

# Michigan Association of Chiropractors (MAC) District 3

Counties: Oakland

## MAC District 3 Congressional Districts

District	County	Incumbent (Party-Hometown)	Assumed Office	Communities Represented
8 <sup>th</sup>	Oakland	<p><b>Mike Bishop (R-Rochester) – Ways and Means</b></p> <p>GOP Base: 56.21% Democratic Base: 43.79%</p> <p>2016 Presidential: Trump 50.61%, Clinton 43.82% 2012 Presidential: Romney 50.91%, Obama 47.75%</p> <p><u>Democratic Candidate: Elissa Slotkin</u> (Holly), consultant, former CIA Middle East analyst, served a number of Defense and Intelligence roles in the White House under both Bush 43 and Obama.</p> <p>One of the few marginal congressional districts in the state. Bishop has been targeted by the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee as a seat in play.</p> <p><b>Gongwer Story, Friday, September 28:</b> <i>House GOP Leadership PAC Pulls TV Ads For Bishop</i> The surprise decision of the super political action committee affiliated with U.S. House Republican leadership canceled millions in television advertising buys backing the re-election campaign of U.S. Rep. Mike Bishop, laying bare the political reality that Mr. Bishop is in serious jeopardy of losing to Democratic challenger Elissa Slotkin.</p> <p>The moves by the Congressional Leadership Fund to pull \$2.1 million in advertising it had reserved on Mr. Bishop's (R-Rochester) behalf stunned Michigan Republicans, who still see him as a good bet to win a third term. Now, however, Mr. Bishop is going to face a wave of questions of whether his campaign is sinking and lost the confidence of national Republicans. Sources close to the Congressional Leadership Fund told Politico, which first reported the decision, they</p>	2015-Present	<p>Oakland County (part)</p> <p>Addison Township</p> <p>Brandon Township</p> <p>Fenton city</p> <p>Groveland Township</p> <p>Holly Township</p> <p>Independence Township</p> <p>Oakland Township</p> <p>Orion Township</p> <p>Oxford Township</p> <p>Rochester city</p> <p>Rochester Hills city (part)</p> <p>Rose Township</p> <p>Springfield Township</p> <p>Village of Clarkston city</p>

		<p>were redirecting those funds to races where party leaders are more confident.</p> <p><b>AP Analysis:</b> This district was redrawn to favor Republicans. It sprawls from Detroit's suburbs to mid-Michigan's Ingham County — with suburban to rural to urban demographics. It went for Trump two years ago but holds enough young, diverse voters and educated moderates to make it a target for Democrats.</p>		
9 <sup>th</sup>	Oakland	<p><b>OPEN</b>  <i>Currently held by Sander Levin (D-Royal Oak)</i></p> <p>GOP Base: 44.73%  Democratic Base: 55.27%</p> <p>2016 Presidential: Clinton 51.46%, Trump 43.74%  2012 Presidential: Obama 57.08%, Romney 41.8%</p> <p><u>Democratic Candidate:</u> <b>Andy Levin</b> (Bloomfield Township), son of current rep., the retiring Sander Levin. Former Director, Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth (2010-2011), clean energy consultant, active member of organized labor.</p> <p><u>Republican Candidate:</u> <b>Candius Stearns</b> (Sterling Heights), licensed insurance agent and owner of DFB TPA Services, a third-party benefits administration firm. Former treasurer, 9<sup>th</sup> District GOP, former board member, Macomb County Republican Party.</p>	N/A Levin, 1983- Present	Oakland County (part) Berkley city Bloomfield Township Clawson city (part) Ferndale city Hazel Park city Huntington Woods city Madison Heights city Pleasant Ridge city Royal Oak city Southfield Township
11 <sup>th</sup>	Oakland	<p><b>OPEN</b>  <i>Currently held by Rep. David Trott (R-Birmingham)</i></p> <p>GOP Base: 55.75%  Democratic Base: 44.25%</p> <p>2016 Presidential: Trump 49.66, Clinton 45.28  2012 Presidential: Romney 52.25%, Obama 46.86%</p> <p><u>Republican Candidate:</u> <b>Lena Epstein</b> (Southfield). Co-Owner, Vesco Oil, Michigan Co-Chair of Trump's 2016 Presidential Campaign</p> <p><u>Democratic Candidate:</u> <b>Haley Stevens</b> (Birmingham),</p>	N/A Trott, 2015- Present	Oakland County (part) Auburn Hills city Birmingham city Bloomfield Hills city Clawson city (part) Commerce Township Farmington city Highland Township Lake Angelus city Lyon Township Milford Township Northville city Novi city Novi Township

		<p>former Chief of Staff, Auto Task Force, US Treasury department, most recently led a national workforce development program and created the nation's first online training program for digital manufacturing</p> <p>This district is one of the few "toss-up" races in the state.</p> <p><b>AP Analysis:</b> GOP Rep. David Trott of Birmingham is stepping down, making the 11th one of the competitive open seats. The district in the northwest Detroit suburbs is one of the country's most affluent and educated, and is getting more racially and ethnically diverse. Democrats are targeting many seats in that profile because they believe there's an enthusiasm gap in those areas for Trump, who barely won the 11th in 2016.</p> <p>"If the Democrats are going to take back the House, that's the type of seat they'll win across nation," said GOP strategist Dennis Darnoi.</p>		<p>Rochester Hills city (part)  South Lyon city  Troy city  Walled Lake city  Waterford Township  West Bloomfield Township (part)  White Lake Township  Wixom city</p>
14 <sup>th</sup>	Oakland	<p><b>Brenda Lawrence (D-Southfield)</b></p> <p>GOP Base: 20.46%  Democratic Base: 79.54%</p> <p>2016 Presidential: Clinton 60.79%, Trump 34.45%  2012 Presidential: Obama 66.1%, Romney 32.68%</p> <p><u>Republican Candidate:</u> Marc Herschfus (Southfield), attorney</p>	2015-Present	<p>Oakland County (part)  Farmington Hills city  Keego Harbor city  Lathrup Village city  Oak Park city  Orchard Lake city  Pontiac city  Royal Oak Township  Southfield city  Sylvan Lake city  West Bloomfield Township (part)</p>

### MAC District 3 State Senate Districts

District	County	Incumbent (Party-Hometown)	Term	Communities Represented
11 <sup>th</sup>	Oakland	<p><b>OPEN</b>  <i>Currently held by term-limited Vincent Gregory (D-Southfield)</i></p> <p>Democratic Base = 73.41%</p> <p><u>Democratic Candidate:</u> Current second-term state Rep. <b>Jeremy Moss</b> (Southfield), former legislative aide and youngest person ever elected to Southfield City Council</p> <p><u>Republican Candidate:</u> <b>Boris Tuman</b> (Southfield), web developer and software engineer. Lost to Vincent Gregory in 2014.</p> <p><u>Libertarian Candidate:</u> <b>James Young</b> (Farmington Hills), Secretary. Oakland County Libertarian Party, US Army Veteran,</p>	N/A	<p>Oakland County (part)</p> <p>Farmington city</p> <p>Farmington Hills city</p> <p>Ferndale city</p> <p>Hazel Park city</p> <p>Huntington Woods city</p> <p>Lathrup Village city</p> <p>Madison Heights city</p> <p>Oak Park city</p> <p>Pleasant Ridge city</p> <p>Royal Oak Township</p> <p>Southfield city</p>
12 <sup>th</sup>	Oakland	<p><b>OPEN</b>  <i>Currently held by term-limited Jim Marleau (D-Lake Orion)</i></p> <p>GOP Base = 54.2%</p> <p><u>Republican Candidate:</u> Current third-term state Rep. <b>Michael McCready</b> (Bloomfield Hills), former Bloomfield mayor, small business owner</p> <p><u>Democratic Candidate:</u> <b>Rosemary Bayer</b> (Beverly Hills), information technology executive</p> <p><u>Libertarian Candidate:</u> <b>Jeff Pittel</b> (Bloomfield Hills), engineer, Ford Motor Company</p> <p><b>Gongwer Analysis (Tuesday, October 23): Ranked #4 most likely district to flip (Previously #5). Beverly Hills Democrat Rosemary Bayer continues to impress Senate Democrats after enjoying a narrow turnout advantage in the primary this is another Oakland County seat that has become a very close race for her opponent, Rep. Michael McCready (R-Bloomfield Township). There's a school of thought that gives Ms. Bayer the better chance at winning because Mr. McCready lacks the benefits of incumbency</b></p>	N/A	<p>Oakland County (part)</p> <p>Addison Township</p> <p>Auburn Hills city</p> <p>Bloomfield Township</p> <p>Independence Township</p> <p>Keego Harbor city</p> <p>Oakland Township</p> <p>Orion Township</p> <p>Oxford Township</p> <p>Pontiac city</p> <p>Southfield Township</p> <p>Sylvan Lake city</p> <p>Village of Clarkston city</p>

and name Mr. Knollenberg enjoys, but it's hard to overlook the incredible enthusiasm on the Democratic side of the primary in the Knollenberg-McMorrow race. Growing enthusiasm for women candidates and heavy retail politics for Ms. Bayer even in more conservative portions of this district has put the seat within reach. Mr. McCready has been working hard as well and has been trying to bring the Republican base home after a brutal primary. Seen as a moderate with a base of support in the southern part of the district, Mr. McCready will need to minimize the number of votes Ms. Bayer may be able to pick off in a tough environment to hold the seat for the Republicans. As in the 13th, both parties say their candidate is nursing a narrow lead. Ms. Bayer needs a big turnout in Pontiac.

***Gongwer Analysis*** (Wednesday, October 10): See below

***Gongwer Analysis*** (Thursday, September 27): *Ranked #5 most likely district to flip (Previously #7)*. Democrats had a narrow turnout advantage in the primary and the Oakland County environment is making this a more competitive race than initially thought for Rep. Michael McCready (R-Bloomfield Township). Beverly Hills Democrat Rosemary Bayer is, like Ms. McMorrow in the 13th, benefitting from growing enthusiasm for women candidates and excitement for Democrats wanting to make a statement to Mr. Trump in November. This is another male Republican versus female Democrat matchup that is looking more competitive given Oakland County. Mr. McCready is a moderate and has a base of support in the southern part of the district where Ms. Bayer will need to chip away to have a chance.

***Gongwer Analysis*** (Wednesday, August 22): *Ranked #7 most likely district to flip*. Republicans have the edge in this suburban Detroit, with Rep. Michael McCready (R-Bloomfield Township) emerging from a tough primary, but maybe not by as much as once thought.

Strong fundraising from Democratic candidate Rosemary Bayer of Beverly Hills and the fact she took more votes in her uncontested primary (27,667) than all Republican candidates combined (27,573) makes this race appear to have the potential to be closer than it

originally appeared on paper. Throw in strong momentum for female candidates, following a national trend in recent months, and this race could be competitive.

Ironically, Mr. McCready's primary victory could prove to be a blessing for Republicans after most establishment GOP groups opposed him. With his political base in the southern part of the district, where Ms. Bayer must run strongly, as well as crossover appeal, he is probably better positioned to ride out a Democratic wave than his defeated primary opponent, Rep. Jim Tedder (R-Clarkston), would have been.

**MIRS Analysis** (Thursday, November 1): *Ranked #4 most likely to flip (Previously #3)*. Democrats sunk \$130,000 into broadcast TV for Rosemarie BAYER today as the D's look to go three for three in Oakland County. If a personable, moderate Republican from the right part of the district like Rep. Mike MCCREADY can't win, no Republican is going to win here.

**MIRS Analysis** (Thursday, October 18): *Ranked #3 most likely to flip (Previously #4)*. Rep. Mike MCCREADY doesn't have the district-wide incumbency advantage of Knollenberg and with this Oakland County seat polling like the 13th, there's every reason to think Rosemary BAYER, who has lived in three different parts of this district, has a very real chance of winning this one.

