

# The November 2022 Election in Michigan – Understanding What Happened and Projecting for the Future

Races for the Governor, the Attorney General, the Secretary of State and  
my Top Three State Senate Picks

By Samantha Shriber

# *The Governor's Race*

In May and June, President Joe **BIDEN**'s approval rating was as low as 36% and inflation across the U.S. was at a historic high of 9.1%.

Campaign items like advocating for energy independence, pushing for state tax reductions and honing in on withstanding frustrations leftover from pandemic mandates were aligned to be the GOP's bread and butter for success.

However, due to an unprecedented wave of petition signature fraud, the GOP was left with five political newcomers – most significantly lacked name ID and more than half were playing for former President Donald **TRUMP**'s endorsement.

The result of this primary was GOP challenger Tudor **DIXON**, and before she lost to Democratic incumbent Gov. Gretchen **WHITMER** (Whitmer winning 54.5% to Dixon's 43.9%), Dixon was faced with several tasks:

# The Tasks

- **How to unify a divided Republican Party?**

Sometimes pleasing Trump's MAGA crowd, which ultimately became the loudest GOP fraction after Trump's loss in 2020, meant spending more time at niche rallies than networking with corporate world donors and engaging with purple ticket-splitting voters.

- **How to navigate the aftershock of *Roe v. Wade* being overturned?**

Before *Roe v. Wade* was overturned, some observed abortion was debated as a question of personal morality. After the U.S. Supreme Court announced their decision in June to eliminate the federal safeguard around abortion access, the topic evolved into a rights issue – attracting new and infrequent voters to the polls.

Part of the \$52.99 million spent backing Whitmer in General Election ad purchases, specially the \$33.1 million spent by the Democratic Governors Association, was defining Dixon by her anti-abortion philosophy. How was Dixon, who racked up less than \$12 million in supporting ad purchases, supposed to reflect this?

## *The Tasks Continued...*

- **What was Dixon's issue space going to be?**

Whitmer had protecting abortion access, infrastructure and a resume of colossal public school budgets and the state's first-ever business incentive fund to zoom in on.

Dixon called for crime reduction and her largest issue, parental rights in education.

However, this platform was criticized after election night for digging too deep into "Red Meat" issues, as some political insiders have categorized them, that independent voters were not into – think regulations on transgender youths in sports, challenging library books to be removed for obscenity and stating Democratic leadership would invite Drag Queen performers into the K-12 classroom.

## *After 2022, Is It Time For A Republican Revitalization?*

In November 2016, Trump won Michigan's 16 electoral votes by having 10,704 Michiganders cast their ballot in the former president's favor. Although Trump and his electrified base categorized Michigan as a setting for corrupt election operations and inaccurate results when he lost to now-President Biden by 154,188 votes, his Super PAC – Make America Great Again Inc. – spent \$1 million to be shared between his endorsed candidates, Dixon and GOP attorney general nominee **Matt DePERNO**.

*The Secretary of State and Attorney General Races:*

Before Dixon received her Trump endorsement, DePerno and GOP secretary of state nominee Kristina **KARAMO** were the past president's hand-picked choices for Michigan – both obtained clout from the MAGA branch of the party by questioning the security and accuracy of the 2020 presidential results for Michigan.

## *DePerno & Karamo Vs. Nessel & Benson*

A Muskegon County prosecutor is still considering a lineup of possible criminal charges against DePerno and eight others over an alleged conspiracy to access election machines. Meanwhile, during the final weeks before Election Day, Karamo was a plaintiff in a lawsuit attempting to force Detroiters to vote on Election Day or submit absentee ballots in-person.

During the same week Karamo hosted a hearing about her failed lawsuit (the week of Halloween) the city of Detroit had already received approximately 83,000 absentee ballot.

- When it comes to General Election ad spending, more than \$8.19 million was spent backing Democratic incumbent Attorney General Dana **NESSEL** and more than \$2 million was dropped for DePerno.

DePerno lost by 378,491.

- When it came to General Election ad spending for the Secretary of State race, more than \$11.7 million was spent supporting Democratic incumbent Secretary of State Jocelyn **BENSON**, and \$216,711 was spent backing Karamo.

Benson won by 112,521.

## *Things to think about moving forward*

- DePerno is now running for Michigan GOP chair. Will the precinct delegates who stormed the convention in his favor carry him to success?
- Proposal 2 was passed. How will Secretary Benson perform when it comes to implementing nine days of early voting in 2024?
- Nessel was targeted this year for treating the Attorney General's office as a partisan arm. How should an objective Attorney General's office operate?
- Ultimately, there wasn't a return on investment when it came to following Trump's candidate recommendations. What needs to change?

