**Michigan: Make Your Voices Heard and Votes Count**

If you are tired of hearing the word crisis in the news these days, there’s something you should know: that means you’re finally tired enough. Because when you have had it up to here with the barrage of bad actions, bad decisions, and moral bankruptcy from the people in charge, inaction and apathy just won’t cut it anymore.

But here’s the good news. The other meaning for crisis is to arrive at the moment of truth—and that is where we are in Michigan right now, today.

This fall, Michigan voters have a chance to restore power to the people in a meaningful way. Up for decision are two critical reforms to the way politics work in our state. Proposal 2, the Independent Redistricting Commission Initiative, would create a transparent process for drawing voting maps. Proposal 3, the Voting Policies in State Constitution Initiative, would safeguard elections and make voting more accessible for Michiganders from all walks of life.

Securing Proposals 2 and 3 on November ballots has been a hard-won victory for the everyday people of this state. Special interests and the wealthy few have used every tactic in the book to keep them from us, including costly battles all the way up to the Michigan Supreme Court. Why? Because too many of the people in charge like things the way they are, no matter the cost to Michigan residents—especially people of color and those struggling to get by.

Think about it: across Michigan our roads are failing. Our long-neglected education system is in desperate need of reform. And our drinking water has been compromised in communities from Flint to Rockford. These problems have been left to grow until some Michiganders pay with their lives and their children’s futures—usually people of color and the ones struggling to make ends meet. Meanwhile, the political elite stay comfortable, knowing they’re safe in a system rigged by special interests and the wealthy few.

The proposed ballot reforms stand to restore fairness and balance in our state’s political process. With its updated process for redistricting, Proposal 2 represents an important first step toward having elected officials who want to solve *our* problems—not their own. Currently, politicians draw lines to give themselves unfair advantages; this proposal would prohibit manipulation of district boundaries to benefit individuals or political parties. It would establish an independent commission of citizens to oversee the process—rather than special interests and party leaders–so *voters* can choose their politicians instead of the other way around.

Meanwhile, Proposal 3 would make overdue updates to Michigan’s voting system. This proposal offers a practical approach to safeguarding elections, putting voters first, and removing barriers to exercising the right to vote. These measures will improve the accuracy of voter registration records and reduce long lines on Election Day.

Among the specific updates are protections for military and overseas voters to ensure they get ballots in time to make their voices heard. State residents could register to vote by mail up until 15 days out from an election, vote absentee if they want to, and register in-person at any time with proof of residency, up to and including Election Day. Finally, the proposal includes a careful auditing process to ensure every vote is counted correctly.

Politicians who do the right thing for their constituents have nothing to fear from people casting their vote—whether they do it by mail, absentee, or in person. And at the end of the day, no citizen of our state, Black, white, or Brown, should lose the chance to vote because of the hours they work or where they live. And every voter should feel confident that the vote they cast will lead to accountable representation in Lansing and Washington, D.C.

Let’s face it: community leaders and residents see the real impact our elections have every day – when we turn on our tap and wonder if our water is safe, when we send our children to public schools that have been neglected, and when we have to open our wallets for yet another car repair because of our crumbling roads.

But now we have the opportunity to do something about it. Proposals 2 and 3 will Michigan ensure a fair voting process so our elected officials are more accountable to *all* of us, not just lobbyists and big donors. Join us in supporting these measures to put our state back on track and more power in the hands of the people: where it belongs.