



What's at stake for townships in next month's election?

Township leaders know all too well the importance of elections—particularly our clerks. While most township officials aren't on the ballot this November (except for certain appointees), that does not mean that the 2026 midterm is any less consequential for township officials and township government.

As you go into the voting booth next month, you will have many important choices to make. All of the statewide offices are up for election, including governor, attorney general and secretary of state. All 38 districts are up for election in the state Senate, where there is currently a very slim 20-18 majority for the Democrats. Likewise, the Michigan House of Representatives—where Republicans hold a 58-52 advantage—will hold elections for all 110 districts. Control of both chambers is up for grabs, and the outcome will likely be determined by a few thousand votes in a handful of key legislative districts.

At the federal level, Michigan is home to perhaps the most hotly contested race for the U.S. Senate in a matchup between Democrat Abdul El-Sayed and Republican Mike Rogers, which as of the time of this writing, was polling at a statistical tie. Given the other races in the U.S. Senate, Michigan could determine whether control of the U.S. Senate will be Republican or Democrat. Each seat is up in the U.S. House and Michigan has one of the most watched races in the 8th District between Republican incumbent Tom Barrett and Democrat William Lawrence. This race could also determine the balance of power in the U.S. House.

Having elected leaders at the state and federal level who understand and value local government helps to better ensure a stronger future and greater support for Michigan's townships. As you head to the polls this fall, from an MTA membership perspective, we encourage you to ask yourself whether the candidate:

1. Supports local, community-based decisions, particularly as it relates to land use decisions in your community
2. Supports local government through resources such as revenue sharing or other forms of support for critical township services
3. Rejects elimination of important revenue sources that support the work townships do to serve their residents (for example, does the candidate support elimination of property taxes—but not wish to replace the revenue to assist townships)

Lastly, there may be no more important issue to townships on the November ballot than Proposal 1, which, if approved, would call for a constitutional convention—allowing every component of our state's constitution to be debated and changed. The MTA Board voted to oppose Proposal 1 and the Association is part of a broad coalition of organizations seeking to protect Michigan's constitution and asking Michigan voters to defeat this measure. (*Learn more on page 24 and at protectmiconstitution.com.*) A constitutional convention could mean reduction or elimination of revenue sharing to townships, a tax structure that does not support townships, or even the elimination of townships. At our state's last constitutional convention in 1962, the issue of the very existence of townships was debated at length. ***We ask our members to vote no on Proposal 1.***

Elections are always impactful on our state, and our member townships. Before we cast our ballot, it is important to take a moment to understand the impact candidates and ballot issues will have on your township and your residents. As we get closer to Election Day, please take an opportunity to reach out to local candidates to let them know about issues important to your township. There is no better time than now to get to know them and begin to develop relationships with officials who could have a say in matters that affect you locally.

Before we cast our ballot, it is important to take a moment to understand the impact candidates and ballot issues will have on your township and your residents.