## *State Senate Races*

- **Present-day Democratic Rep. Kevin HERTEL v. Republican Rep. Pamela HORNBERGER, the current House Education Chair.** Hertel won in the 12th state Senate district bordering Lake St. Clair by 313 votes when 99% of votes were counted for.

- **Five-term Macomb County Commissioner Veronica KLINEFELT v. present-day Republican Sen. Michael MacDONALD.** The new 11th state Senate district started in MacDonald's red-slanted backyard of Macomb Township (where Trump dominated with more than 60% of the vote in 2020) and slices through the county until reaching a sliver of Detroit – an often obvious Democratic stronghold.

Klinefelt won by 5,715 votes when 99% of votes were counted for.

- **Downriver Democratic Rep. Darrin CAMILLERI versus Flat Rock Republican Houston JAMES, a former legislative intern for late Alaskan U.S. Rep. Don YOUNG.** Camilleri won by 12,430 votes.

## *Clips Of My Hertel vs. Hornberger Coverage*

Some neighborhoods have been fairly submerged by a red wave left behind by former President Trump, while a handful of Democratic hubs still float."

- In the five-city Grosse Pointe Community and Harper Woods – all located majorly within Wayne County – Biden was preferred over Trump by less than 2,900 votes out of more than 33,300 voters.
- In Algonac, Trump more than doubled up Biden 1,680-736.

Hertel had a \$221,677 ad featuring Macomb County Executive Mark **HACKEL**, a Democrat who's maintained favorability across some of the county's most conservative hubs.

In the ad, which aired 279 times, Hertel focused on his ability to work "with anyone" to get the job done, being tagged as "independent leadership."

The race was the 11th most expensive balot item across Michigan, with more than \$4.26 million being spent on General Election ads backing Hertel and more than \$3 million being spent in support of Hornberger.

## *Clips of My Klinefelt vs. MacDonald Coverage*

- Roseville, one of the district's biggest municipalities, has been becoming more open and responsive to Republican candidates.

For example, Democratic President Barack **OBAMA** earned 62% of the city's votes in 2008, Whitmer got around 58% in 2018 and Biden won less than 54% in 2020.

- In Eastpointe, which was Klinefelt's home turf, gave Biden a clear victory in the city with more than 73% of the community's presidential votes in 2020.

Klinefelt had an ad commemorating her for calling out corruption within her own party, stating she places "taxpayers ahead of politics" and was "tough enough to take on the Lansing politicians" and eliminate retirement taxes.

"'The Ballenger Report' political blog, led by former Republican lawmaker Bill **BALLENGER**, calculated a Democratic preference of 54.7% for the district – although the Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission (MICRC) estimated a slightly more humble 53.9% when designing it."

"It's a landscape where the blue-colored presence of labor Democrats – once an ideological backbone of Macomb County – runs through the cracked roads."

## *Clips of My Camilleri vs. James Coverage*

In the new 4th state Senate district – where former social studies educator and Downriver Rep. Camilleri won 55.3% to 44.7% – the Michigan Senate Republican Campaign Committee and GOP opponent James spent at least \$523,685 on advertisements criticizing Camilleri for supporting "biological males to compete in girls' sports."

One of the aforementioned advertisements, which was titled "Fake Moderate" and aired 586 times, specifically claimed Camilleri radically backed allowing "children even as young as 10 to start gender change therapy without parental consent.

"Darrin Camilleri was subjected to a relentless broadcast television advertising campaign based on transgender issues and we now refer to him as Senator-elect Camilleri. That's all the evidence required on this topic,' said Chief Executive Officer John **SELLEK** of Lansing-based Harbor Strategic Public Affairs."

# *Democrats Won 20 Out Of 38 State Senate Seats*

In the last 63 years, there have been three Democratic majority leaders of the Michigan Senate. The most recent one was Westland Democratic Sen. William FAUST, who was the chamber's majority leader until Republicans took the Senate in 1984.

Next year, Michigan will have its first-ever female Senate Majority Leader, Winnie **BRINKS**, a Grand Rapids Democrat and present-day minority vice chair of the Senate Health Policy and Human Services Committee.