**MIRS Analysis** (Thursday, September 27): *Ranked #4 most likely to flip (Previously #7)*. President Donald TRUMP's name is dirt in Oakland County and the numbers are bearing that out. Rep. Mike MCCREADY (R-Birmingham) isn't going to flip many swing voters in Democratic-heavy Pontiac. He doesn't start with much of a political base, coming from the far southern part of the district, and Rosemary BAYER already has future Sens. Stephanie CHANG and Adam HOLLIER knocking doors with her. That said, the moderate McCready, and the funds he brings to the table, shouldn't be underestimated.

**MIRS Analysis** (Wednesday, August 22): *Ranked #7 most*

		<p>likely to flip. Conservatives may be disappointed Rep. Jim TEDDER didn't win this primary, but the way Birmingham is trending, Rep. Mike MCCREADY's primary victory could be a blessing in disguise. The more moderate McCready brings more bucks to a race in which Rosemary BAYER won more primary votes (27,667) than Tedder, McCready and two other Republican candidates collected combined (27,573).</p>		
13 <sup>th</sup>	Oakland	<p><b>Marty Knollenberg (R-Troy)</b>  <i>Appropriations Committee</i></p> <p>GOP Base = 52.84%</p> <p>Democratic Candidate: <b>Mallory McMorrow</b> (Royal Oak), former product designer, Mattel (Hot Wheels line)</p> <p><b>Gongwer Analysis</b> (Tuesday, October 23): <i>Ranked #3 most likely district to flip (Unchanged).</i> Royal Oak Democrat Mallory McMorrow has been a key part of the party's efforts at making inroads into traditionally Republican Oakland County. If Democrats come close or take the Senate majority, this could be one of the upsets that is key to large Democratic gains. Sen. Marty Knollenberg (R-Troy) came up on the short end of an 8,000-vote Democratic advantage in primary votes. Mr. Knollenberg cannot be counted out as the race has tightened and both sides say their candidate has a narrow lead. Mr. Knollenberg is a strong campaigner with a lengthy resume and strong family name. Changing dynamics in Troy and Rochester Hills, voter enthusiasm and the popularity of Mr. Trump could all loom large in this, as of right now, pure toss-up race. Interestingly, Mr. Knollenberg isn't running away from the Republican brand at a time when its supposedly damaged in his area. His yards signs say "Trust Republican Knollenberg."</p> <p><b>Gongwer Analysis</b> (Wednesday, October 10): See below</p> <p><b>Gongwer Analysis</b> (Thursday, September 27): <i>Ranked #3 most likely district to flip (Previously #5).</i> Democrats are getting excited about their chances of making serious inroads in Oakland County where turnout</p>	First	<p>Oakland County (part)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Berkley city</li> <li>Birmingham city</li> <li>Bloomfield Hills city</li> <li>Clawson city</li> <li>Rochester city</li> <li>Rochester Hills city</li> <li>Royal Oak city</li> <li>Troy city</li> </ul>

skyrocketed in the primaries and the party recruited women candidates who are getting a strong response, especially Royal Oak Democrat Mallory McMorrow. Ms. McMorrow has kept close in fundraising with Sen. Marty Knollenberg (R-Troy), whose seat is at risk given the rise in Democratic enthusiasm as evidenced in Ms. McMorrow's 8,000-vote advantage in the primary. Mr. Knollenberg is expected to get significant backing from his caucus to hold the seat but the race is in toss-up territory. Troy and Rochester, which hold the bulk of the vote in this seat, have pivoted hard from being one-time Republican bulwarks into territory repelled by Mr. Trump. Royal Oak appears poised for a huge Democratic vote this year.

***Gongwer Analysis*** (Wednesday, August 22): **Ranked #5 most likely district to flip.** Democrats are very confident in Mallory McMorrow of Royal Oak in her race against Sen. Marty Knollenberg (R-Troy). Ms. McMorrow has been raising strong money and through the primary was right at Mr. Knollenberg's heels in fundraising.

In the primary Ms. McMorrow received more than 8,000 votes more than Mr. Knollenberg, with a huge turnout increase for Democrats in the district that historically is Republican but is showing signs of inroads for Democrats. In fact, the Democratic turnout in the primary for this district rose by 20 times the amount Republican turnout did compared to 2014. Mr. Knollenberg will receive big money to hold the seat from his caucus, but this is a race to watch.

***MIRS Analysis*** (Thursday, November 1: **Ranked #2 most likely to flip (Unchanged).** Every time we see a Mallory McMORROW video, we immediately want to see another one. Outside of some of Shri THANEDAR's ads and Abdul EL-SAYED's inspiring "People's Summer" ads, McMorrow's videos have been the year's best.

***MIRS Analysis*** (Thursday, October 18: **Ranked #2 most likely to flip (Unchanged).** Sen. Marty KNOLLENBERG's (R-Troy) attention is split between re-election and his Sedona Steakhouse. The state party is trying to bring down

		<p>Mallory McMORROW by framing her as an out-of-touch California transplant who's raised more money from "Berkley, California than Berkley, Michigan."</p> <p><b>MIRS Analysis</b> (Thursday, September 27): <i>Ranked #2 most likely to flip (Unchanged)</i>. MIRS has Sen. Marty KNOLLENBERG (R-Troy) and Democrat Mallory McMORROW within the margin of error, which is likely due to the incumbent being better known than his challenger. Knollenberg's favorable/unfavorable number is underwater (24 percent/37 percent) and around 80 percent of the district didn't know McMorrow between the Sept. 11-14 polling period. Meanwhile, Democrat Gretchen WHITMER is up on Bill SCHUETTE 52 to 36 percent in this district, which puts Knollenberg in a hole despite its 53 percent GOP base number.</p> <p><b>MIRS Analysis</b> (Wednesday, August 22): <i>Ranked #2 most likely to flip</i>. Sen. Marty KNOLLENBERG (R-Troy) is offering Senate Republican staffers free steaks at his Sedona Taphouse if they walk for him outside of their regular volunteer caucus days the rest of this month of September. Meanwhile, those supportive of Democrat Mallory McMORROW were out polling on Knollenberg's two DUIs during his younger years. Let's see if they play that card with any type of paid media.</p>		
14 <sup>th</sup>	Oakland	<p><b>OPEN</b>  <i>Currently held by term-limited David Robertson (R-Grand Blanc)</i></p> <p>GOP Base = 58.67%</p> <p><u>Republican Candidate:</u> Current Michigan Secretary of State <b>Ruth Johnson</b> (Holly) (2010-Present), former state Representative (1999-2004), former Oakland County Clerk/Register of Deeds (2005-2006), GOP nominee for Lt. Governor, 2006</p> <p><u>Democratic Candidate:</u> <b>Renee Watson</b> (Grand Blanc), former Treasurer Grand Blanc School Board</p> <p><b>Gongwer Analysis</b> (Tuesday, October 23): <i>"On the Radar" (New to the List)</i>. Secretary of State Ruth Johnson of Holly is the heavy favorite and is a former</p>	N/A	<p>Oakland County (part)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Brandon Township</li> <li>Fenton city</li> <li>Groveland Township</li> <li>Highland Township</li> <li>Holly Township</li> <li>Lake Angelus city</li> <li>Rose Township</li> <li>Springfield Township</li> <li>Waterford Township</li> </ul>

		<p>Oakland County Clerk, county commissioner and House member. How, then, is this race on the radar for Democrat Renee Watson, a Grand Blanc Community Schools board member? The Oakland County dynamics, along with parts of the district being part of the 8th U.S. House and 11th U.S. House districts, where big money is being spent in tight races involving Democratic candidates Elissa Slotkin and Haley Stevens, respectively, are a factor. A state House candidate is also running a competitive campaign within the Senate district, but the U.S. House races could have a positive effect for Democrats down the ticket. And Ms. Johnson has not run a terribly aggressive campaign. Democrats don't have the money to make a play here, but wonder if perhaps Ms. Johnson got caught napping.</p> <p><b>MIRS Analysis</b> (Thursday, November 1): “<i>Honorable Mention</i>” (Unchanged). If Whitmer wins by 20 points, anything is possible.</p> <p><b>MIRS Analysis</b> (Thursday, October 18): “<i>Honorable Mention</i>” (Previously unranked). If Congressional hopeful Elissa SLOTKIN is changing hearts and minds in typically bright-red northern Oakland County, Renee WATSON would a beneficiary, particularly if Republican Ruth JOHNSON is taking this race for granted.</p>		
15 <sup>th</sup>	Oakland	<p><b>OPEN</b>  <i>Currently held by term-limited Mike Kowall (R-White Lake)</i></p> <p>GOP Base = 55.58%</p> <p><u>Republican Candidate</u>: Current two-term state Rep. <b>Jim Runestad</b> (White Lake) (2015-Present), former Oakland County Commissioner, insurance agent</p> <p><u>Democratic Candidate</u>: <b>Julia Pulver</b> (West Bloomfield), registered nurse, business owner</p> <p><b>Gongwer Analysis</b> (Tuesday, October 23): <i>Ranked #10 most likely district to flip (Previously #9)</i>. West Bloomfield Democrat Julia Pulver has made this once crimson-red district a race and was able to turn out the</p>	First	<p>Oakland County (part)  Commerce Township  Lyon Township  Milford Township  Northville city  Novi city  Novi Township  Orchard Lake city  South Lyon city  Walled Lake city  West Bloomfield Township  White Lake Township  Wixom city</p>

Democratic vote in the primary to the tune of six times that of four years ago. This is still considered a race where Rep. Jim Runestad (R-White Lake) is the odds-on favorite to win. But the changing dynamics in Oakland County have spread here as well, moving it from a district where Democrats have had virtually no chance to being competitive if the district is worked hard, which sources say Ms. Pulver has done a great job of doing in a way Democrats have not for years on this turf. While she narrowly took more votes in the primary than the entire Republican field, this seat is still a more-than-likely hold for the GOP but has served notice that the political environment is putting many more areas in play than in recent years. Republicans, however, quickly saw the threat after the primary and have hit Ms. Pulver with a relentless drumbeat of negative mail. Democrats don't have the resources to respond in kind.

***Gongwer Analysis*** (Wednesday, October 10): See below

***Gongwer Analysis*** (Thursday, September 27): *Ranked #9 most likely district to flip (Previously "on the radar" at #13).* West Bloomfield Democrat Julia Pulver narrowly edged the two-person Republican primary field in August, a startling result in this longtime Republican bastion that has grabbed the attention of Republicans as Oakland County shifts to the Democrats. West Bloomfield, which has long been tilting Democratic, now is solidly blue and Novi is rapidly trending the Democrats' way but there is still a lot of strong Republican turf in southwest Oakland County. Rep. Jim Runestad (R-White Lake) remains the favorite here but voter enthusiasm and the male versus female candidate dynamic could play to the Democrats' favor. A district that is traditionally a wide Republican victory – the average victory margin for the GOP is 20 points the last four cycles – could be much closer than expected and could be one of the final pieces of the puzzle, far down the list of races, to flip the Senate if Democrats have a wave in November.

***Gongwer Analysis*** (Wednesday, August 22): *Ranked #13 most likely district to flip.* In another sign of changing

dynamics in Oakland County, Democratic candidate Julia Pulver of West Bloomfield actually took more than 500 more votes in her uncontested primary (29,173) than the two candidates in the Republican primary (28,638). Rep. Jim Runestad (R-White Lake) is the favorite in this race but the fundraising, voter enthusiasm and female versus male candidate dynamics could make this at least a closer race than traditionally seen in what historically is a very Republican area.

West Bloomfield continues to become ever more Democratic, and Novi's rapid political shift away from Republican bulwark toward 50-50 territory continues.

The average Republican margin of victory in this seat in 2002, 2006, 2010 and 2014 was more than 20 percentage points. It's going to be closer this year, maybe a lot closer.

