisements".

As we inched forward in the white, I was filled with thoughts of amazing Michiganders who seem to have clear vision despite the challenges that surround them.

I thought of Alison Swan and the remarkable collection of non-fiction work she edited recently, entitled *Fresh Water: Women Writing on the Great Lakes*, which was published by Michigan State University Press and should be read by all who care about this incredible state. The authors capture the beauty, the essence, and the fragility of the ecology that we are so lucky to have surrounding us (<http://msupress.msu.edu/bookTemplate.php?bookID=3014>).

I was reminded of my friends at Save the Wild UP who continue to battle the proposed Kennecott Eagle Mine, which is currently being fought in the courts. The Kennecott proposal is to mine for nickel through sulfide ore beneath the majestic Salmon Trout River, a plan that will undoubtedly result in sulfuric acid contamination of the river, a river that leads directly into the Lake Superior ([www.savethewildup.org](http://www.savethewildup.org)).

Chris McCarus came to mind, a Michigander who traveled the world only to return home and launch (solo) a new program on

Public Radio that focuses on land use in Michigan. Michigan Now interviews people "...in cities and towns, in settings rural, urban and in between..." and tells first hand stories of their connection to, and their loss of, Michigan's special places ([www.michigannow.org](http://www.michigannow.org)).

I thought of Earthwork Music, a music collective that "...believes in the intrinsic and historical power of music to raise both community and self-awareness and serves to facilitate and encourage original music in the state of Michigan and beyond." Earthwork musicians, like Seth Bernard and Daisy May, melt hearts, soothe souls, and inform people of the tremendous threats to our natural environment ([www.earthworkmusic.com](http://www.earthworkmusic.com)).

Each of these people and entities perseveres—through thick and thin, through the blindness of a snowstorm and the drenching of a winter rain—to elevate the power and splendor of the written and spoken word and magic of music in the protection of place.

We emerged, finally, from the snowy blindness and although the roads were still terrible, at least I could see again. Just like Alison Swan, Save the Wild UP, Chris McCarus and Earthwork Music, Michigan LCV also perseveres in a noble quest to make sure that Michigan's citizens realize that *who we elect really matters!*

2008 was an amazing election year. Michigan voters spoke out loud and clear in favor of candidates—up and down the ballot—who believe in putting our state firmly on a path to a new energy future and cleaning up our Great Lakes. Michigan LCV played a key role in a number of these elections. Now, it's time to make sure that our newly elected officials actually keep their word. We'll be looking to all of you to help us do this. The path is clear (and snow free) if we just keep our eyes open wide. Working together we will continue to preserve and protect this magical place called Michigan. ■

Lisa Wozniak, Executive Director

## JOIN US! UPCOMING IMPORTANT EVENTS

**Annual Summit of the Michigan Students Sustainability Coalition**  
Grand Rapids, January 23-25

**MEC Legislative Breakfast**  
Lansing, mid-February (Please visit [www.michiganlcvedfund.org](http://www.michiganlcvedfund.org) for the exact date and time.)

**Power Shift 2009**  
Washington DC,  
February 27-March 2

**Michigan Wind Energy Conference**  
Detroit - Cobo Hall, March 3-4

**Sixth Annual Renewable Energy Conference**  
Hastings, March 15, 8:30-4:00pm

**Michigan Agri-Energy Conference**  
Kalamazoo, March 30-31

**2nd Annual Michigan Energy Conference**  
Ferris State University, April 16-17

## UPCOMING EARTHWORK MUSIC DATES

**(Scene) Metrospace - Folk Festival**  
Daisy May, Seth Bernard, Chris Dorman, Josh Davis, Brandon Foote, Chris Bathgate, Michael Beauchamp  
East Lansing  
January 24

**Seth Bernard**  
Founders Brewery, Grand Rapids  
January 29

**Ann Arbor Folk Fest**  
Hill Auditorium, Ann Arbor  
January 30-31

**Seth Bernard, Saline Fiddler's Hometown Show**  
Saline Middle School, Saline  
February 7

**Greensky Bluegrass**  
The Ark, Ann Arbor  
February 9

**Steppin' In It**  
The Ark, Ann Arbor  
February 19

*For details and a list of the latest happenings, please check out [www.michiganlcvedfund.org](http://www.michiganlcvedfund.org) and [www.michiganlc.org](http://www.michiganlc.org)*



# Earth Tones

## Music for Michigan's Soul

BY SUSAN FAWCETT, FOX ON A HILL PRODUCTIONS

On a crisp Ann Arbor evening just a month before an historic election, friends and strangers gathered together for two reasons; to hear great music, and to support a great organization. Hard economic times have increased the need for both the soul-lifting capabilities of song and the long-term protection of the environment.

