

Proposal to hold event for Governor Gretchen Whitmer



Governor Whitmer is committed to solving the problems Michiganders face every day. That means ensuring every Michigander has a great public education and a path to a good-paying job, every community has clean, safe drinking water, and everyone can drive to work or drop their kids at school safely, without blowing a tire or cracking a windshield.

Since taking her oath of office, she has put together the most diverse cabinet in the state's history and has signed executive directives to clean up the state's drinking water, end discrimination in state government based on sexual orientation and gender identity, secure equal pay for equal work, and expand opportunities for small and disadvantaged businesses.

Biography

Gretchen Whitmer is a lifelong Michigander. She was raised in Grand Rapids and East Lansing, and her parents taught her and her siblings the value of hard work. She started her first job at age 14 at Burlingame Lumber in Grand Rapids, and also worked at the Royal Fork Buffet and Target.

She graduated from public high school and obtained both a bachelor's degree and a law degree at Michigan State University. Gretchen currently lives in East Lansing with her husband Marc, daughters Sherry and Sydney, and stepsons Alex, Mason and Winston.

Political Career

Gretchen Whitmer's political career began in 2000, when she was elected to represent Michigan's 23rd legislative district, a post she held until 2006.

In March 2006, she won a special election to the Michigan State Senate. She was elected to a full term that November and reelected to the State Senate in 2010. In 2011, Gretchen's Democratic colleagues unanimously chose her to be the Senate Democratic Leader, making her the first woman to lead a party caucus in the Senate. Due to term limits, Whitmer was unable to run for reelection in 2014 and left office in 2015. In 2013, she received national recognition when she discussed her experience of being sexually assaulted. She told the story during a debate about abortion rights, arguing victims should be allowed to terminate pregnancies that result from rape.

In 2016, Governor Whitmer stepped up to serve as Ingham County Prosecutor, restoring faith in the office after the elected prosecutor was forced to resign following a scandal. She implemented stronger ethics standards, established a new Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Unit to go after

abusers, sped up the rehabilitation of non-violent first-time offenders, and asked the Michigan State Police to investigate the integrity of the county's evidence room. Following her service as prosecutor, Gretchen taught at the University of Michigan and Michigan State University.

On August 7, 2018, Gretchen Whitmer became the Democratic nominee for governor of Michigan. She won all 83 counties in the state in the Democratic primary. She said that if elected she would focus on improving Michigan's "fundamentals", such as schools, roads, and water systems. She defeated her opponent, Republican Bill Schuette, by nearly a 10-point margin. As both a gubernatorial candidate and as governor, one of Whitmer's key pledges was to "fix the damn roads", a reference to Michigan's struggling infrastructure.

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Governor Whitmer rose to national prominence in 2020 when she was selected to deliver the Democratic response to President Trump's 2020 State of the Union Address. She became even better known due to her handling of the Covid-19 pandemic. She issued a stay-at-home order in March 2020 and extended and tightened the order that April, a move that was broadly popular among Michiganders and was successful in controlling the spread of Covid-19. However, opposition to the orders was fierce, and between 3,000 and 4,000 protesters came to the state capitol to protest, many of them armed. Finally, on October 2, 2020, the Michigan Supreme Court ruled that Governor Whitmer lacked authority to issue or extend executive orders related to the pandemic.

On October 8, 2020, a federal indictment was unsealed that charged six men associated with the Wolverine Watchmen with plotting to kidnap Governor Whitmer and violently overthrow Michigan's government. Governor Whitmer cast blame on President Trump for refusing to condemn far-right groups and for his mismanagement of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Accomplishments and Focus Areas

Infrastructure: Roads in Michigan are so bad that they endanger drivers and get in the way of the state's economic prosperity. Furthermore, more than 70 communities have drinking water systems with higher lead levels than Flint and billions of gallons of sewage currently contaminate Michigan's water ways. To grow the economy and make Michigan a state that businesses move to and can grow in, Governor Whitmer is focused on investing in roads, bridges, water systems, broadband, and electrical grid. She believes that good roads are good for Michigan families and businesses and infrastructure investment is economic development.

Expanding Access to Healthcare: As Senate Democratic Leader, Governor Whitmer led negotiations to expand access to healthcare to more than 680,000 Michiganders through the state's Medicaid expansion. As Governor, she has fought to address the cost of health care and lower the cost of prescription drugs so that everyone in Michigan has access to an affordable health plan and can afford their treatment. Governor Whitmer has also focused on access to rural healthcare by enlisting technology, bringing people together, and harnessing the incredible talent of the state to find solutions to the challenges faced by rural hospitals and care providers. Her goal is to bring

people together to find solutions so that every Michigander, no matter where they live, gets the care they need.

Job Skills and Workforce Development: Senator Whitmer's jobs plan focuses on raising household incomes by expanding education and skills training, investing in infrastructure, aggressively pursuing economic development and supporting small business growth so that everyone has a path to a good job and a secure future. Governor Whitmer believes that it's not a real comeback until everyone feels it. Every Michigander deserves a path to a high-wage skill, economic opportunity and an income that supports their family.

