

U. S. Congress - Michigan

U.S. House, District 6

Description:

Primary Election: August 7, 2018

Duties: Representatives share the responsibility with Senators for enactment of the nation's laws as provided in the U.S. Constitution. Laws that require payment of taxes are initiated in the House of Representatives.

Qualifications: A Representative must be at least 25 years of age and a U.S. Citizen for at least 7 years. There are 435 Representatives based on Congressional districts reapportioned after each census. Michigan has 14 districts as of 2012.

Term: 2 years

Vote in one political party's primary only.

Candidates (choose 1):

Fred Upton

Party: Rep

DID NOT RESPOND BY DEADLINE

David Benac



Party: Dem
History Teacher

Biographical Info:

Website: www.benac2018.com

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/benacforcongress/>

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Occupation / Current Position: History teacher, elected union representative

Education: Michigan State University, BA Indiana University-Purdue University at Indianapolis, MA University of Missouri, PhD

Qualifications / Experience: Elected representative, AAUP (union) Association Council Delegate for Senator Sanders, Platform Committee of the Democratic National Committee Vice-Chair, Michigan Democratic Party (MDP) Environment Caucus Co-founder, Kalamazoo Earth Day Festival, Bronson Park District District 6 representative, MDP Justice Caucus Co-founder, Organize West Michigan Kalamazoo Complete Streets Initiative

Questions:

Q: 1. PRIORITIES: *What are your top three national legislative priorities and how would you address them?*

A: Health Care--I support the creation of a single-payer universal system of health care, along the lines of the Expanded and Improved Medicare for All Act, HR 676. Education--I support tuition-free public education from pre-K through college & the end of for-profit charters. I support teachers' unions, placing licensed social workers in all schools, & ending the school to prison pipeline. Environment--I support the Off Fossil Fuels For A Better Future Act, a piece of legislation that would achieve a fully renewable energy system by 2030 & provide workers in the fossil fuel industry with new jobs in renewable energy.

Q: 2. IMMIGRATION: *What are your concerns and plans regarding U.S. immigration policy?*

A: I will work to secure a path to citizenship for immigrants, defend diversity visas, and protect the integrity of families who are here and those who would like to immigrate. I will work to reshape our border policy to expand safe opportunities for legal immigration and focus our enforcement attention on

individuals who are proved threats to public safety. I will protect the DACA program and every immigrant here under its terms. I will work to push the US to remain in the UN Human Rights Council and to hold us to international law regarding asylum and refugee seekers.

Q: 3. HEALTH CARE: *What are your concerns and plans regarding U.S. health care policies and programs, including those affecting maternal and child health?*

A: I protect and expand every health care safety net, especially Medicare, Medicaid, the ACA, and the Veterans Health Administration. As we secure those programs, we can move to implement a single-payer universal system of health care. I will co-sponsor legislation to provide tuition-free childcare to all Americans I will co-sponsor legislation to create a single-payer, universal healthcare system that includes reproductive health I will protect Planned Parenthood from the partisan attacks that see to undermine it. I will work to ensure this crucial health provider receives the Federal funding it needs.

Q: 4. ECONOMY: *What federal policies do you support to help members of all strata of the American public improve their economic positions?*

A: I support: - equal pay for equal work & I will cosponsor the Equality Act. - paid family leave. - defined benefits pensions & the expansion of social security. - raising the Federal minimum wage to \$15 per hour indexed to inflation. - tuition-free public education, including vocational, apprenticeship, & worker retraining programs. - a single-payer, universal health care system. - a \$1 trillion investment in infrastructure to create 11 million jobs. - the growth of unions & the ability of workers to organize, elect their own leadership, & bargain collectively. - overturning the Taft-Hartley Act

Q: 5. ENVIRONMENT & ENERGY: *What policies do you support to meet U.S. energy needs while protecting our water, air and land for current and future generations? Explain how those actions or policies would affect the future of the Great Lakes.*

A: I support: - protecting the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, the Clean Water Act, & the Environmental Protection Agency. - restoration of the Clean Water Rule. - a program to test the drinking water in every public school in the US. - elimination of nuclear & all fossil fuel from renewable energy standards - the elimination of every subsidy & permit for offshore drilling, new oil & gas pipelines, & mining and drilling projects on public lands. - major Federal investments in renewable energy infrastructure - allocation of Federal agricultural subsidies to support a transition to diverse, sustainable agriculture