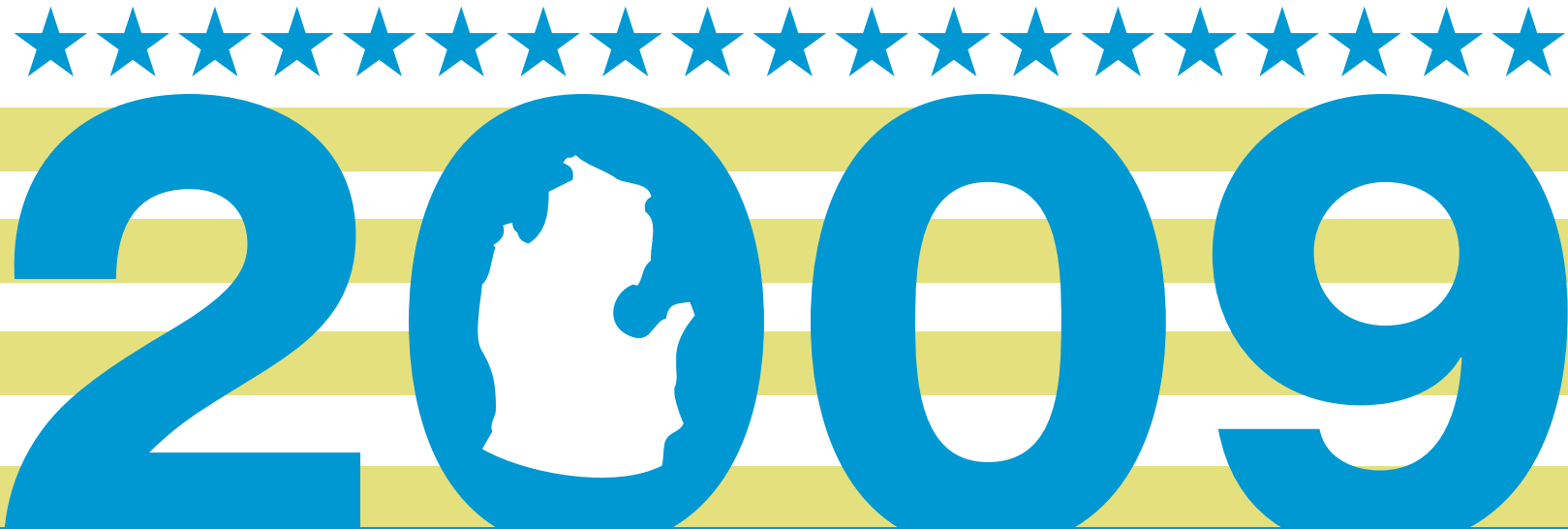
While Joe Reilly kicks off the night with his “Michigan” song, spirits are high backstage. Dominic John and Rachael Davis finalize their set list, and fuss over their one-year-old, Virgil, before handing him off to fellow musician, Aunt Laura Bates, who just stepped off the stage with her musical partner, Brandon Foote. Breathe Owl Breathe ready their home-made super-hero capes, Micah gathering his pile of dead leaves to crumple into the microphone and spread across the stage during the show. After their performance, Grand Rapids group, Glean Infusion enjoy the rest of the night from the wings. The Master of MCs, Chris Buhalis is every bit as witty behind the scenes as he is on the microphone.

This feels more like a community reunion than a concert, and for good reason. None of these performers are strangers. They’ve all shared the stage before. Every group performing also helped build the Water Festival, a traveling event founded by Earthwork Music. Jason Wheeler of Glean Infusion was on the planning committee for the Grand Rapids festival along with all the members of his other band, Hawks & Owls, who performed at Earth Tones last year.