**MIRS Analysis** (Thursday, November 1): *Ranked #7 most likely to flip (Previously #10)*. Outside groups are bringing up Rep. Jim RUNESTAD's 50/50 shared custody bill. As if motivated women didn't need more motivation to vote Democratic in Oakland County. With little initial aerial support, no candidate has done more with less than Julia PULVER. The rest of Lansing may have been slow to come around, but this married mother of four kids 10 and under is the right type of candidate in the right year.

**MIRS Analysis** (Thursday, October 18): *Ranked #10 most likely to flip (Previously #9)*. Julia PULVER is having fun with the angry-face mailers that Republicans are sending against her. She also has to like that Citizens for Energizing Michigan's Economy – the same group that knocked off Gary GLENN – are running television ads for her now. The seat is tempting for Democrats, but it still has that pesky 56 percent GOP base.

**MIRS Analysis** (Thursday, September 27): *Ranked #9 most likely to flip (Previously #10)*. In the 39th House District, which makes up at least a third of this district, Democrat Julia PULVER was up 52 to 36 percent on Republican Jim RUNESTAD, according to the Target

		<p>Insyght/MIRS poll. Clearly, the numbers would be much different in the northern part of this Oakland County district, but it shows that the conservative Runestad is not a slam dunk.</p> <p><i>MIRS Analysis (Wednesday, August 22): Ranked #10 most likely to flip.</i> Something is going on in Oakland County that is so fast moving and counterintuitive that it's taking Lansing and the rest of state observers some time to come to terms with it. This western Oakland County District is definitely in play. Pulver is dramatically underfunded compared to Runestad, which still makes her an underdog until we see polling that shows otherwise. Pulver is dramatically underfunded compared to Runestad, which still makes her an underdog until we see polling that shows otherwise.</p>		
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**GONGWER: October 10, 2018 Update**

**[Oakland Senate Seats: Dems See Shift, But GOP Remains Bullish](#)**

For control of the Michigan Senate after 2018, all roads lead to Oakland County.

Women and Democratic voters who stayed home in 2016 were shocked by the election of President Donald Trump and roused to action, Democratic candidates say. As the months fell off the calendar that anger has given way to new enthusiasm and constituents in Oakland County taking a fresh look at their elected leadership.

Democrats in Oakland County are banking on changing demographics, angst over Mr. Trump and a softening of support for him and frustration over politics-as-usual to deliver them as many as three now Republican seats that Democrats usually do not seriously contest because of their solid GOP leanings.

In a midterm election year where Democrats appear in position to make Senate gains, the difference between making a small dent in the 27-10 Republican majority and having a shot at flipping control of the chamber depends on their performance in Oakland County. They likely need to flip two of the three to have the chance at winning majority. By contrast, Republican victories in two of the three would make it near impossible for Senate Democrats to get the seats they need for majority.

The similarities of the three Oakland County Senate district races are striking. All feature first-time female candidates against male Republican lawmakers:

Beverly Hills Democrat [Rosemary Bayer](#) is facing [Rep. Michael McCreedy](#) (R-Bloomfield Township) in the 12th Senate District, Royal Oak

Democrat [Mallory McMorrow](#) is squaring off with [Sen. Marty Knollenberg](#) (R-Troy) in the 13th Senate District and West Bloomfield Democrat [Julia](#)

[Pulver](#) is taking on [Rep. Jim Runestad](#) (R-White Lake) in the 15th Senate District.

Not so fast, Republicans say. While Democratic enthusiasm may be up, the seats have historically been Republican-held.

Mr. McCreedy has been able to win tough races before and has an independent streak that provides crossover appeal. Mr. Knollenberg has a high-profile family name and long ties to his district. And Mr. Runestad is a conservative whose politics align with his historically strongly Republican district.

Blue wave. Pink wave/year of the woman. Red wave. Something will inevitably give in next month's general election.

Gongwer News Service spent part of last week in Oakland County to get an in-person look at the campaign trail with all six candidates.

**KNOLLENBERG VS MCMORROW**

Mr. Knollenberg, while mingling with the more than three dozen campaign volunteers including several Senate Republican staffers gathered in the parking lot of the Sedona Taphouse in Troy that he owns, is talking about his drive to take on, and overcome, challenges.

Born with severe hearing loss that went undiagnosed until the age of three, he spent years going to a neighboring school district in special needs programs for the hearing impaired, a story he touted in a recent campaign ad focused on overcoming adversity.

On this overcast and rainy October 5 morning, he reminisces over a time when he participated in marathons and triathlons. Prior to his first triathlon, he noted that he had not yet learned how to swim. No problem, he said, taking on the challenge of learning prior to the race. He did not complete the race until his third triathlon, but persistence paid off: he said in time he could finish in the top 10 or 15 percent in such races in his age group.

This election is his most recent challenge. Ms. McMorrow, running unopposed, took 253 percent more primary votes than the two-person Democratic field did in 2014 while Mr. Knollenberg had only a 12 percent boost compared to the entire Republican primary field in 2014.

While the race has tightened, Mr. Knollenberg said the party's recent polling shows the campaign is finding success and he is starting to build a lead. That contrasts sharply with confidence in the Senate Democratic Caucus that Ms. McMorrow has the race all but wrapped up.

Speaking at his insurance agency office not far from Sedona, Mr. Knollenberg said he does not "really pay attention to what she's doing," referencing the campaign of his opponent (whom he has not met). He said all he can do is share with voters what he has done to help the communities in the district with infrastructure and in pushing for school funding, among other accomplishments.

Education spending, he said, has always been a priority due to his childhood experience. He said every child should be provided the tools necessary to reach their potential, something he said he would love to do more of if re-elected and were to chair the Senate Education Committee.

Mr. Knollenberg's chief of staff and campaign manager Michael Murray likened it to "two different worlds" out on the campaign trail, noting that he has never heard anyone when out knocking on doors be able to identify Ms. McMorrow by name. He said at most someone who is voting Democrat might say they are voting for the Democrats or say they are not a fan of Mr. Knollenberg.

Mr. Knollenberg agreed, saying he will focus on his campaign and of his opponent "if she goes negative I'll respond."

Both campaigns recently posted to Twitter negative mailings attacking them. The Republican one Photoshopped Ms. McMorrow's head onto someone else's body and had her holding a map of Michigan upside-down to use her relatively recent move to the state against her. The Democratic one had Mr. Knollenberg in a space suit mocking his policy ideas as from outer space.

Due to a rain storm in Troy Friday morning when he was about to go knock on doors, Mr. Knollenberg opted to give a demonstration of an automated phone program he has subscribed to and used extensively during the campaign.

Mr. Knollenberg logged on to the phone program, which allows for a series of numbers of potential voters that come from the Republican Party's database to be dialed at once. The program brings up information on the household and number of potential voters for whomever picks up. Automated voicemails are also left with individuals that do not pick up.

Mr. Knollenberg said he spends a few hours per day working the phones. On average he makes 400 to 450 phone calls per day, with a response rate of a few dozen voters per day.

The phone program has a similar effect to knocking on doors in person, where being in person instead of a volunteer increases the odds of winning someone over: "Hopefully they'll appreciate the call," Mr. Knollenberg said.

Mr. Knollenberg pointed to one recent call where a woman was shocked it was him on the line. After convincing the woman it really was him the woman's husband joined the call, wanting to have a conversation and engage with him.

He said "I feel pretty good about what's going on" in the district, saying voters in the district are smart and tend to wait until shortly before the election to weigh their options and make their choice.

He said the U.S. Supreme Court nomination hearings and vote on U.S. Circuit Judge Brett Kavanaugh in recent weeks is an example of area voters waiting to get more information. He said it likely will spark more enthusiasm among Republicans to get out and vote.

"They like the fact that I'm not (just) a politician," Mr. Knollenberg said.

On October 3, an unseasonably warm early October day topping 80 degrees, Ms. McMorrow visited Raintree Park in Troy, having lunch with 40 members of Michigan Education Association. After lunch with members of the group over hot dogs, chips, cookies and potato salad, Ms. McMorrow was given time to speak, following words from multiple other area Democratic candidates.

Ms. McMorrow told the crowd teachers who work their entire careers should be rewarded for the thankless jobs they do, not have pensions gutted and while still working should not be subject to increased requirements to simply teach to standardized tests.

"They feel like they don't have a voice in the process," she said.

She said when teachers are given the freedom to run their classrooms as they see fit, are treated like professionals and are empowered to operate in ways that get students excited about learning "great things happen."

Ms. McMorrow said her teachers were a great influence in encouraging her to pursue a career after initially wanting to be an artist. After graduating from the University of Notre Dame she worked for advertising companies and other companies including Mattel and Gawker Media.

She said she found Michigan to be the place she wanted to be after visiting during college and eventually meeting her husband, a Michigan native who worked on former Governor Jennifer Granholm's first campaign.

Ms. McMorrow noted the stark changes in education in recent years in Michigan, a state once ranked in the Top 10 in education and now in the bottom 10. She said Republican policies that have negatively affected the teaching profession in the state and pensions have led to the chronic teacher shortage the state now faces. The public schools in this district – Birmingham, Troy, Rochester, among others – are among the highest-performing in the state. But even in a higher-funded district like Birmingham teachers have chafed at the lack of pay increases as a result of subinflationary increases from the state.

While talking about the automotive industry, she pointed to and praised the blue 1966 Corvette parked behind her. Audience members pointed to the car's owner, a retired Troy teacher who formerly taught automotive technology class, and suggested she go for a spin afterward.

Ms. McMorrow joked with the car's owner afterward when offered to go for a spin, and even for her to get behind the wheel, that she would never get any campaigning done that day if given that opportunity.

The retired auto shop teacher minutes later joined her in door knocking in a Troy neighborhood less than a mile from Raintree Park.

Walking through a neighborhood of large homes, at one home Ms. McMorrow was invited inside for a few minutes to speak with the woman who answered, where all were greeted by a very energetic small dog named Snuggles who repeatedly jumped on Ms. McMorrow's lap while she discussed education concerns. The woman told Ms. McMorrow she supports providing teachers with more support staff and tools they need to reduce their workload, which she said she believed would allow educators to focus more on the basics of their jobs. She spoke of teachers being spread thin with their growing responsibilities, noting she herself is a tutor for a child at her children's school.

While getting up to leave, Snuggles made one last excited round of jumping to greet the guests, hopping around on two legs as the song "TNT" by rock legends AC-DC kicked in on a radio playing in the house.

In an interview, Ms. McMorrow said while the current political environment may have begun with "a wake-up call" after Mr. Trump was elected, it has evolved into voters to whom she's spoken taking a fresh look at their elected leaders on all levels.

She said newcomers like her are getting a serious look not just because they are Democrats but because the desire for upending politics as usual and giving others a chance at leading may be filtering down to the state level.

Women who may not have followed politics very closely before 2016 have been fired up since, she said, pointing to the strong attendance of Oakland County women a year ago at the Women's Conference in Detroit she attended.

"There's no way to ignore that. That dynamic is certainly there," Ms. McMorrow said of the gender dynamic of the race. "(But) I don't want that to be the main reason to vote for me."

"I don't think it's so much of a partisan reaction as it is a generational shift," Ms. McMorrow said of the shifting demographics in the district. For years, Troy, Rochester and Rochester Hills were Republican bulwarks with Republicans taking upwards of 70 percent of the vote. Troy in particular has shown signs of Democratic gains in the past decade, though still neither community has elected a Democrat to the Legislature in modern Michigan politics.

The younger generation has different standards for livable communities, she said, and parts of the district, particularly Troy, are rapidly diversifying. There is a booming population of south Asian descent in Troy.