Q: 6. ELECTIONS: *What federal policies do you support regarding campaign funding and voting rights?*

A: I support: - the freedom of the press & a free and open internet. - establishing election day as a holiday, universal, automatic voter registration, & voting by mail in paper ballots. - any legislation to end partisan redistricting. - The Democracy for All amendment to correct "Citizens United," "Buckley v. Valeo," & "McCutcheon v. FEC." - The DISCLOSE Act, The Election Protection and Integrity Act, & the KOCH Act, all designed to increase transparency I will oppose any effort to restrict voting rights. My ultimate goal is the creation of publicly funded elections.

Rich Eichholz



Party: Dem

Scientist – Business Development

Biographical Info:

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Occupation / Current Position: Co-Founder, Qmulus LLC

Education: BA in government, Cornell University, 1969; PhD in Cell Biology, University of Illinois, 1983

Qualifications / Experience: I have 30+ years of experience using a fact-based approach and my business expertise to help more than 150 businesses start-up and grow – giving me deep insight into the critical factors enabling business growth. Throughout my 30 years of experience I have also negotiated over 100 win-win agreements between parties with very different viewpoints and goals – a critical legislative skill.

Questions:

Q: 1. *PRIORITIES: What are your top three national legislative priorities and how would you address them?*

A: Top legislative priorities: 1) Create an infrastructure jobs program to train and employ workers to build a 21st Century electric grid and implement the FCC's 2010 National Broadband Plan; 2) Establish Universal Healthcare, by adding a subsidized public option to the Healthcare Exchanges; and 3) help ensure all students get a quality education in part by a) providing federal matching funds for states expanding pre-k education to all public school

students and b) providing debt relief for graduates and students of 2- and 4-year public colleges.

Q: 2. *IMMIGRATION: What are your concerns and plans regarding U.S. immigration policy?*

A: While we need to ensure that we have secure borders, we should also recognize that each wave of immigrants has enriched our culture and brought new vitality to our economy. I will support our traditional welcoming immigration policy that does not discriminate on the basis of race or religion and welcomes families and individuals without bias against less skilled workers. We also need to end the uncertainty facing undocumented residents who were brought to the U.S. as children, by passing a version of the DREAM Act which would give them a potential pathway to citizenship.

Q: 3. *HEALTH CARE: What are your concerns and plans regarding U.S. health care policies and programs, including those affecting maternal and child health?*

A: Unlike the U.S. most developed countries have universal healthcare, giving them better health outcomes at half the cost. Typically, these countries have a combination of commercial and government insurance, although some rely heavily on government insurance. I will be focused on moving the U.S. toward universal healthcare as rapidly as possible. Putting a public option on the Healthcare Exchanges to compete with commercial insurers should be the first step, but I will work with anyone in Congress to finally achieve true universal healthcare by any practical means – whether by government or commercial insurance.

Q: 4. *ECONOMY: What federal policies do you support to help members of all strata of the American public improve their economic positions?*

A: Trickle-down economics does not work: We cannot sustainably grow the economy by simply reducing regulations and cutting taxes on wealthy individuals and major corporations. We can only sustainably grow our economy when workers have enough money to buy products and services. We need to raise the minimum wage to a living wage and reverse federal laws and policies which have weakened the labor movement. We also need to restore the previous tax rates for wealthy individuals and close corporate loopholes to ensure that the federal government can provide the infrastructure needed to support economic growth.

Q: 5. *ENVIRONMENT & ENERGY: What policies do you support to meet U.S. energy needs while protecting our water, air and land for current and future generations? Explain how those actions or policies would affect the future of the Great Lakes.*

A: There is no conflict between adequate energy resources for a vibrant economy and a sustainable environment. We can revitalize our economy by creating a national jobs program to train and employ workers for clean energy jobs. We should set industry standards (such as those proposed in the OFF act, HR3671) to drastically reduce our carbon footprint, and create a smart energy grid which incorporates distributed renewable energy sources, allowing for two-way electricity flow. I will also ensure continued funding of the Great Lakes

Restoration Initiative, and develop initiatives to reduce invasive species in our waterways.