Partnership between Earthwork Music and Michigan LCV is only natural. As two parts of one grand community in Michigan that value local culture and natural heritage, they’ve even shared issues and campaigns over the years. Both have a history of advocacy in the face of some of Michigan’s greatest threats: the construction of new polluting coal plants and a proposed metallic sulfide mine at the mouth of the Yellow Dog River. Through activism and celebration, collaboration and song, we will continue to strengthen our community and protect Michigan’s natural heritage. ■



Photos— Top row, left to right: MC and performer Chris Buhalis; Lisa Wozniak greeting Earth Tones attendees; Kelly Pond of Bates & Foote. Bottom row, left to right: Andrea Moreno-Beals of Breathe Owl Breathe; Congressman-elect Mark Schauer and Michigan LCV Board Member Kerry Duggan; Rachel Davis; Michigan LCV Board Member Lana Pollack with an attendee. Above: Brandon Foote



# WHO WE ELECT MATTERS

BY BILL KIRK

Typically in an election year, Michigan LCV only engages in traditional campaign tactics like direct mail campaigns. While they have been and continue to be very successful, in 2008, Michigan LCV expanded its electoral work in a number of exciting ways. The underlying goals of this expansion were to increase the organization's reach to a local level and to integrate our staff more deeply into specific campaigns, thereby providing more meaningful and comprehensive support to high priority candidates. The tactics we used in 2008 proved to be very successful and are critical to forming a more solid foundation of election work in the future.

Like years past, this year Michigan LCV designed and executed direct mail independent expenditure campaigns (IECs) in two state House races. Both were ambitious in scope and meticulously targeted. While the races we targeted were on opposite ends of the state with two very different voting demographics, both were equally critical in relation to the protection of Michigan's natural resources.

The first involved an open seat in Northwestern Michigan that was vacated by a term-

limited representative whose voting record illustrated his lack of concern for Michigan's natural heritage. Fortunately for Michigan, Representative-Elect Dan Scripps won Michigan's 101st House District, which stretches from the southernmost end of Mason County to the tip of the Leelanau Peninsula. Conservation and environmental protection are primary issues of concern in this district, which enjoys the most Lake Michigan coastline of any district in the Lower Peninsula. Michigan LCV executed a direct mail program in this district that targeted over 11,000 persuadable (or swing) voters. The end result was a decisive Scripps victory; our candidate won by 10,000 votes in an area that was decided by less than 2,000 votes just two years ago. The 101st District will now be represented by an individual who is dedicated to delivering on his campaign pledge to bring Michigan into the future by creating jobs in the renewable energy industry. This will not only put Michiganders back to work, but will set Michigan on a path to lead in the new energy economy.

Michigan LCV's second targeted IEC was a race along the shores of Lake St. Clair, in northern Detroit and the Grosse Pointe com-

munities. As in the 101st District, Michigan LCV executed a direct mail program in the 1st District that reached over 8,000 persuadable voters. As a result of our work, the citizens of HD 1 will now be represented in Lansing by an individual who, as a professor of urban politics and political science, understands the environmental implications of urban sprawl, recognizes the imbalanced consequences of environmental degradation on underprivileged populations (Environmental Justice), and seeks to limit the influence of special interests in government (i.e. political action committees and high powered lobbyists advocating for environmentally detrimental policies). Like Representative-Elect Scripps, Representative-Elect Bledsoe brings much needed new leadership to Lansing.

In addition to these traditional campaign tactics, Michigan LCV also launched two new electoral programs. The first was our Michigan LCV "Guardians" program. Modeled after the national League of Conservation Voters' "Eagles" program, the Guardians program involved Michigan LCV making an "in-kind" donation of a staffer to top tier campaigns. This year, Michigan LCV embed-

ded one staffer into two separate campaigns: Sarah Roberts (HD 24 – St. Clair Shores) and Lisa Brown (HD 39 – West Bloomfield).

The Guardians concept is intended to build on the idea that “one quality volunteer is worth more than ten mediocre volunteers”. Not only did providing a staff member to these campaigns for volunteer coordination, field operations, and general “all-purpose” support help the campaigns save resources, it also provided a tangible link between the campaigns and Michigan LCV that will be useful in the years ahead. This program was very successful (both of the candidates were victorious!), and it provides a framework from which to expand and improve in subsequent elections.

Finally, Michigan LCV endorsed candidates in county-level races for the first time in our organizational history. By specifically targeting races in Kent and Oakland Counties, Michigan LCV extended its reach to the local level, for a whole host of reasons. Notably, by working with two endorsed County Commission candidates in Kent County and four in Oakland County, we have begun emphasizing the importance of local level politics. From the LEED building boom in Grand Rapids to the emergence of sustainability practices in Oakland County, municipalities across the state are beginning to take on serious leadership roles by enacting model policy practices that can be translated to quality state-level policy. With calculated involvement and positive cooperation, Michigan LCV seeks to help develop leaders and policies at the local level that will eventually expand to the state level.