### **MCCREADY VS BAYER**

The Oakland Township neighborhood Mr. McCready chose to knock doors on the afternoon of October 5 required some comfortable shoes: hilly and lined with mansions and large homes spread far apart, requiring him to hop into his pickup truck every few houses and pull farther up the street to tackle the next batch. On a drizzling, chilly afternoon Mr. McCready only had a few people answer their doors while canvassing this affluent neighborhood, but the response was positive and in line with the more Republican northern part of the district.

A middle-aged man answered one of the first doors he knocked on, politely accepting a piece of campaign literature.

While walking down the driveway next door after there was no answer at the door, the man from the previous home stepped out onto his driveway and called out to him, holding a piece of paper in his hand.

"Sir, I have my absentee ballot and I already voted for you," the man told Mr. McCready.

Mr. McCready thanked him for his support and continued toward the next door, noting that he has had a few people mention in recent days they intend to check the box on their absentee ballots for him.

Farther up the street he began telling a woman who he was and held out a piece of literature.

The woman quickly interrupted: "Sir, I'm already voting for you. You don't have to go any further."

With a chuckle and a thank you, he continued along his way.

At a third house, a man in work clothes, a contractor doing interior renovations, came to the door. Mr. McCready asked if the contractor could pass his flier along to the owners of the home when they arrive later and left. The final person to answer a door in the neighborhood said she would consider Mr. McCready when it comes time to vote and shook his hand and wished him luck.

Mr. McCready said the campaign is going well, with recent Republican polling putting him in the lead after coming out of the primary a couple points behind. The race, he said, is tightening and is tighter than the party may have expected early on.

"The Democrats saw a big voter turnout in the primary and see that as an opportunity," Mr. McCready said. "You definitely need to work harder than you have in the past."

This is true: Ms. Bayer earned more votes in the primary than the entire Republican field, where there was a hotly contested primary, while she was running unopposed. Democratic turnout in August increased compared to 2014 four times as much as Republican primary turnout rose.

To that end, he said his campaign has knocked on about 50,000 doors since March, with many doors being knocked on more than once. He will need his base in Bloomfield Township to offset any Democratic gains in the rest of the district to hold off his opponent.

He said the issue of gender has not come up much during the campaign but added having diversity among candidates is a good thing.

Mr. McCready said he met Ms. Bayer before an event earlier this year. He said she has a good business background but "she's got a very different viewpoint than I've got" on local issues such as schools, infrastructure and the economy that he sees as being front and center in the campaign.

Mr. Trump sometimes comes up at doors and when speaking to people, but he said the more conservative communities in the district remain supportive of the president, as does he. The president has overall followed through on his campaign promises but it's when he "puts his foot in his mouth" with his blunt statements and tweets that worry supporters at times, he said.

He said he considers himself a traditional Republican, a label he said others sometimes consider as being a moderate. His work as a member of the Detroit bankruptcy board and being in favor of the Healthy Michigan Medicaid expansion legislation were tough to be involved with, although he said being on the board and casting his Medicaid vote were the right things to do.

"This is a very competitive race," Mr. McCready said. "We had our plan and we've stayed with it. I think we're going down the right path."

The efforts have been successful so far, he said, pointing to the support in the Oakland Township neighborhood and the northern part of the district as a whole.

He said he has been able to get the Republican base solidly in his corner since the primary and even some soft Democrats.

Ms. Bayer on the morning of October 2 found herself in the district's Democratic stronghold of Pontiac, speaking at the Bowen Senior Center in front of more than 70 members of the Golden Opportunity Club, a local senior citizens club that meets at the center.

She gave club members an overview of her background, being a lifelong resident of the district who has worked as an engineer in the computer industry for years before starting her own small business.

During a short question and answer session following her speech a member of the audience asked that she "commit to coming back to this room" at least quarterly or every six months if elected to provide updates on her legislative activity.

Ms. Bayer agreed, saying a communications plan for her office if elected is being developed. She plans on regularly visiting each corner of the district to hold periodic constituent meetings, townhalls, virtual townhalls and gathering input through surveys.

Speaking to constituents is one of her favorite parts of the process, she said. When she began her campaign just over one year ago, Ms. Bayer said she had little idea what she was doing but quickly became comfortable with knocking on doors and talking to residents.

Following her words to the senior group, she drove to a neighborhood several blocks away. Pontiac is a solidly Democratic city and seen as vital to Ms. Bayer's chances. If she can drive up turnout in Pontiac beyond the midterm norm, Democrats think she is on her way to Lansing.

The efforts of her roughly one hour of labor on a few blocks of the neighborhood? People answering the door at nine of about 25 homes and acceptance from four homeowners to place yard signs.

Some had reasons to cut their conversations short: one man was waking up and getting ready for work but took a campaign flier. Another man said he had a flier from a volunteer coming by recently but promised to give it another look. One woman said she was in the middle of planning her mother's funeral.

One man, who agreed to take a yard sign, told Ms. Bayer he will be happy when the election cycle is over, so he can stop being bombarded with television advertisements that "drive me batty." He added he is a Democrat that was shocked that Mr. Trump won, adding he hopes the party can be successful in November and "fix all the craziness."

A few doors down, a man with a Bayer yard sign was beginning to pull out of his driveway as Ms. Bayer approached. He rolled down his car window and spoke with her for a few minutes, saying she has his support.

A block up the street, a woman was returning home with her lunch as Ms. Bayer was leaving. The woman opened her car door and announced that she had received a flier from a volunteer knocking on doors the previous week and she was firmly on her side. She also agreed to having a yard sign put up.

Ms. Bayer said she began to see a shift in momentum in the months after she began knocking on doors in January.

In traditionally solid Republican areas of the district such as Addison Township and Bingham Farms where she was told there was little chance of getting any support, she said there has been a surprising level of support. She noted in the strongly conservative northeast part of the district, she eclipsed the projected Democratic vote total in the primary that was thought possible in a general election.

"People are looking for something different," Ms. Bayer said, adding in her decades living in the district that the environment is shifting. "I've never seen anything like this."

Ms. Bayer said there a growing number of Republicans in the district who no longer identify with the party but have not moved into the Democratic camp. Finding those voters are key to flipping the district.

Further south in more Democratic territory voters are "up and at 'em because they're angry" at a lack of responsiveness from state leadership and at the Trump administration. She said women voters in the Democratic part of the district are fired up and the liberal group Fems for Dems is very active in the area.

The shifting demographics in the district are real and not a flash in the pan, she said. Her fear, however is if more Democrats are elected and then return to politics as usual the pendulum could swing right back to the Republicans.

### **RUNESTAD VS PULVER**

Mr. Runestad said over dinner October 2 in White Lake after driving back from session in Lansing he's confident the 15th Senate District the district remains a Republican one. He said Milford and South Lyon are strongly conservative and a large chunk of the district being moderately Republican. Novi, he said, leans slightly Republican but is trending Democratic, with West Bloomfield being lean Democratic.

The Republican nominee has average a 20 percentage point margin of victory in this seat the last four elections. It has never been on the radar.

For the primary, however, Ms. Pulver saw Democratic turnout increase to the tune of six times the rate of GOP turnout compared to 2014.

He said while the Democratic numbers were up, there is a ceiling for the party in the district. Mr. Runestad said the enthusiasm may be there, but they largely brought out their share of the vote in August.

"There's way more Republicans in November," Mr. Runestad said. "Republicans will be passionate to get out."

If there is a softening of support for Mr. Trump or Democratic enthusiasm, particularly among women, to punish Trump and the Republicans at the polls, Mr. Runestad says he has not seen it. While knocking on doors the male versus female candidate dynamic virtually never comes up. He added that in most of the district Mr. Trump also only comes up sporadically. When it does, it's usually positive feedback on the president.

He said while district demographics could be shifting somewhat, he said any shift is "not significantly enough to effect the outcome" according to party polling. He declined to elaborate on party polling data.

That said, Republicans have attacked Ms. Pulver with mail and digital ads.

Mr. Runestad said his experience is a major difference between himself and Ms. Pulver, noting that the two had debated at a forum months ago.

"She seemed like a nice enough person to me ... but didn't seem to have command of the details," Mr. Runestad said of policy positions.

Mr. Runestad explained that his years of county commissioner experience were valuable but: "when I got to Lansing, what a difference!" He said the learning curve is sharp and his local government experience provided skills at working across the aisle and with stakeholders to craft solutions. Those in turn helped him navigate the steep learning curve in the House and would help ease the burden of moving across the hall to the Senate.

"You really to be effective have to be able to have the experience," Mr. Runestad said of assuming a top role in state government and being able to effectively serve constituents out of the gate.

He said he never would have personally attempted to make the leap to state Senate without previous government experience and has only seen one recent example of someone doing so: term-limited [Sen. Patrick Colbeck](#) (R-Canton Township).

"I have the right temperament for the district," Mr. Runestad added.

Mr. Runestad said he has the full backing of the Senate GOP caucus and they have been great to work with during the campaign.

On the campaign trail knocking on doors, Mr. Runestad has had a small operation of a half dozen core volunteers regularly helping him meet with constituents with between 25 and 30 helping on single-day days of action with increasing regularity recently.

People have been largely positive at the doors, Mr. Runestad said, estimating "less than 1 percent" of those he speaks with on the campaign trail have been caustic or hostile verbally. The most common encounter approaching opposition is from voters who say they are a Democrat and there's no way they'll vote for a Republican.

"If you're the one at that door, there's a pretty high percentage chance they're going to vote for you," Mr. Runestad said, meaning if they have direct contact with the candidate himself or herself rather than a volunteer.

He estimated he and volunteers have knocked on about 20,000 doors since the primary.

The usual suspects of taxes, road conditions and no-fault auto insurance frequently arise from those who do wish to discuss topics on their minds, he said.

The results are notable, with numerous of his signs dotting the main roadways and many lawns around the district with his catchy "Run With Runestad" slogan accompanied by a silhouette of a man running in full stride. The series of them along M-59 in the district, for example, make for imagery of regular markings along a trail as they dot the sides of the road in semi-regular intervals outside of businesses.

On the afternoon of October 3 Ms. Pulver was in Mr. Runestad's home turf, sitting in the backyard of a friend's farm home just off M-59 in White Lake.

Several campaign volunteers were inside preparing literature with snacks and apple cider while more than a half-dozen large dogs and multiple cats roamed. As Ms. Pulver sat in the backyard where some chickens strutted around and spoke of her campaign, a couple-hundred-pound pig began bumping its nose against the glass sliding door leading to the backyard.

People in the White Lake area, she said, are concerned about the perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances, or PFAS, that are increasingly being found at locations around the state. She pointed to recent do-not-eat fish advisories for the Huron River in Oakland County and multiple other counties, saying residents are worried that with PFAS issues "their weekends are ruined" by reduced fishing opportunities. The stigma of water contamination could also affect property values, she said.

She said education policy needs to take a new direction after years of Republican policies that have made it difficult to attract and retain quality teachers. She said she knows of people who left the profession because they could no longer afford to continue in the career even though they loved doing it. Others, like the first-grade teacher of one of her four children, sent home a letter asking for supplies for the classroom because the teacher could no longer afford the purchase of basic supplies coming out of the teacher's own pocket.

Ms. Pulver said West Bloomfield was the main Democratic stronghold in what was drawn to be a safe Republican seat in 2011, with Novi being the primary conservative firewall along with the more traditional Republican strongholds in the district such as South Lyon, Commerce Township, Milford Township and Wixom.

"We've been on the ground since March of this year. We knew that the enthusiasm was out there," Ms. Pulver said.

She said the Republicans appear to have misfired in drawing the district, with Novi moving from strong Republican to purple and with Democrats performing strong last year in city elections.

While her campaign has not been conducting any polling, she said the district demographics are changing. She pointed to population growth in the district and that in knocking on doors she's learned many are coming from the Southfields, Ann Arbors and other Democratic areas wanting a less busy area to live and commute from.

"That enthusiasm is still out there," Ms. Pulver said. "We're not ceding any ground."

