

Tuscola County Democratic Party Newsletter

March 2023

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Our Goals

- Ensure honest and transparent government.
- Restore and protect our environment.
- Support strong economic growth and opportunity.
- Strengthen voter access and turnout.
- Promote affordable education and health care for all.

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Notice of Our March Meeting

The regular monthly meeting of the Tuscola County Democratic Party will be held on **Thursday, March 16th, 2023**. The meeting will be held at the Brentwood, 178 Park Drive, Caro, MI. Mona DeQuis will be teaching us how to canvass effectively and how to use the miniVAN. Also, there will be a report from our candidate recruitment committee. Social hour will begin at 5:30 p.m. and the meeting will begin at 6:30 p.m.

We hope you will join us.

Highlights of Our February Meeting

Our February meeting was canceled due to the weather.

The Debt Ceiling

As everyone knows, the federal government is deeply in debt. After years of spending more than it takes in, the government owes \$31 trillion, and now it cannot pay its bills unless it borrows even more money. However, the government has reached its debt ceiling, which means that it needs Congressional approval before it can borrow any more money. Otherwise, it will default on its payments, which likely would mean a stock market crash and a recession, a weaker dollar and higher interest rates, and a government forced to make tough choices, like whether to pay creditors or fund the Defense Department and send out Social Security checks.

The debt ceiling was created in 1917 through the Second Liberty Bond Act and was set at \$11.5 billion. In 1939, Congress increased it to \$45 billion. Since the end of World War II, Congress has raised the debt ceiling more than 100 times, usually without much fanfare. During the 1980s, the debt ceiling was increased to nearly \$3 trillion, and during the 1990s, it was doubled to nearly \$6 trillion. In the 2000s,

it was again doubled to over \$12 trillion. In 2011, it was raised to \$16 trillion and was raised twice in 2021, mostly recently in December, to \$31 trillion.

Now Congress must raise the debt ceiling again, but this time, it's different. Kevin McCarthy and House Republicans are refusing to raise the debt ceiling unless they get spending cuts they can't otherwise pass into law. What exactly are the cuts Republicans are demanding?

Republicans haven't said specifically what they want to cut from the 2023 budget, but Jodey Arrington of Texas, the newly appointed Republican Chair of the House Budget Committee, has said he flatly rejects any increase in taxation on the wealthy or any increase of any kind in federal revenues, declaring that the budget deficit must be eliminated entirely through spending cuts. He has proposed cuts totaling more than \$1 trillion in domestic discretionary spending, none of it from the military or police, which he considers untouchable.

The biggest single cut would be \$404 billion from Biden's proposed relief of student loan debt—\$25 billion by ending the moratorium on student loan payments and \$379 billion by rescinding the debt cancellation plan, which has not yet taken effect because of state lawsuits against it.

Another \$381 billion would come from rescinding \$100 billion in pandemic relief funds that are in the pipeline to the states but not yet expended, combined with the elimination of \$281 billion in so-called "improper payments."

They also propose a full-scale onslaught on social benefits for the most vulnerable Americans—at least \$135 billion. Undocumented immigrants would be cut off from the Child Tax Credit by requiring Social Security numbers. Workers who qualify for Obamacare subsidies would see those capped. Workers receiving food stamps (SNAP) would be required to provide income verification and submit to work requirements. Those who receive Temporary Aid for Needy Families (TANF) would also face work requirements.

Another \$100 billion would be cut from environmental programs, including \$87 billion from spending authorized by last year's Inflation Reduction Act and another \$13 billion for the purchase of electric or low-emission buses, garbage trucks and postal vehicles, as well as reduced spending on "greenways" and trails.

Republicans are saying that cuts to Social Security and Medicare are off the table this time, but don't forget that in the past they have tried to make Social Security and Medicare cuts every time they thought there might be a political window of opportunity. Soon after taking office in 1981, Ronald Reagan proposed major cuts to Social Security, but backed down in the face of a political backlash. Then Republicans called for replacing Social Security with individual accounts—which George W. Bush tried to do in 2005. Newt Gingrich shut down the federal government in 1995, and his key demand was that President Bill Clinton agree to large cuts in Medicare and Medicaid. After Republicans gained control of the House in 2010, Paul Ryan began pushing for converting Medicare from a system that pays medical bills to a system offering people fixed sums of money to be applied to the purchase of private insurance—that is, vouchers.

Letter from Governor Whitmer



Dear Michigander,

February 19th marked the first 50 days of my second term. On day one, I told you I would work with anyone to grow our economy, help Michiganders feel safe, improve our infrastructure, and lower costs to help families put food on the table. 50 days in, I want to provide a progress report.

We have grown our economy, created and supported thousands of jobs, and created opportunity across our state.