Overall, 23 of our 27 endorsed State House of Representative candidates were victorious, and five of our six endorsed County Commission candidates were victorious. In addition, our only endorsed local initiative (Washtenaw County Parks Millage) passed. A truly great year for Michigan LCV! However, the importance of this election goes far beyond a simple win-loss record. After such great success in November, great challenges lie ahead. Michigan LCV will continue to work full-time with elected officials at all levels to advocate for strong policies that protect Michigan’s natural resources and hold elected officials accountable for their actions. We hope you will join us when our elected officials in Lansing, and throughout the state, need to hear your voices. ■

# Michigan League of Conservation Voters 2008 State Level Endorsements

## MICHIGAN HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

District:	Endorsee:	% of Vote:
1	Tim Bledsoe	56%
20	Rep. Marc Corriveau	58%
23	Deb Kennedy	59%
24	Sarah Roberts	49%
26	Rep. Marie Donigan	61%
27	Ellen Cogen Lipton	71%
31	Rep. Fred Miller	66%
37	Vicki Barnett	60%
39	Lisa Brown	51%
51	Michael Thorp	L
52	Rep. Pam Byrnes	62%
53	Rep. Rebekah Warren	78%
54	Rep. Alma Wheeler Smith	71%
55	Rep. Kathy Angerer	66%
56	Rep. Kate Ebli	63%
61	Julie Rogers	L
62	Kate Segal	61%
69	Rep. Mark Meadows	69%
75	Rep. Robert Dean	58%
76	Roy Schmidt	71%
91	Rep. Mary Valentine	53%
92	Rep. Doug Bennett	73%
98	Garnet Lewis	L
101	Dan Scripps	59%
109	Rep. Steve Lindberg	63%
110	Rep. Mike Lahti	70%
59	Rob Sisson (lost in primary)	L

## COUNTY COMMISSION

Kent County District 14	Carol Hennessy	57%
Kent County District 18	Brandon Dillon	63%
Oakland County District 14	Steve Schwartz	54%
Oakland County District 16	Karen Spector	L
Oakland County District 17	Marcia Gershenson	58%
Oakland County District 19	Tim Burns	50%

## NATIONAL LCV 2008 MICHIGAN CONGRESSIONAL ENDORSEMENTS

District 7	Mark Schauer	49%
District 9	Gary Peters	52%

# Voting Vindication

BY HANNAH SMITH



This past November was not the first time, and certainly won't be the last time, I vote. The significance of this particular election will undoubtedly stick with me, and not just because of the historic outcome of the presidential race. In 2004, I woke up on Election Day eager to flex

my civic muscles and exercise my right as a citizen to vote for the first time. I cast my vote, I convinced my less civically-engaged roommate to do the same, and that was the extent of my participation in the democratic process. That night I watched the results roll in, watched as

a decision was not reached, and I went to bed, feeling just a tad disenfranchised.

This time around the actual act of voting was less of a novelty. It was no longer an excuse to miss class; I certainly did not have the day off. I worked, along side a fellow Michigan LCV staffer, as an election challenger at a polling station in Ann Arbor. Suddenly, on November 4, 2008, I was part of the bigger picture. My contribution was no longer limited to casting my own vote. Now I was protecting the actual process that allowed others to vote as well! For me, this was not a one-day-only, limited engagement kind of thing and, as a new member of the Michigan LCV staff, I was exposed to the reality that shapes the work

that Michigan LCV does: the election is only the means to an end; we aren't actually electing Change or A New Energy Future, we are electing people who have made lofty promises. Whether or not they keep these promises will shape their legacy, and the future of our state (and country), long after the polls close.

As a young voter, I know what I do on Election Day is vitally important, and stepping inside that cardboard voting booth still inspires a rush of pride and excitement. But as a young member of the environmental community, I no longer have to wait until the first Tuesday in November to influence change. And that makes every day a little bit more exciting. ■

# The Briefing Book—Does It Work?

BY ABBY RUBLEY

Two years ago a group of environmental leaders came together to put forth an agenda for the next legislative session. This was nothing new. Just like the state legislature, the environmental community works to reach consensus on the most important issues and how to ensure they are addressed in a positive way by decision-makers in Lansing. As you can imagine, the list of desired environmental protections was huge. It is no secret that Michigan is plagued with environmental challenges. From cleaning up sewage in the Great Lakes to stopping out-of-state trash, the amount of work to be done is astronomical.