That enthusiasm, she said, stems from running a full-scale campaign and not simply being a placeholder on the ballot and giving up the race for lost. She said the Democrats have made the mistake in the past of not running hard in districts including the 15th and her visibility campaigning in areas considered ruby red Republican have been noticed.

Ms. Pulver said there are a lot of "closet Democrats" out there. She recalled knocking on doors one day and the joke being at dozens of homes that they were the only Democrat in the area.

She said if people do not reach out and try to have a conversation than people, right and left, simply retreat to the extreme edges and people become even more hardened by partisanship.

At this point, one of the chickens in the volunteer's backyard, wandering closer to Ms. Pulver as she spoke, hopped up onto her lap. After petting the chicken briefly, she let it back onto the ground.

While Mr. Trump's election was what prompted people like herself to get involved, she said there has been a snowball effect since then and residents began seeing more things about their federal and state government they felt were wrong. This, she said, prompted people like herself to take more direct action and run for office.

What is happening in Oakland County and other parts of the state is sustainable, she said.

"I think people are going to be able to shift their idea of what's possible," Ms. Pulver said.

### MAC District 3 State House Districts

District	County	Incumbent (Party-Hometown)	Term	Communities Represented
26 <sup>th</sup>	Oakland	<p><b>Jim Ellison (D-Royal Oak)</b>  <i>Member, Health Policy Committee</i></p> <p>Democratic Base = 56.34%</p> <p><u>Republican Candidate:</u> <b>Al Gui</b> (Madison Heights), no further information known at this time</p>	First	Oakland County (part) Madison Heights city Royal Oak city
27 <sup>th</sup>	Oakland	<p><b>Robert Wittenberg (D-Oak Park)</b>  <i>Member, Insurance Committee</i></p> <p>Democratic Base = 74.13%</p> <p><u>Republican Candidate:</u> <b>Janet Flessland</b> (Huntington Woods), no further information known at this time, \$1,000 waiver</p> <p>Libertarian Candidate: <b>(Benjamin Carr)</b> (Oak Park), Vice Chair for Oakland County Libertarian Party, professor of history, social scientist</p>	Second	Oakland County (part) Berkley city Ferndale city Hazel Park city Huntington Woods city Oak Park city Pleasant Ridge city Royal Oak Township
29 <sup>th</sup>	Oakland	<p><b>None</b>  <i>Currently held by term-limited state Rep. Tim Greimel (D-Auburn Hills), who unsuccessfully ran for Congress</i></p> <p>Democratic Base = 72.4%</p> <p><u>Democratic Candidate:</u> <b>Brenda Carter</b> (Pontiac), speaker for Improved Benevolent Protective order of the Elks and organizer of the Million Woman March, President of Pontiac School Board, president of Michigan Association of School Board Directors</p> <p><u>Republican Candidate:</u> <b>Timothy Carrier</b> (Auburn Hills), owner of Carrier &amp; Sons Home Improvement, \$1,000 reporting waiver</p>	N/A	Oakland County (part) Auburn Hills city Keego Harbor city Orchard Lake Village city Pontiac city Sylvan Lake city
35 <sup>th</sup>	Oakland	<p><b>OPEN</b>  <i>Currently held by two-term state Rep. Jeremy Moss (D-Southfield), who is running for Michigan Senate, 11<sup>th</sup> District</i></p> <p>Democratic Base = 82.30%</p> <p><u>Democratic Candidate:</u> <b>Kyra Harris Bolden</b></p>	N/A	Oakland County (part) Lathrup Village city Southfield city Southfield Township

		<p>(Southfield), attorney, Commissioner on the Total Living Commission for the City of Southfield</p> <p><u>Republican Candidate: Theodore Alfonsetti, III</u> (Southfield), licensed realtor, \$1,000 waiver</p>		
37 <sup>th</sup>	Oakland	<p><b>Christine Greig (D-Farmington Hills)</b>  <i>Current Democratic Floor Leader, leading contender for Democratic Leader next term, if Dems take control of the chamber (they need nine seats to gain control), she would be Michigan's first female Speaker of the House</i></p> <p>Democratic Base = 59.24%</p> <p><u>Republican Candidate: Mitch Swoboda</u> (Farmington Hills), USAF Veteran, ran against Greig in 2016, losing 65-36%), \$1,000 waiver</p>	Second	<p>Oakland County (part)  Farmington city  Farmington Hills city</p>
38 <sup>th</sup>	Oakland	<p><b>Kathy Crawford (R-Novi)</b></p> <p>GOP Base = 56.68%</p> <p><u>Democratic Candidate: Kelly Breen</u> (Novi), member of Novi City Council, former legislative intern and aide to a state representative, insurance defense attorney representing large insurance companies</p> <p><b>Gongwer Analysis</b> (Friday, November 2): <i>Ranked #7 most likely district to flip (Unchanged)</i>. Gongwer has bumped this seat where Rep. Kathy Crawford(R-Novi) is seeking re-election above Rep. Brandt Iden's seat given the environment in Oakland County and the globs of money both Republicans (upwards of \$400,000) have spent on Ms. Crawford and Dem money for both their candidate Kelly Breen of Novi. And, again, this is a district that overlaps the Stevens-Epstein contest. Another issue of environment for Republicans and a question about ticket splitting if Dems do well top-of-the-ticket here. If Rep. Jim Runestad of White Lake is in trouble in this area's Senate seat, what does that portend for Ms. Crawford, who doesn't have the benefit of more Republican communities in the bigger Senate district to protect her?</p>	Second	<p>Oakland County (part)  Lyon township  Northville city  Novi city  Novi Township  South Lyon city  Walled Lake city</p>

**Gongwer Analysis** (Tuesday, October 23): *Ranked #7 most likely district to flip (Previously #9)*. Rep. Kathy Crawford (R-Novi) has served in some capacity in the Novi area for decades and her husband held this seat before her. She is seeking her third term and earlier in the year wasn't even on the radar. But she has never faced a re-election test. She had a tense primary. Voters here are changing and the same dynamics at play in other areas of Oakland County are playing here too. Democrats have Novi City Councilmember Kelly Breen, a political newcomer, who is working hard and getting more attention after the 39th House District fell through for the Democrats. Republicans see a greater cushion here than in other Oakland County seats and Dems see a chance. Ms. Crawford's lack of heavy door-to-door work creates vulnerability.

**Gongwer Analysis** (Tuesday, October 16): See below

**Gongwer Analysis** (Friday, September 21): *Ranked #9 most likely district to flip (Previously unranked)*. Democrats are increasingly confident in Novi City Councilmember Kelly Breen, who is going up against Rep. Kathy Crawford (R-Novi). The Crawford name has represented this area for a decade and Republicans feel confident, especially given Ms. Crawford's long tenure as a senior director in Novi prior to her running for office. But Ms. Breen is working the district hard along with other area Democrats, and Ms. Crawford is said to have her hands full after a closer-than-expected primary win. Novi is rapidly shifting toward the Democrats.

**MIRS Analysis** (Friday, November 2): *Ranked #5 most likely to flip (Previously #6)*. How do you know Rep. Kathy CRAWFORD is in trouble? Republicans put \$456,000 into her campaign the last two weeks. It's already been an expensive race in Novi. Clearly, what's been put in here wasn't enough. Democrats have put about \$250,000 into Kelly BREEN from what we can tell, which looks more like in response. We can't believe there's that much TV left to buy.

**MIRS Analysis** (Friday, October 19): *Ranked #6 most*

		<p>likely to flip (Previously 7<sup>th</sup>). Rep. Kathy CRAWFORD's (R-Nov) seat has become the battleground on television three weeks out from the General Election, based on numbers the MCFN collected. Republicans are sticking their flag in the ground in this Novi-based district that went 65 percent for Gov. Rick SNYDER four years ago, but only 49 percent for Trump. So far, MCFN is reporting \$424,399 in TV spending, the most among Michigan House races.</p> <p><b>MIRS Analysis</b> (Friday, September 28): <i>Ranked #7 most likely to flip (Previously 10<sup>th</sup>)</i>. The math gets a bit harder for Democrats starting right about here. Rep. Kathy CRAWFORD (R-Nov) might not register well on a generic ballot test, but her name is so well known that she starts with an advantage, Trump numbers be damned. It took Kelly BREEN 20 minutes to drive her daughter two miles to the doctor to treat an ear infection and she's talking about it in her new 30-second video. She needs to keep her fundraising numbers up to keep that ad on the air. Breen also needs Haley STEVENS to keep rocking and rolling in the 11th Congressional District.</p> <p><b>MIRS Analysis</b> (Thursday, August 23): <i>Ranked #10 most likely to flip</i>. Rep. Kathy CRAWFORD (R-Nov) survived an aggressive primary challenge. Now she's going up against Novi City Council member Kelly BREEN, who just won an election last year. For as much attention we gave the Crawford-Chase TURNER primary race, Breen's Democratic primary against her two opponents generated 461 more votes.</p>		
39 <sup>th</sup>	Oakland	<p><b>OPEN</b>  <i>Currently held by term-limited state Rep. Clint Kesto (R-West Bloomfield)</i></p> <p>GOP Base = 54.46%</p> <p><u>Republican Candidate:</u> <b>Ryan Berman</b> (Commerce Township), attorney, reserve police officer, Republican Party activist</p> <p><u>Democratic Candidate:</u> <b>Jennifer Suidan</b> (West Bloomfield), attorney in Election Law, previously</p>	N/A	Oakland County (part) Commerce Township West Bloomfield Township (part)

worked for ACLU of Michigan

Libertarian Candidate: Anthony Croft (West Bloomfield), works in retail and volunteers at the local library, \$1,000 waiver

**UPDATE:** On September 24, Democrat Jennifer Suidan was accused of embezzling campaign funds from Oakland County Treasurer Andy Meisner while serving as his campaign record keeper. It is generally believed that this cripples her chances to win, despite a recent MIRS/Governmental Consultant Services Inc. poll showing Suidan up on Republican Ryan BERMAN 50 to 38 percent.

**Gongwer Analysis** (Friday, November 2): “*On the Radar*” (*Unchanged*). Republicans have had to spend here even with Democrat Jennifer Suidan of Commerce Township no longer campaigning and facing charges after Oakland County Treasurer Andy Meisner accused her of embezzling more than \$100,000 from his campaign fund. On paper, Republican Ryan Berman of West Bloomfield should win, but there is still some Republican heartburn here and some speculation on just how strong that Democratic-friendly environment may be. Is it possible a candidate charged with embezzlement who has been off the trail for six weeks and not spent a dime could win on environment alone?

**Gongwer Analysis** (Tuesday, October 23): “*On the Radar*” (*Previously #4*). Democrat Jennifer Suidan of Commerce Township should be toast after one of the state's leading Democrats, Oakland County Treasurer Andy Meisner, accused her of embezzling more than \$100,000 from his campaign fund and she was charged with a 20-year felony, right? Hmmm. Ms. Suidan has vanished into a bunker and Democrats have abandoned her, but the environment in this area is still great for a Democratic candidate. Republican Ryan Berman of West Bloomfield should win, but Republicans will need to get the word out about Ms. Suidan's legal problems to avoid an election night shocker.

**Gongwer Analysis** (Friday, September 21): *Ranked #4*

*most likely district to flip (Previously #7).* Republican Ryan Berman of Commerce Township is going up against Democrat Jennifer Suidan of Commerce Township in this seat currently held by Rep. Klint Kesto (R-West Bloomfield), where Mr. Trump did win. Still, trends here are promising for Democrats. Multiple sources said the 39th, 40th and 41st districts are going to the Democrats barring a major surprise.

***Gongwer Analysis*** (Friday, August 10): *Ranked #7 most likely district to flip.* Mr. Trump did win this Oakland County seat currently held by Rep. Klint Kesto (R-West Bloomfield), so Republicans feel a bit better in the 39th House District than the other two. They have Ryan Berman of Commerce Township, an attorney and reserve police officer. Democrats have Jennifer Suidan of Commerce Township, who works for attorney and former Michigan Democratic Party Chair Mark Brewer and is an activist.