## From Michigan Senate Democrats:

### RECORD-BREAKING FUNDRAISING

- **\$26 million** raised by the Senate Democrats
- Over **10,000 contributors** from Michiganders across the state
- SDF received an unprecedented level of investment from all 16 caucus members
- Targeted candidates raised over **\$2.1 million** dollars from **15,642 contributors**

Cycle	Total Raised by Senate Democrats
<b>2022</b>	<b>\$26.2 million</b>
2018	\$7.3 million
2014	\$2.6 million
2010	\$4.3 million

## Pre-General Fundraising Numbers In Competitive Senate Districts

<b>Pre-General Competitive Districts (Chart By MIRS Inc.)</b>									
District	Candidate	Party	Raised This Period (5)	Raised Overall (19)	Non-Cash Gifts This Period (6)	Spent This Period (9)	Spent Overall (23)	Debt (12a.)	Cash On Hand (17)
4	Darrin Camilleri	Democrat	\$326,345.12	\$784,175.40	\$1,430,058.77	\$473,884.37	\$670,935.73	\$0.00	<b>\$113,239.67</b>
9	Padma Kuppa	Democrat	\$329,329.07	\$759,226.71	\$23,253.46	\$369,367.02	\$440,720.32	\$11.00	<b>\$318,556.46</b>
11	Mike MacDonald	Republican	\$169,987.55	\$735,425.89	\$396,972.25	\$133,418.70	\$709,027.65	\$12,400.00	<b>\$139,974.01</b>
35	Kristen McDonald Rivet	Democrat	\$342,370.61	\$664,905.10	\$139,757.69	\$390,314.02	\$474,886.73	\$0.00	<b>\$189,092.02</b>
28	Sam Singh	Democrat	\$207,413.21	\$650,009.15	\$47,542.15	\$400,908.69	\$547,224.85	\$0.00	<b>\$102,784.30</b>
30	Mark Huizenga	Republican	\$279,611.43	\$644,641.79	\$1,158,693.60	\$195,689.47	\$487,026.21	\$5,000.00	<b>\$157,615.58</b>
30	David LaGrand	Democrat	\$346,112.43	\$630,873.19	\$712,523.78	\$348,787.17	\$478,401.21	\$0.00	<b>\$152,540.13</b>
35	Annette Glenn	Republican	\$321,920.00	\$589,709.50	\$574,354.75	\$174,493.13	\$418,398.98	\$25,000.00	<b>\$171,310.52</b>
12	Kevin Hertel	Democrat	\$294,502.75	\$572,318.13	\$940,105.25	\$400,350.32	\$490,282.86	\$0.00	<b>\$82,035.27</b>
13	Rosemary Bayer	Democrat	\$136,566.02	\$536,916.10	\$166,059.09	\$300,283.88	\$437,465.02	\$0.00	<b>\$112,474.36</b>
11	Veronica Klinefelt	Democrat	\$296,708.13	\$512,982.82	\$801,513.30	\$398,585.27	\$428,668.25	\$24,600.00	<b>\$84,368.43</b>
32	Jon Bumstead	Republican	\$225,334.86	\$501,047.67	\$339,357.98	\$237,037.99	\$421,250.09	\$4,600.00	<b>\$87,520.77</b>
32	Terry Sabo	Democrat	\$133,499.40	\$486,506.57	\$22,590.66	\$273,953.08	\$350,171.15	\$0.00	<b>\$136,367.42</b>
14	Sue Shink	Democrat	\$231,664.43	\$457,431.93	\$103,689.83	\$260,917.03	\$405,875.68	\$20,000.00	<b>\$51,956.25</b>
9	Michael Webber	Republican	\$239,400	\$365,138	\$585,433	\$91,082	\$148,071	\$0.00	<b>\$217,067</b>
12	Pamela Hornberger	Republican	\$163,257.54	\$342,290.10	\$1,962,413.27	\$153,066.79	\$306,768.13	\$0.00	<b>\$35,521.97</b>
14	Tim Golding	Republican	\$134,913.58	\$218,397.69	\$38,966.41	\$141,250.97	\$156,447.34	\$5,000.00	<b>\$61,950.35</b>
4	James Houston	Republican	\$115,016.79	\$154,207.85	\$448,563.04	\$101,982.04	\$130,174.64	\$0.00	<b>\$24,033.21</b>
28	Daylen Howard	Republican	\$103,026.64	\$134,680.70	\$86,476.75	\$65,124.03	\$86,148.89	\$50.00	<b>\$48,531.81</b>
13	Jason Rhines	Republican	\$24,409.35	\$73,017.41	\$25,801.28	\$15,999.81	\$59,770.51	\$0.00	<b>\$13,246.90</b>