Q: 6. *ELECTIONS: What federal policies do you support regarding campaign funding and voting rights?*

A: I believe we need to reverse the impact of the Citizens United Supreme Court decision, by constitutional amendment if necessary. I support local and state efforts to switch funding of elections from individual and corporate donations to public funding. State and local voter suppression continues to be a threat to our democracy; Congress needs to update the Voting Rights act to nullify the Supreme Court's egregious error in nullifying Section 5 of that act requiring prior authorization of voting laws in jurisdictions with a history of voter suppression, and act to make voting easier – not harder.

George Franklin



Party: Dem

Public Affairs Representative

Biographical Info:

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Occupation / Current Position: President of Franklin Public Affairs

Education: BA and JD from American University

Qualifications / Experience: I have been fighting for Southwest Michigan for over 30 years. I spent most of my career at Kellogg Company and have owned my own small business the last 12 years fighting for local jobs, cancer research, and many more important issues. I served on the Board of Trustees at Western

Michigan University and held advisory positions in the Carter and Clinton administrations.

Questions:

Q: 1. PRIORITIES: *What are your top three national legislative priorities and how would you address them?*

A: Protecting seniors, fighting for universal health care, & protecting the environment. We must protect Social Security and Medicare, these are not an entitlement, they are a contract that must be honored. I will fight for universal health care ensuring we protect women's access to a doctor. We must fix the ACA and provide a public option. Environmental protection is vital in Michigan. The EPA must be fully funded and staffed by people who believe in the mission and do not use it as an instrument to attack the environment like Scott Pruitt. We must protect the Great Lakes and invest in clean alternative energy.

Q: 2. IMMIGRATION: *What are your concerns and plans regarding U.S. immigration policy?*

A: I support comprehensive immigration reform that includes a pathway to citizenship. We must pass the DREAM Act to protect folks who have only known the United States as home. We need to protect our borders, but I will never support any money going to create a wall. We must stop the abhorrent policy and separating parents from their children when they seek asylum and act with some humanity. I also oppose the Muslim travel ban. There should never be a religious or ethnic test when traveling to the United States.

Q: 3. HEALTH CARE: *What are your concerns and plans regarding U.S. health care policies and programs, including those affecting maternal and child health?*

A: We must fully fund Planned Parenthood and fix the Affordable Care Act. We need to provide a public option in the ACA and expand Medicare and Medicaid until we reach universal coverage. Health care is a fundamental human right just like food, shelter, and clothing. We must protect those with pre-existing conditions from all of the attacks from the Trump administration.

Q: 4. ECONOMY: *What federal policies do you support to help members of all strata of the American public improve their economic positions?*

A: We must invest in local communities to give people a fair shot at economic advancement by ensuring our education system works for everyone no matter their zip code and make sure anyone that wants to, can go to college or pursue vocational training. I will fight for a fair tax system where the wealthy pay their fair share and increasing the minimum wage to \$15/hour for large companies and ratchet it up for small businesses. No one that works full time should live in poverty. Folks also must have a right to join a union. When workers can join together they help raise wages and workplace standards for all workers.

Q: 5. ENVIRONMENT & ENERGY: *What policies do you support to meet U.S. energy needs while protecting our water, air and land for current and future generations? Explain how those actions or policies would affect the future of the Great Lakes.*

A: Climate change is the single biggest threat to our world and it is long past time we work to stop it. We must continue to move towards clean alternative energy to help in this fight. We also must produce clean energy with greater

efficiency. I support rejoining the Paris Climate Accord. The Great Lakes hold 20% of the world's fresh water and they are at risk every single day. From the oil pipeline running through the Straits of Mackinaw to the hundreds of gallons of water Nestle is taking every minute, we can never do enough to protect our fresh water.

Q: 6. *ELECTIONS: What federal policies do you support regarding campaign funding and voting rights?*

A: The number one thing we can do to make sure our elections are fair is to eliminate gerrymandering. I support the Voter not Politicians ballot initiative. We must end Citizens United. The addition of unlimited corporate money into our system is devastating. That is why I have pledged not to accept any corporate PAC money. We must do so much more to open up our elections to everyone. We start by re-instituting the Voting Rights Act. We should expand to have same day registration and early voting across the country. We also must eliminate voter ID laws that disproportionately effect people of color and the elderly.