***MIRS Analysis*** (Friday, November 2): *Ranked #12 most likely to flip (Previously #10).* As these suburban voters get blasted from all mediums with ads about various candidates, are we sure these Commerce Township/West Bloomfield Township votes REALLY KNOW their Democratic choice, Jennifer SUIDAN, is REALLY being charged with embezzlement and has suspended her campaign? Democratic voters will likely be voting for her anyway. In their minds, "Better to have a vacancy that can be filled later than have a Republican in there today."

***MIRS Analysis*** (Friday, October 19): *Ranked #10 most likely to flip (Previously #13).* It's totally crazy to think that a candidate freshly charged with embezzlement could win. But in this Oakland County seat, where voters may not know which House district they live in, it's a very real possibility. Ryan BERMAN is mailing Democrats to remind them his opponent, Jennifer SUIDAN, is the same Jennifer Suidan who allegedly stole from County Treasurer Andy MEISNER's campaign fund. Maybe it won't matter and voters will force the Legislature to deal with it if she gets elected.

		<p><b>MIRS Analysis</b> (Friday, September 28): <i>Ranked #13 most likely to flip (Previously #6)</i>. The criminal charges against Jennifer SUIDAN are coming and even if she is elected, the House won't seat her with embezzlement hanging over her head (See "Dem Candidate In 39th Accused Of Embezzling," 9/24/18). But the numbers here are very bad for Republicans. Stabenow is up 62 to 33 percent on Republican John JAMES so the R's will need to spend money to make sure Ryan BERMAN gets through without incident. It doesn't appear a write-in candidate is an option.</p> <p><b>MIRS Analysis</b> (Thursday, August 23): <i>Ranked #6 most likely to flip</i>. The district looks a little different than the one now-Oakland County Clerk Lisa BROWN held, but it's still trending the Democrats' way. Democrat Jennifer SUIDAN is going to need to work on name ID after Republican Ryan BERMAN's impressive primary win.</p>		
40 <sup>th</sup>	Oakland	<p><b>OPEN</b>  <i>Currently held by term-limited state Rep. Mike McCready (R-Bloomfield Hills), the Republican nominee in Michigan's 12<sup>th</sup> Senate District</i></p> <p>GOP Base = 56.7%</p> <p><b>Republican Candidate: David Wolkinson</b>  (Birmingham), manages and owns a portfolio of multi-family apartment buildings, attorney, Republican Party activist</p> <p><b>Democratic Candidate: Mari Manoogian</b>  (Birmingham), graduate of Elliott School of International Affairs at the George Washington University who interned for then-Congressman John D. Dingell, the Council on Foreign Relations, and for Ambassador Samantha Power at the U.S. Mission to the United Nations, worked in the Office of English Language Programs at the U.S. Department of State</p> <p><b>Gongwer Analysis</b> (Friday, November 2): <i>Ranked #2 most likely district to flip (Unchanged)</i>. Again, not much has changed here. Campaign finance reports filed between the last rankings and now show more institutional support for Democrat Mari Manoogian of</p>	N/A	Oakland County (part) Birmingham city Bloomfield Township Bloomfield Hills city West Bloomfield Township (part)

Birmingham. Republican David Wolkinson of West Bloomfield filed his most recent campaign finance report with a negative balance, and House Republicans have not reported any contributions in the seat recently. Democrats remain confident given the toxic environment for the GOP here. By all accounts, the Republicans have waved the white flag here amid a surge toward the Democrats.

**Gongwer Analysis** (Tuesday, October 23): *Ranked #2 most likely district to flip (Unchanged)*. Democrat Mari Manoogian of Birmingham continues to hustle in this seat with support from the caucus and party. Republicans say they haven't stopped supporting David Wolkinson of West Bloomfield but he appears to be handling his own campaign advertisements while the party has filmed ads for other Oakland County Republicans. Democrats are confident with their chances here and Republican less so. The environment couldn't be better for Democrats here with Mr. Trump toxic. If Democrats lose this one, they are having a terrible night.

**Gongwer Analysis** (Tuesday, October 16): See below

**Gongwer Analysis** (Friday, September 21): *Ranked #2 most likely district to flip (Previously 5<sup>th</sup>)*. Democrat Mari Manoogian of Birmingham is up against Republican David Wolkinson of Birmingham in this Oakland County seat currently held by Rep. Michael McCready(R-Bloomfield Hills). The seat covers Birmingham, Bloomfield Hills, Bloomfield Township and part of West Bloomfield. Mr. Trump ran 10 points below Mr. McCready in 2016, who won a surprisingly tight general election bid two years ago. With the national environment and an open seat, Democrats think this is a great opportunity (Dem voters made up 59 percent of the turnout in primary last month, up from 39 percent four years ago). Both candidates are working hard, raising money and will fight it out to the end, but the consensus right now is this is Ms. Manoogian's to lose.

**Gongwer Analysis** (Friday, August 10): *Ranked #5*

*most likely district to flip.* The Democratic base is energized in this seat covering the Birmingham area after a competitive primary, which Mari Manoogian won. Republicans have David Wolkinson, who was a surprise winner. Republicans like Mr. Wolkinson and think that he will work hard, and he has access to money. Democrats think the 40th is one of their best opportunities and like that they have a woman on the ballot here.

**MIRS Analysis** (Friday, November 2): *Ranked #2 most likely to flip (Previously #4).* David WOLKINSON has been on his own much of this campaign, counting on his own \$100,000 contribution to push forward in this trending-blue House District. Like Democrat Kelly ROSSMAN-McKINNEY in the 24th Senate District, if this guy ends up winning, he should be given any committee assignment he wants. He's not even getting a walking day from the HRCC in the week leading up to the election. Democrats are still making sure Mari MANOOGIAN has what she needs.

**MIRS Analysis** (Friday, October 19): *Ranked #4 most likely to flip (Previously #3).* If David WOLKINSON is going down, it's not going to be without a fight. His latest ad connecting " Hamas " and " BDS " (boycott, disinvestment, sanctions) to Mari MANOOGIAN may be a sign of desperation. It may also be a sign that he's got some money and he's willing to do whatever it takes. (See "Candidate Makes Other Dems' Anti-Israel Statements Those Of His Opponent," 10/15/18).

**MIRS Analysis** (Friday, September 28): *Ranked #3 most likely to flip (Previously #1).* If Mari MANOOGIAN were in serious trouble, you would expect organized labor to help out the daughter of the former CEO of the utilities workers, George MANOOGIAN. Downtown Publications has backed her. U.S. Sen. Gary PETERS (D-Bloomfield Twp.) has shot a video for her. David WOLKINSON is up with his first ad talking about how he received his law degree from the University of Michigan before he was 24. But with 55 percent of the district believing President

		<p>Donald TRUMP is doing a poor job, all Republicans in this Birmingham-based district should be nervous.</p> <p><b>MIRS Analysis</b> (Thursday, August 23): Ranked #1 most likely to flip. Nearly 59 percent of primary voters participated in the competitive Democratic primary over the six-way GOP primary. Democrat Mari MANOOGIAN will be able to stay competitive with David WOLKINSON on the fundraising front. This affluent suburban district voted Hillary CLINTON in 2016 and won't be featuring a House incumbent this time.</p>		
41 <sup>st</sup>	Oakland	<p><b>OPEN</b>  <i>Currently held by term-limited state Rep. Martin Howrylak (R-Troy)</i></p> <p>GOP Base = 54.24%</p> <p>Republican Candidate: <b>Doug Tietz</b> (Troy), Oakland County Commissioner, District Director for U.S. Rep. Dave Trott (R-Birmingham)</p> <p>Democratic Candidate: <b>Padma Kuppa</b> (Troy), business analyst in auto finance</p> <p><b>Gongwer Analysis</b> (Tuesday, October 23): Ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> most likely district to flip (Unchanged). Another unchanged Oakland County seat from previous rankings. Padma Kuppa of Troy is working the district and has strong support from the Indian community, and others. Oakland County Commissioner Doug Tietz is said to be working hard, too. Both sides say this will go down the wire and will show how much the environment is working or not working for the Democrats. Mr. Trump is unpopular in this seat, and Ms. Kuppa's campaign has won raves. This is one the Democrats have to have.</p> <p><b>Gongwer Analysis</b> (Tuesday, October 16): See below</p> <p><b>Gongwer Analysis</b> (Friday, September 21): Ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> most likely district to flip (Previously 4<sup>th</sup>). Democrat Padma Kuppa of Troy is a strong candidate in this district, raising a ton of money and working hard. There</p>	N/A	Oakland County (part) Clawson city Troy city

has also been an increase of Indian-Americans in this area, which helps Ms. Kuppa. Republicans also like their candidate, Doug Tietz of Troy, who is an Oakland County commissioner with some name ID in the district, and Republicans say he is working hard. But the environment for Republicans is simply awful in this part of Oakland.

**Gongwer Analysis** (Friday, August 10): *Ranked #4 most likely district to flip.* Democrat Padma Kuppa of Troy raised nearly \$90,000 so far in this seat with no primary. Republicans, though, believe that with the primary over, Oakland County Commissioner Doug Tietz will have no issue raising money. Republicans will be running with some headwinds in Oakland County given the environment but feel confident in the seat currently held by Rep. Martin Howrylak (R-Troy).

**MIRS Analysis** (Friday, November 2): *Ranked #4 most likely to flip (Previously #3).* Republican dropped \$92,350 into Doug TIETZ's campaign this week, a sign that talk of this Oakland County Commissioners demise may have been premature. Either that or it was a way to draw the Democrats into spending \$50,300 into Padma KUPPA. It's something, but it's a fraction of what we're seeing in some of these other races.

**MIRS Analysis** (Friday, October 19): *Ranked #3 most likely to flip (Previously #4).* Democrats here found themselves a phenomenal candidate in Padma KUPPA. The year 2018 looks like the right time. Troy and Oakland County look like the right place for her. Only \$21,000 in television money spent here, according to the Michigan Campaign Finance Network (MCFN), isn't a promising sign for Republicans here.