- On January 13th, I announced funding for construction and improvements on nearly 700 affordable housing units from Cheboygan to Detroit, creating over 60 permanent jobs and 1,100 construction jobs.
- On January 13th, I announced an estimated \$9 billion budget surplus.
- On January 17th, I led a five-day mission to Norway and Switzerland to bring home new opportunities to our state—my first economic development trip to Europe!
- On January 19th, I announced a \$25 million investment by L&L Products in Romeo. This investment will create 65 advanced manufacturing jobs in the area.
- On February 3rd, I signed an order to make state procurement more accessible to businesses in Michigan.
- On February 8th, I introduced my budget proposal to streamline economic development funding and expand workforce development programs like Michigan Reconnect and Going PRO.
- On February 13th, we won a \$3.5 billion investment from Ford to create 2,500 good-paying jobs building electric vehicle batteries in Marshall.

Since I took office, I've been focused on fixing the damn roads, bridges, pipes, housing, and all kinds of infrastructure. 2023 is no exception.

- On January 13th, I signed an Executive Order to streamline housing funding to kickstart projects and get us moving dirt.
- On January 31st, I signed a \$1 billion supplemental budget to invest in affordable housing, revitalize communities, and support small businesses and entrepreneurs.
- On February 8th, I introduced a program to continue fixing the damn roads while improving bridges and rail transit, replacing old lead service lines, and continuing the transition to clean energy.

Lowering costs is a top priority as families are facing the pinch of inflation.

- On January 12th, I announced the Lowering MI Costs Plan with the Michigan Legislature to roll back the retirement tax saving 500,000 households an average of \$1,000 a year, quintuple the Working Families Tax Credit to deliver an average combined refund of \$3,150 to 700,000 families, and deliver \$180 inflation relief checks to every tax filer.
- On February 8th, I introduced my budget proposal, including tax credits for childcare and preschool teachers, a temporary pause of the sales tax on electric vehicles, and investments in the Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP) to move towards pre-K for all.

As the state heals after the horrific shooting at MSU, I am grateful to my partners in the legislature for turning pain into purpose and introducing commonsense gun safety legislation to enact universal background checks, safe storage laws, and extreme risk protection orders. I am looking forward to signing it.

- On February 8th, I proposed an additional \$500 million in public safety funding in my budget proposal, with investments in community violence intervention programs to address the root cause of violence and dedicated resources to train and retain local first responders.

2023 is off to a productive start, but the work is far from over. Let's keep getting it done.

Sincerely,



Gretchen Whitmer
Governor

Elissa Slotkin Is Running for U.S. Senate in 2024



On February 27th, U.S. Representative Elissa Slotkin announced her candidacy for U.S. Senate, entering a race widely regarded as key in the fight for Democratic control of the Senate in 2024. Slotkin's Senate run was widely anticipated after Senator Stabenow stunned Michigan Democrats last month with her decision not to seek reelection.

The 46-year-old former CIA analyst is seen by many top Democrats as a formidable contender with a proven record of winning in competitive House races. She has positioned herself as a moderate, rejecting positions and rhetoric adopted by the far left while championing Democratic principles like abortion rights and a ban on assault weapons.

Other well-known figures in Michigan, such as Governor Whitmer and Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg, who has a residence in Michigan, have said they will not run for Senate. Representative Haley Stevens has also ruled out running, as has Mallory McMorrow, the state senator who received national attention last year for a speech that went viral chastising a Republican colleague who had falsely accused her of wanting to sexually groom children.

No prominent Republicans have yet entered the race. Republican Representative John James announced last week he wouldn't be seeking the open Senate seat. Other Republicans whose names have been floated include former congressman Fred Upton, who retired last year, former congressman Peter Meijer, who lost his House primary after voting to impeach Trump, and the 2022 Republican gubernatorial nominee, Tudor Dixon.

Kristina Karamo Elected Chair of Michigan Republican Party



On February 18th, Michigan Republicans picked Kristina Karamo to lead their party at the state party's convention in Lansing. Karamo is a Trump-backed election denier who lost to Joslyn Benson by 14 points last November in her run for Secretary of State. Her main rival in the leadership contest was Matthew DePerno, another vocal champion of Trump's election falsehoods, who lost to Dana Nessel by 8 points last November in his run for Attorney General.

It now appears that the Michigan Republican Party has either purged or alienated moderate voices and is plotting a defiant course as the 2024 presidential election approaches. "Sadly, it looks like they want an encore," said former Representative Fred Upton, a Republican who declined to run for re-election last year after voting to impeach Mr. Trump.

Karamo called for reinventing the party's donor base to include more grass-roots supporters. In the past, Michigan Republicans have relied mostly on big donors, like the powerful DeVos family, which declined to support Karamo's campaign last year.

Tuscola Dems Need Your Support

To contribute, please write a check to Tuscola County Democratic Party and either mail it to Box 605, Caro, MI 48723, or bring it to one of our meetings. You can also contribute by going to our website, tuscoladems.com, and clicking "Contribute."

Thank you!

Make
Tuscola County
a better place
to live.



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Elect Democrats