Matt Longjohn



Party: Dem

Physician/Public Health Leader

Biographical Info:

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Occupation / Current Position: Candidate for Congress in Michigan's 6th district

Education: Bachelor's of Science-Kalamazoo College M.D, MPH-Tulane University

Qualifications / Experience: My qualifications for representing Michigan's 6th Congressional District include a deep attachment to the area (6 generations of family in SW MI); experience in building more than 250 coalitions across the country that implemented 39,000 community changes; and being recognized as one of the top healthcare innovators in the nation who created jobs and better health while saving Medicare billions.

Questions:

Q: 1. PRIORITIES: *What are your top three national legislative priorities and how would you address them?*

A: Improving the health and quality of life for everyone in the country. As a healthcare innovator, I have created jobs, prevented illness, saved lives and saved money. Our environment, and our education, housing, transportation and food systems must also promote health. Fighting to make our government truly representative. We must get dark money out of politics and increase the influence of everyday people. Reforming the tax code to help families and small business. Washington's 'trickle down' policies haven't worked, and too many people are being left behind. Tax policy must prioritize working families and small busi

Q: 2. IMMIGRATION: *What are your concerns and plans regarding U.S. immigration policy?*

A: Immigrants have always been an important part of our society. We continue to need immigrants to help fuel and diversify our economy. We must protect our sovereignty and national security, but building a wall is a waste of money. No human is merely "an illegal," and the rights of all immigrants need to be respected. I support DACA and a path to citizenship for Dreamers. I will protect and expand student and agricultural worker visa programs. Splitting up refugee families by placing adults in military detention while putting their kids in foster care is dangerously close to recreating the internment camps of WWII.

Q: 3. HEALTH CARE: *What are your concerns and plans regarding U.S. health care policies and programs, including those affecting maternal and child health?*

A: I'm running for Congress to improve people's health and quality of life. Quality of life depends on affordable healthcare, a safe and healthy environment, and educational as well as economic opportunities. I believe in universal healthcare, keeping mental and reproductive health in all insurance plans, and expanding Medicare by offering it on the insurance exchanges as a public option. Medicare must also be able to negotiate lower drug prices. I believe it's a women's right to make her own reproductive health care decisions. I will always protect funding for children's health insurance and community health centers.

Q: 4. ECONOMY: *What federal policies do you support to help members of all strata of the American public improve their economic positions?*

A: Too many hard-working families are struggling to make ends meet. Washington's approach to stimulating the economy through 'Trickle Down' tax breaks for corporations and the wealthiest among us has resulted in a larger

income gap. We need more balanced economic policy prioritizing workers and small business. Liveable wages and well-paying jobs need to be protected—not just created. I support “equal pay for equal work” for women and other groups experiencing discrimination, and believe trade agreements must not incentivize employers to leave the country or help them profit by devaluing American labor.

Q: 5. *ENVIRONMENT & ENERGY: What policies do you support to meet U.S. energy needs while protecting our water, air and land for current and future generations? Explain how those actions or policies would affect the future of the Great Lakes.*

A: Clean air, water, and land is fundamental to our health and our economy. The Great Lakes and other natural resources in Michigan are treasures, fueling agriculture and tourism. Protecting them is a fundamental job of public leaders. We need to remove Line 5 responsibly and invest in creating green energy jobs at the same time, so we can ensure the protection of Lake Michigan while helping transition workers to sustainable well-paying jobs. We must continue to improve air-quality by maintaining emission standards. I also support agricultural innovation to diversify our food system, improve yields, and limit soil loss.

Q: 6. *ELECTIONS: What federal policies do you support regarding campaign funding and voting rights?*

A: We must reform campaign financing and other aspects of our political system to reduce the risk of corruption and protect voters’ rights. All political contributions must be transparent so we can hold policy-makers accountable to voters, not just their mysterious corporate donors. We must limit gerrymandering, and have public financing of elections to ensure small-dollar individual contributions aren’t overwhelmed by corporate lobbyists and large-dollar contributions. Voter suppression is wrong. We must protect the integrity of our voting system, but never limit anyone’s ability to exercise their right to vote.