**MIRS Analysis** (Friday, September 28): *Ranked #4 most likely to flip (Unchanged).* Reports from the field have Democrat Padma KUPPA targeting South Asian Republicans in this growingly diverse, Troy-based district, which Hillary CLINTON won two years ago. Doug TIETZ is working the Indian community and recognizing the multicultural feel of this district, as well, but Kuppa's nearly 4-to-1 cash-on-hand number

		<p>and her stronger ground game gives her the advantage.</p> <p><b>MIRS Analysis</b> (Thursday, August 23): <i>Ranked #4 most likely to flip.</i> Democrat Padma KUPPA's \$69,000 cash on hand number stood out in this district based in Troy, which is now made up of 20 percent Asian-Americans. We'll see if Doug TIETZ's connection to outgoing U.S. Rep. David TROTT is a net positive or net negative.</p>		
43 <sup>rd</sup>	Oakland	<p><b>OPEN</b>  <i>Currently held by two-term state Rep. Jim Tedder (R-Clarkston), who ran for Michigan Senate</i></p> <p>GOP Base = 62.31%</p> <p>Republican Candidate: <b>Andrea Schroeder</b>  (Independence Township), trustee on Independence Township Board, director of ACE Academy</p> <p>Democratic Candidate: <b>Nicole Breadon</b> (Independence Township), community organizer for Unitarian Universalist Social Justice Network, retired sous chef</p> <p><b>Gongwer Analysis</b> (Friday, November 2): <i>Ranked #13 most likely district to flip (Unchanged).</i> Republicans have spent more money on Andrea Schroeder in this Clarkston-area seat while Democrats are not investing in Nicole Breadon, though she is working. This seat appears an area where environment could take over and bring Dems over the top. If they win here, majority is likely part of the conversation. This is a district where the massive sums of money pouring into the Elissa Slotkin congressional campaign, which overlaps Independence Township, and the Stevens campaign, which overlaps Waterford, could cause a surprise. But it would be a big surprise.</p> <p><b>Gongwer Analysis</b> (Tuesday, October 23): <i>Ranked #13 most likely district to flip (New to the List).</i> Republicans have started spending on Andrea Schroeder in this Clarkston-area seat while Democrats are not getting as involved with Nicole Breadon. The Oakland County-effect appears to be moving over to this district unexpectedly, though Republicans say their spending</p>	N/A	Oakland County (part) Independence township Lake Angelus city Village of Clarkston city Waterford township (part)

		<p>here is simply for insurance purposes. Democrats think it might be winnable but are not investing. They are happy with the work Ms. Breadon is putting in. Some Republican sources think Democrats might be missing an opportunity here. Ms. Schroeder's lead is said to be small and some local Republican sources say she needs to mend fences from a tough primary to consolidate the GOP vote. Ms. Breadon is said to have a strong yard sign presence.</p> <p><b>MIRS Analysis</b> (Friday, November 2): "Dropped Out" (Previously #13). The Save Andrea SCHROEDER plan is nearly complete with the Democrats doing little to fight back. Yes, this is Oakland County, but the \$13,000 Democratic Nicole BREADON managed doesn't give her much to fight back with.</p> <p><b>MIRS Analysis</b> (Friday, October 19): Ranked #13 most likely to flip (Previously Unranked). If there's nothing to see here, why are Republicans spending \$44,000 on television for Andrea SCHROEDER? Nicole BREADON gives Democrats another option in Oakland County.</p>		
44 <sup>th</sup>	Oakland	<p><b>OPEN</b>  <i>Currently held by two-term Jim Runestad (R-White Lake), the Republican nominee in the 15<sup>th</sup> Senate District</i></p> <p>GOP Base = 65.93%</p> <p><u>Republican Candidate: Matt Maddock</u> (Milford), private investigator and bail bondsman, campaigned for Trump in 2016</p> <p><u>Democratic Candidate: Laura Dodd</u> (Milford), Democratic campaign operative, nonprofit consultant</p>	N/A	Oakland County (part) Highland township Milford township Springfield township Waterford township (part) White Lake township
45 <sup>th</sup>	Oakland	<p><b>Michael Webber (R-Rochester Hills)</b>  <i>Member, Insurance Committee</i></p> <p>GOP Base – 59.67%</p> <p><u>Democratic Candidate: Kyle Cooper</u> (Rochester Hills), 2016 graduate of Oakland University, co-founder of Students for Bernie Sanders</p>	Second	Oakland County (part) Oakland township (part) Rochester city Rochester Hills city

		<p><b>Gongwer Analysis</b> (Friday, November 2): “<i>On the Radar</i>” (Unchanged). Still no race developing here between Rep. Michael Webber (R-Rochester Hills) and Democrat Kyle Cooper of Rochester. But again, if the 43rd House District is seeing action, and with the congressional races happening here, maybe there is a surprise. Mr. Webber is said to be polling well and working. Maybe the 45th is where ticket splitters show up next week.</p> <p><b>Gongwer Analysis</b> (Tuesday, October 23): “<i>On the Radar</i>” (Unchanged). Neither Republicans nor Democrats see much of a race developing in Rochester Hills with Rep. Michael Webber (R-Rochester Hills) and Democrat Kyle Cooper of Rochester. Still, if the environment is becoming a factor in the 43rd District – and it is – and with the congressional race overflowing here, something could happen. Mr. Webber is said to have a commanding lead, however.</p> <p><b>Gongwer Analysis</b> (Friday, September 21): “<i>On the Radar</i>” (Previously unranked). Republicans don't think Rep. Michael Webber (R-Rochester Hills) is in any danger. Democrats aren't impressed with their candidate, Kyle Cooper of Rochester. But it is still in Oakland County and has some of the same dynamics as the others. If Dems win here, they are having a great night November 6. With all the Democratic effort going into the Elissa Slotkin, Haley Stevens and Mallory McMorrow campaigns in the Rochesters, maybe Mr. Cooper doesn't have to do much to come along for the ride. The Rochesters are swinging rapidly Democratic.</p>		
46 <sup>th</sup>	Oakland	<p><b>John Reilly (R-Oakland)</b></p> <p>GOP Base = 67.96%</p> <p><u>Democratic Candidate: Mindy Denninger</u> (Oxford), retired auto industry engineer</p>	First	<p>Oakland County (part)</p> <p>Addison township</p> <p>Brandon township</p> <p>Oakland township (part)</p> <p>Orion township</p> <p>Oxford township</p>
51 <sup>st</sup>	Oakland	<p><b>OPEN</b></p> <p><i>Currently held by term-limited state Rep. Joseph Graves (R-Linden)</i></p> <p>GOP Base = 60.72%</p>	N/A	<p>Oakland County (part)</p> <p>Fenton city</p> <p>Groveland township</p> <p>Holly township</p> <p>Rose township</p>

Republican Candidate: Mike Mueller (Linden), US Navy Veteran, Livingston County Sheriff's Deputy, family farmer

Democratic Candidate: David Lossing (Linden), former mayor of Linden, former president of Michigan Municipal League, former director of government relations for University of Michigan-Flint

**Gongwer Analysis** (Friday, November 2): "*On the Radar*" (*Unchanged*). Republicans have started to put some money into Mike Mueller of Linden here. Though it is unclear if Democratic long-time Linden Mayor David Lossing can make moves in this long-time GOP stronghold. The Oakland portion of this district overlaps the Elissa Slotkin-U.S. Rep. Mike Bishop congressional race, so there's huge sums of money pouring into turnout out voters to vote Democratic. And Mr. Lossing is from the most Republican portion of the Genesee piece of the district. Still, this district went heavily for Mr. Trump, so the environment seems to favor the GOP here. But it wouldn't be spending money on Mr. Mueller if it thought the race was in the bag.

**Gongwer Analysis** (Tuesday, October 23): "*On the Radar*" (*Unchanged*). Not much has changed in this race between Democratic long-time Linden Mayor David Lossing and Republican Mike Mueller of Linden. Democrats are happy with Mr. Lossing but it is a challenging district. Republicans are confident.

**Gongwer Analysis** (Friday, September 21): "*On the Radar*" (*Unchanged*). The numbers here are challenging for Democrats, but their candidate is solid in long-time Linden Mayor David Lossing, who is working hard. Former U.S. Sen. Carl Levin is fundraising for him this weekend. Still, Republicans have Mike Mueller of Linden, a Livingston County sheriff's deputy, who is said to be doing what he has to in this mostly-Republican seat.

**Gongwer Analysis** (Friday, August 10): *Ranked #14 most likely district to flip* Democrats have long-time

		<p>Linden Mayor David Lossing in the 51st House District currently held by term-limited Rep. Joseph Graves (R-Linden). Democrats aren't taking it off the list, but Mr. Lossing will have to work hard. Republicans think Mike Mueller of Linden, a Livingston County sheriff's deputy, is just as good of a candidate on their side and aren't worried.</p> <p><b>MIRS Analysis</b> (Friday, November 2): Ranked #13 most likely to flip (Previously Unranked). Something is going on in the district where the Michigan Education Association got voters to recall Republican Paul SCOTT. The whisper campaign on Republican Mike MUELLER we heard in the primary is back and the Republicans are responding with dollars and walkers. Former Linden Mayor David LOSSING is a strong candidate with a loyal volunteer base, but the GOP still has a 60 percent base here.</p>		
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Gongwer, October 16 Update:

## [House Dems Look To Capitalize On An Evolving Oakland County](#)

Tucked into a modest neighborhood in northern Novi, not far from Walled Lake, an old camper parked in the backyard of [Kelly Breen](#), the Democratic candidate in the 38th House District, serves as a campaign office where she meets with volunteers and works on her race while still being close to home to tend to her dog and children.

The small camper is filled with campaign mailers, a "Whitmer is Coming" pin sits on the table where on a sunny day in October she was doing her first media interview with Gongwer News Service. Her campaign manager sat on one of the beds on either side setting up turf to knock doors at later in the day.

"This is all still weird to me," Ms. Breen, who is serving her first year on the Novi City Council, said as she discussed her efforts to win the 38th District currently held by Republican [Rep. Kathy Crawford](#) (R-Novi).

Of the Oakland County races on the map for Democrats as suburban voters continue to shift Democratic as more young, diverse and educated families move into the suburbs, the 38th District is in the one Republicans feel best about. That's a relative term though at a time when Oakland is shifting hard toward Democrats. Observers say it is a coin flip.

Ms. Crawford is running for her third term (so the seat isn't open like the 40th and 41st Districts), she has served the area in some capacity for decades and her husband, former Rep. Hugh Crawford, held this House seat before her.

Ms. Breen said it is not daunting to run against a Republican incumbent with so much history in the district. She said the Crawfords are nice people and everyone is grateful for what they have done.

"It is not so much as trying to convince people to maybe not vote for Kathy and pick me," she said. "I think it is just a matter of doing what I have been doing. Listen to people and advocate for them."

Oakland County is changing. And Democrats are counting on that change to help them gain seats in the House after eight years in the minority. The 38th, 40th and 41st House Districts have been traditionally held by Republicans, but anger over President Donald Trump appears to have sped up the evolution of these districts toward the Democrats.

Democrat [Mari Manoogian](#) of Birmingham is a first-time candidate in the 40th House District, going up against Republican [David Wolkinson](#) of West Bloomfield. In the 41st House District, Democrat [Padma Kuppa](#) of Troy is going up against Republican [Doug Tietz](#) of Troy.

Gongwer walked doors in district with Ms. Breen, Ms. Manoogian, Ms. Kuppa and Mr. Wolkinson. Mr. Tietz and Ms. Crawford participated in phone interviews.

Ms. Crawford, who is facing a tougher than expected re-election campaign after a tougher than expected primary from a far-right challenger, said during a phone interview there "seems to be this undercurrent of anger out there," regarding politics. She isn't sure if voters will vote against her just because they don't like President Donald Trump, who is also a Republican.

"I like to think voters will do a little bit of research on their own," she said. Ms. Crawford said she is a middle of the road person and tries to vote her district. She said she never votes in a vacuum and goes back to voters and officials in the 38th before making a decision in Lansing.

Democrats are confident in Oakland County and see good opportunities. Republicans, though, still profess confidence about their chances. Their numbers have improved since the summer and their candidates are working.

Republicans are hoping voters in affluent Oakland County will stick with the GOP at the state level given the strong economy. Attacks from the party on Democratic candidates appear to center around "Medicare for all," which Democrats say don't resonate.

Democratic candidates here are focusing on affordable health care with coverage for pre-existing conditions, water quality, education and roads.

In the 39th House District Republicans appear to have gotten a pass after Democrat Jennifer Suidan of Commerce Township was charged with embezzling more than \$100,000 from Oakland County Treasurer Andy Meisner's campaign. That said, the

Democratic tide in the county is so strong, Ms. Suidan is said to still be polling ahead of Republican [Ryan Berman](#) of West Bloomfield and the GOP still has to get the word out about her felony charge.

## **A 'SISTERHOOD'**

This campaign cycle in Michigan and across the country, all eyes are on female candidates who are winning everywhere. In Oakland County, Democrats are running women in almost every district, and in these core districts in the House and Senate, these women are coordinating their efforts.

"It's a sisterhood," Ms. Kuppa said. Ms. Kuppa and Ms. Breen were at least partly encouraged to run by [Rep. Christine Greig](#) (D-Farmington Hills). Ms. Breen passes out literature that includes Julia Pulver who is running in the 15th Senate District and Gwen Markham who is seeking a county commissioner seat. On Twitter, you can see all of them including each other in tweets and helping when they can.