These highly committed leaders were able to narrow the list and come up with the most pressing issues, one being Michigan's commitment to a clean energy future. Recognizing that real change was happening in states across the country and that Michigan was woefully behind the times, the environmental community decided to lead the charge on a clean energy campaign that advocated for investment in alternative energy (instead of dirty, old, coal-fired power plants) as a way to simultaneously create jobs and protect the natural environment.

Michigan LCV and the collective environmental community then began the journey towards a new energy future. We started talking to lawmakers and the Governor. We held countless press conferences and wrote even more press releases. We built coalitions of local business owners, university professors, faith leaders, and citizens like you. We talked about investment in clean energy every day and in every way. As a result, it became more and more obvious that this was the right direction

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The *2009-2010 Briefing Book* debuts at the Michigan Environmental Council's annual Legislative Breakfast in February. Please see our website for details.

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for Michigan. Investing in clean energy, like wind and solar, and encouraging energy efficiency programs was—plainly and simply—good for Michigan.

In the end, we were right. This fall, Governor Granholm signed a set of bills into law that set forth a clean energy package for Michigan that included a mandatory commitment to energy efficiency and renewable energy.

The process of setting issue priorities for the environmental community worked and

we are back at it this year. Right now we are working with our partners to define the next steps we need to take to ensure that Michigan has clean air, clean water, and open spaces. As we go through this challenging process, there are many issues that rise to the surface such as, stronger investments in clean energy; long-term protections of our water; curbing global warming pollution; protecting children from dangerous toxics, like mercury, arsenic and lead; and finding a sustainable funding source for our most critical state offices, like the Department of Environmental Quality and the Department of Natural Resources.

We will be delivering our *2009-2010 Michigan Environmental Briefing Book* to the State Legislature at the Michigan Environmental Council's annual Legislative Breakfast in mid-February in Lansing. This is an opportunity for the community to come together with one voice and clearly state our goals for the next two years. This is also an opportunity for you to be a part of the process. Please consider joining us for the event and for the unveiling of this session's *Briefing Book*. For more information on the Legislative Breakfast visit <http://www.mecprotects.org>. ■

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# PROFILE

## Scripps Makes Magic in Northern Michigan

BY ABBY RUBLEY

Through rain, snow, sleet and hail, Dan Scripps knocked on almost every one of the 30,000 doors in the 101st House District and it paid off. On the hottest days of the summer and the coldest days of the winter, Scripps bundled up or stripped down and headed out to hear from the people that he was asking to serve. His dedication paid off and on November 4 Scripps swept all four counties to become their state representative in Lansing.

Dan Scripps began his campaign to serve the citizens of Mason, Manistee, Benzie and Leelanau counties in 2006. At that time, he was practicing environmental law in Washington DC. Seeing his home state in trouble, Scripps returned to Northern Michigan—his boyhood vacation destination—and threw his hat in the ring for state representative. Beating the odds, he received over 48% of the vote against a two-term incumbent in one of the most closely fought races in Michigan that year. Rather than see this as a defeat, Scripps saw the results as an opportunity. It was clear to Scripps that the citizens of Northern Michigan were ready for a change; all he needed to do was convince a few more voters that he was worthy of their vote.



Recognizing the need to make himself more visible, Scripps took a job with the Leelanau Conservancy, developing a cutting-edge package of farm preservation programs. This job allowed him to interact with citizens throughout Leelanau County. In addition, Scripps began walking, knocking and talking to citizens in other areas of the District as way to

truly understand their concerns and needs. Almost every day between 2007 and 2008, Scripps spoke with citizens who understood the importance of clean air, clean water and open spaces, three issues that he firmly believes are integral to the revitalization of Michigan's economy.

As Dan Scripps readies himself for the biggest, most important job of his young life, he takes with him the stories of the citizens of his district: the unemployed factory workers, the struggling farmers, the small business owners, and the public servants, from police officers to school teachers. Scripps firmly believes in representing all 90,000 of his constituents regardless of political party preference or economic status. He is sure to be a breath of fresh air in Lansing as he brings his expertise to the table and works to follow through on his campaign promises of investing in clean energy, education and the economy. ■

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