Women's Rights: Governor Whitmer has continued to fiercely defend the rights of every Michigan woman, including for women's access to all forms of reproductive care, contraception, and maternity care, paid family leave, and equal pay. As Senate Democratic Leader she led the fight against Republican efforts to erect more barriers for women in their health care. On the floor of the state legislature, she shared her own story of surviving sexual assault to speak out for all the women they silenced by refusing to hold a single public hearing. As prosecutor she implemented a new domestic violence unit, and Governor Whitmer is committed to bringing together university officials, law enforcement, students, and legislators to end sexual assaults on college campuses.

Education: Governor Whitmer believes that every child in the state has the right to a phenomenal education and a path to a high wage job. Her priorities are early childhood education, including universal prekindergarten, and improving literacy rates in education and beyond. Governor Whitmer believes that when children enter school, they need safe classrooms with high quality teachers to meet them where they are and help them succeed. She has vowed to respect educators and treat them as professionals, instead of attacking them for Lansing's policy failures. Finally, she has pledged to expand offerings that give every child – regardless of their zip code – exposure to a full curriculum of classes and opportunities to find the right path for their future.

Why support this race and this candidate?

Governor Whitmer is one of only 9 women serving as governor in the United States. It is critical that we protect her as an incumbent because governors play a key role in protecting voting rights and women's reproductive rights, as well as keeping us safe during the pandemic. In the past week, 39 voter suppression bills have been filed. Critically, the Governor can veto. Furthermore, due to Governor Whitmer's responsible handling of the Covid-19 pandemic and the fact that she became a regular target of former President Trump, the rightwing has mobilized against her and even threatened her life. Betsy DeVos' machine has already targeted this race.

Per the campaign's recent polling, moderate GOP voters credit Gov. Whitmer as tough and doing what she needs to do to fight the pandemic.

Some key legislative accomplishments:

- Largest increase in per pupil public school funding
- Futures for Frontline: free college education for any frontline worker

There are strategic reasons to invest in this race because Michigan is an important battleground state. Donald Trump won the state by just 10,704 votes in 2016. In 2020, Biden ultimately was able

to carry Michigan by a 2.78 point margin. Keeping a democrat in the Governor's mansion will help ensure that Michigan is carried by the next democratic presidential candidate.

Governor Whitmer's fate in 2022 is tied largely to the challenger that decides to run. It is very important for Governor Whitmer to continue post big fundraising numbers in order to dissuade potential challengers. Austin Chenge, who operates a product and software design company, was the first Republican challenger to announce his candidacy in January 2021. However, other Michigan Republicans have floated former U.S. Senate candidate John James; former state House Speaker Lee Chatfield, R-Levering; Republican National Committee Chairwoman Ronna McDaniel; U.S. Rep. Jack Bergman, R-Watersmeet; and state Sen. Tom Barrett, R-Charlotte, as potential gubernatorial candidates.

Under Michigan's campaign contribution limits, individual donors can give the campaign of a candidate for governor up to \$6,800 per election cycle, another reason our early money would make a difference in this race.

Fundraising

Governor Whitmer's campaign has raised \$5.5 million ahead of the 2022 gubernatorial race and has \$3.5 million in cash on hand.

Governor Whitmer's campaign raised just over \$17 million for her successful 2018 race. There was a total of roughly \$93.4 million spent on both sides, including outside groups.

Endorsements

Below is a list of endorsements for Governor Whitmer's 2018 campaign:

- [American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees \(AFSCME\) Council 25](#)
- [American Federation of Teachers - Michigan](#)
- [Clean Water Action](#)
- [Clean Water Action Michigan](#)
- [Communications Workers of America](#)
- [Emily's List](#)
- [Feminist Majority Political Action Committee](#)
- [Fems for Dems](#)
- [Giffords](#)
- [Human Rights Campaign](#)
- [International Brotherhood of Teamsters](#)
- [Michigan AFL-CIO](#)
- [Michigan Association for Justice](#)
- [Michigan Building and Construction Trades Council](#)
- [Michigan Education Association](#)
- [Michigan Laborers' District Council](#)
- [Michigan League of Conservation Voters](#)
- [Michigan Nurses Association](#)

- [**Michigan Professional Fire Fighters Union**](#)
- [**Michigan Regional Council of Carpenters and Millwrights**](#)
- [**MI List**](#)
- [**MI Women Win**](#)
- [**National Education Association**](#)
- [**Planned Parenthood Advocates of Michigan**](#)
- [**Progressive Women's Alliance of West Michigan**](#)
- [**Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union**](#)
- [**Sierra Club Michigan Chapter**](#)
- [**Tobacco Free Kids Action Fund**](#)
- [**UFCW \(United Food and Commercial Workers\)**](#)
- [**United Auto Workers**](#)

Press

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/25/magazine/gretchen-whitmer-coronavirus-michigan.html>

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/02/opinion/gretchen-whitmer-coronavirus-george-floyd.html#click=https://t.co/hnXaQWqzKB>

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2020/05/01/whitmer-protest-gop-lawsuit/>

<https://www.mlive.com/politics/2021/02/whitmer-brings-in-55-million-ahead-of-2022-gubernatorial-race.html>

<https://www.9and10news.com/2020/07/07/ag-nessel-gov-whitmer-suing-betsy-devos-over-education-funding/>

<https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2020/may/13/gretchen-whitmer-michigan-governor-coronavirus>