"When voters look at their ballots whether they are in the ([Rosemary Bayer](#)) Senate district, or the ([Mallory McMorrow](#)) Senate district or the Pulver Senate district, they've got these women who are bringing this really diverse set of skills," Ms. Manoogian said. "And the fact that we all kind of lean into each other to talk about all these things that are happening and what we are hearing on doors and what we think is the issue of the week or the issue of the moment, it is something I am really grateful for."

When Ms. Kuppa announced her run for the House, she did so wearing a shirt that said, "the future is female."

"It is not that men don't have a place in it, it is just that we have been relegated to the sidelines," she said. "There need to be more of us so not only are our voices heard but the next generation see women in authority. Not just girls, but guys too."

Ms. Breen said the coordination isn't just across Oakland County, but up and down the ballot.

"When you have a unified voice, everybody saying these are the things, these are the issues, these are things we can work on together, I think that is what people are more eager to hear," she said. "We are ready to work. We are ready to make these things happen. We are not going to sit here and talk about the 'other guys,' ... because that is just waste of time."

## **MANOOGIAN VS. WOLKINSON**

In a predominantly Jewish neighborhood in West Bloomfield where nearly every home had a mezuzah outside its door, Mr. Wolkenson heard from one receptive voter who appeared to like Mr. Wolkenson but not the president.

"It is unbelievable how he speaks about U.S. citizens from Puerto Rico," this voter, who had recently returned from a cruise that visited the territory, told Mr. Wolkinson.

Another female voter saw Mr. Wolkinson at her door and seemed to know he was. She shook her head, not opening the glass door, and said "I'm never voting Republican again."

Another voter yelled from her upstairs window as Mr. Wolkinson walked away after talking to a different resident of the home that she is definitely voting for him.

Mr. Wolkinson said Mr. Trump is often the subject of conversation, but he normally gets "the door shut in my face before I try to answer questions on the president." Mr. Trump is pretty unpopular in the district, Mr. Wolkinson said. Indeed, Mr. Trump ran far below the Republican base in 2016 in the 40th.

"There is a strong anti-Trump sentiment," Mr. Wolkinson said. "But with that said this is the best economy of my lifetime, I am 38. This is a very intelligent district. I hope this district won't throw out the baby with the bathwater. The answer to some of the radical and angry rhetoric is not more angry, baseless rhetoric, but the election of a centrist problem-solver, and that is who I am."

Mr. Wolkinson has run for the seat before – he lost in the 2012 Republican primary – and said he has changed a lot in the following years on how he operates. But he said his desire to serve others has not dwindled.

He criticized Ms. Manoogian saying she was funded by the Democratic Party and union special interests.

"I am focusing entirely on representing the best interest of the district, not the Republican caucus, not the Republican Party, not the Chamber of Commerce," he said. "Unlike my opponent these business groups have not given me tens of thousands of dollars. We both say we want to get ... more resources into the classroom, well which one of us is going to have to ask the teachers union permission to do it?"

Ms. Manoogian grew up in Birmingham and graduated from Seaholm High School. She went to Washington, D.C., for college and worked within the federal government before returning to Michigan, where she is now running for office.

While she has seen a change in the district demographically, she also sees Republican voters who feel abandoned by their party currently. She said Republican women particularly do not see a party that represents their values.

Still, she said getting voters to choose her has less to do with political party and more to do with building trust.

"A lot of what this has to do with is the hustle to meet the voters and convince them to vote for you," she said.

And Ms. Manoogian said she has hustled. Her team has hit 27,000 doors. She had a competitive primary as well and said she has lost 35 pounds over the course of this campaign. She has gone through several pairs of tennis shoes and experienced every kind of weather.

Ms. Manoogian agrees with the Republicans that voters in the 40th do vote their pocket books, and many are unhappy that their vacation homes might be on water that is unsafe to swim in.

"It is about quality of life," she said. "It is about making sure when you do move to Michigan for that great job you just got, that your kids can go to a really good public school no matter what your zip code is, that you don't have to be worried about what kind of water you drinking out of your tap, making sure health care is affordable for everyone who has a pre-existing condition or not, and making sure we don't discriminate against people. I think having that message, that is what people here really believe in."

In downtown Birmingham on a Wednesday afternoon, not too many people were home. One architect working on a home in the neighborhood stopped Ms. Manoogian to ask her if she was "the Mari Manoogian." The man's wife was involved in Democratic politics in the area.

Another voter told her if she were elected she would change the world ("that's just what I needed to hear today, Ms. Manoogian said.)

Overall, Ms. Manoogian said the reception she has gotten on the doors has been positive.

"Folks are tired of politics as usual," she said.

## **KUPPA VS. TIETZ**

Democrats have been urging Ms. Kuppa to run for years, but with children in high school and a reluctance to get involved in politics, she hesitated. This year, she decided to take the work she has done in the community, in the Hindu temple, on the planning commission on Troy and with fellow Asian-Americans (Ms. Kuppa was born in India).

"I said let me take my bridge building skills and go into the political arena and bring people back together," Ms. Kuppa said. "Being a mom, I wanted to wake up every morning and think I have done everything I can to create a better place for my children and all children in the world, and children in the state and children in my district."

Ms. Kuppa has been successful fundraising within the Hindu community, and she said they appreciate she has the language and skill-set to be a representative for them and the broader community. But she said she has been uncomfortable soliciting contributions.

"I am not asking for it for me. It is for our shared values," she said. "Making sure the Michigan we all moved to, whether you moved here 50 years ago, were born here, or whatever, that we all have a certain quality of life that we want as Michiganders."

Ms. Kuppa has lived in Troy for 20 years and has been a community activist, though not particularly engaged in the political world. Now, she said, the public is seeing that "a particular party is not serving their needs."

"It's more than saying it is Republican or Democrat, I think right now Democrats reflect more about my shared values," she said of what is happening to voters in the 41st District.

On the doors in Clawson, Ms. Kuppa said Oakland County Treasurer Andy Meisner had knocked doors with her in the district recently and gave her some pointers. She always knocks doors with a side-kick, she said.

At one door, a middle-aged woman answered the door saying her absentee ballot was upstairs and she already voted for Ms. Kuppa. She said the August primary was the first time she had ever voted.

"We need to change things," she said, becoming emotional. "We have to."

Mr. Tietz, an Oakland County commissioner and former Troy City Council member, said he has worked with Democrats and Republicans to get results for people in the district.

"I have gotten results on the issues people care about," he said. "Issues like roads, I have worked with Republicans and Democrats on the commission to get road funding."

As a state representative, he would work to get auto insurance rates down and ensure people have access to good health care. Three weeks out, he said he is feeling good, and is out there knocking doors and doing the things necessary to win.

As for a changing Oakland County, Mr. Tietz said he has lived there a long time and the voters he talks to daily are the same ones who have voted for him repeatedly.

"I don't dwell on partisanship. We want to get things done. Yes, I am a Republican, but I work with everybody," he said. "The second part is the Democrats pushing a story that this is different. These are the same voters. This is a not a new set of people

who have landed here. My neighbors are the same neighbors who have lived there. My friends in town have been there for years."

Troy's demographics have changed, however. In 2017, the city's white population was 70.1 percent, down from 82.3 percent in 2000, and the Asian population was 22.9 percent, up from 13.3 percent in 2000.

He also said the president does not come up very often, and he spends his time talking about state issues.

"I am not running for Congress," he said. "People have questions, they want to know how we are going to work on things like clean water, how we are going to work on things like access to health care or auto insurance to get premiums down and be competitive with other states. People will mention what happens on CNN, but they understand the difference between what happens in Washington and the state."

## **BREEN VS. CRAWFORD**

Going into this cycle, everyone anticipated the 40th and the 41st Districts would be hard-fought given the lack of an incumbent, that both have had close races in the past and Mr. Trump's struggles in each. The same was true of the 39th until Ms. Suidan's arrest. The surprise is the 38th in southwest Oakland, long a Republican bulwark where Ms. Crawford ran well above Mr. Trump in 2016 to easily win re-election and was still eligible to run again.

Similar to Troy, the growing diversity in Novi, the population base of the district, is a big factor. Novi's white population in 2017 was 67 percent, down from 87 percent in 2000, its Asian population was 21.4 percent, up from 8.7 percent, and its African-American population was a not insignificant 7.9 percent, up from 2 percent. The other key population component of the district, Lyon Township, while 93 percent white, also has 45.5 percent of its residents 25 and older with at least a bachelor's degree, a high percentage that could help the Democrats in a generally Republican community.

In Novi, Ms. Breen knocked doors on a Wednesday morning in high-density condominiums with more being built right next door. Not many people were home, but two women walked by when she stopped them to ask if they lived in the area.

The women, with strong accents, said they were from Nigeria and couldn't vote. They lived in a mobile home park nearby, they said.

"It doesn't matter if you can't vote, you're still my constituents," Ms. Breen told them. "If you have any problems, I want you to call me."

Ms. Breen said she feels the momentum in the race is in her favor, but no matter what happens in November, "Novi is stuck with me."

"If I win, I go and fight for what is right in Lansing, or I stay on the city council," she said.

Ms. Breen said she is not campaigning on party, but instead on the core issues Democrats are emphasizing like water, education and infrastructure. She said in the area people are just starting to get more vocal.

"They realize they do have a voice and they can make changes," she said. "I am still fairly new to all of this. I threw my hat in the ring last year. Before last year, I thought things will get better, things will change. They didn't get better. Things did change, but for the worse."

Of the changes in Oakland County, Ms. Breen said she thinks women have been the primary catalyst.

"I respect the office of the president. The office, tremendously," she said. "I don't think (Mr. Trump) is doing women on the whole a lot of favors. I don't like the way he speaks about them. I don't like the way he has historically treated them. I think women as whole are very upset and have said enough."

Ms. Crawford said more than any other president, voters are asking her what her opinion is of Mr. Trump and whether or not she voted for him.

"When they ask me, that it is normally the first question out of their mouth," she said. "They are going to make an instant opinion on me based on what I think about Trump."

She said Mr. Trump wasn't her first choice. She said sometimes his style makes her grimace. But he is the president. And his policies are helping Michigan. She also said regardless of if she personally likes someone in the office of the president, she still wants leaders to be successful.

"I want Michigan to be successful and I want people in the district to be successful, all have jobs, to make sure we have communities are thriving," she said. "Whoever is in charge of things, I am such an optimist, so I want to believe they are surrounding themselves with really smart people who are moving the needle."

Ms. Crawford has had a difficult election year. In August, a primary challenge from the far-right, which at times got nasty, was closer than expected. Now, she is in another close race observers say could go either way. She said she knows whatever way it shakes out, she will be fine.

"It has certainly been more challenging," she said. "I still just keep doing things the way I have always done them plus more. As our population has grown it is more and more difficult to meet everyone in your district."

After her primary opponent said she had been in politics for 45 years, which is not true, she said she had been working to win those voters back. She said some people heard it so much they believed it as reality.

Ms. Crawford's main way of getting to meet voters face-to-face is at events around the district. She said she prefers events around the district to doors, like the Pumpkin Fest in South Lyon or coffees around the district.

"Because we are in a more urban area people don't necessarily come out," she said of doors. "It is not like it used to be 20 years ago. People are suspicious on their doors now."

Still, she said, "you have to do a little bit of everything," including dropping literature at doors.

For the next generation of politicians, Ms. Crawford said she worries about how the state will get good people to serve.

"More and more I have been thinking about how difficult it is going to be to get good people to run for office if they are going to deal with this," she said. "I have had to spend all my money trying to win the primary and then start all over again. Most people starting out don't have a bank roll

You are not going to get a good cross section of the state if it takes this much effort.

"Quite honestly it is more than challenging. You really have to thick skin," she said. "I am not whining, though. It is what it is."