

Michigan House District 15

Partial Term Expires 12/31/22

Voter Guide

Special Primary Election March 1, 2022



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Our local Voter Services Committee will be holding a virtual **Candidate Forum** for the three candidates whose names are on the Primary ballot. The Democratic candidates are Alabas Farhat and Jeffrey D. Pepper. The Republican candidate is Ginger L. Shearer.

Like previous virtual forums, the forum will be recorded for public viewing without edits. The recording of the forum will be available for viewing on our website www.lwvddh.org and Facebook by February 11, 2022.

About this Guide

Publication of this guide is solely in the interest of public service and in no way is to be construed as an endorsement of candidates by the League of Women Voters. The League takes no responsibility for any of the views or facts stated by the candidates. Candidates' responses are printed **as submitted**, including any misspellings and grammatical errors. Space limitations often prevent bullet points and other clarifying marks and spaces.

The League of Women Voters was founded in 1920 as a nonpartisan political organization to encourage informed and active participation in government, increase understanding of major policy issues, and influence public policy through education and advocacy. **The League never supports or opposes a political party or candidate.**

Membership in the League is open to everyone aged 16 years or older. Please visit www.lwvddh.org for more information, or contact us at lwvddh@gmail.com or (313) 278-6476.

Please visit the nonpartisan site www.VOTE411.org for more information. View what is on the ballot, find your legislative district and polling place, learn registration requirements, and discover other important information.

Visit the Michigan Voter Information Center

www.mi.gov/vote

Find out

If you are registered to vote
Whether your absentee ballot is in the mail
If your clerk has received your absentee ballot

Where to vote

And much more!

Partisan Section – Vote Only 1 Party Section

If you attempt to vote in more than one party's primary, your ballot will be invalidated.

All responses are as candidates submitted with character limits. Responses are not edited.

DEMOCRAT BALLOT

Candidate	EDUCATION: What is your position on the role of public funding of education in Michigan? What measures do you support/propose to improve educational outcomes and accessibility for all Michigan students?	ECONOMIC SECURITY: What policies do you support to increase jobs and help Michigan residents improve their economic positions, in general and given the pandemic?	ELECTIONS: What state policies do you support regarding Michigan elections, voting and campaign funding? Do you support mailing ballots to all eligible voters?
<p style="text-align: center;">Alabas Farhat</p> <p>Occupation: Government Affairs, Wayne County Executives Office Website: http://votefarhat.com Education: Bachelor of Science in Public Health, University of Michigan-Dearborn Masters in Public Policy, University of Michigan Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy Qualifications and Experience: Alabas Farhat is a public policy analyst who has experience in both state and local governments. Farhat has worked on budgets exceeding a 1.5-billion dollars and successfully negotiated a labor agreeem</p>	<p>In order to invest in our futures, we must reinvest in our students and teachers. Our schools are understaffed, our teachers overworked, and our students struggle to learn without the proper resources and often in outdated buildings. I will propose and support programs that increase per-pupil funding across the district, protect teachers in the workplace, and ensure all schools have adequate technology, resources. The quality of our children's education should not be dependent on their zip code.</p>	<p>Between the economy and the pandemic, it's getting harder and harder for everyday Michiganders to get by. Across the district, moving up the economic ladder can seem like an impossible dream. As your representative, I will create solutions that put people first. We need to stop putting bandaids on these systemic problems, and I will champion programs that invest in a green future, creating jobs that will reflect a new, sustainable world in emerging industries like electric and solar.</p>	<p>We must safeguard the right to vote from those who threaten this precious cornerstone of our democracy. Across the United States, nationalist, anti-democratic groups are trying to sabotage the electoral process and make it harder and harder for Americans to vote. We must ensure that our elections are fair & balanced. I will continue to do what I first started working in politics: protect your right to vote, and guarantee voting is safe and accessible for all residents.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Jeffrey Pepper</p> <p>Occupation: Attorney/Mediator, Pepper Mediation Center, Dearborn, MI Website: http://Pepforrep.com Education: BA, Communication Arts, Michigan State University, 1974; JD, Wayne State University Law School, 1977. Qualifications and Experience: Product of Dearborn Public Schools. Practicing lawyer/mediator for 45 years. Dearborn business owner, employer, job creator, tax payer. Husband, father grandfather. Community activist. Dog lover.</p>	<p>I oppose petition initiatives to create a voucher-style school scholarship system that provides tax credits for non-public schools. I oppose expansion of certain shared time programs to ensure that public schools retain scarce resources to educate public school students. I support using some budget surplus funds for hiring tutors to assist students struggling after a year of Covid. I support tuition free community college. I support universal pre-school. I support expansion of Pell grants for low income students. I support caps on student loan interest and revision of the bankruptcy code to permit appropriately prescribed discharge of student loan debt. I support curricula that promote critical thinking, ethical reasoning, global interconnectiveness, creative and innovative thinking, scientific literacy, mathematical literacy, digital literacy, communication literacy and technical literacy. All of that said, I am not an educator and I would solicit the advice of those who are.</p>	<p>Generally, I believe that embracing renewable energy and green technology offers job creation and opportunity and thus, will help Michigan residents improve their economic positions. K - 14 education will offer a platform for training/re-training residents for a new economy. We've just seen GM announce a \$7 billion investment in EV technology and production. We need to create an environment that is agile, where the future can arrive quickly and support our automakers, tier suppliers and renewable energy manufacturers. I support tax incentives, within reason, to do so. I support a \$15 per hour minimum wage. I support remote working. We shouldn't mandate private employers to go there; however, we should incentivize them to do so for public health, environmental and family reasons. Public agencies should be mandated to find remote work efficiencies.</p>	<p>I support mailing ballots to all eligible voters. I support expanded in-person early voting. I support early processing/tabulation of mailed-in/absentee ballots. I support establishing Election Day as a holiday. I support HR 5513-5519, which collectively legalize organizations and individuals to transport others to polls, allow for counting of ballots postmarked on election day but received within 72 hours after election day, and state reimbursement to municipalities for pre-paid postage for return of ballots, although federal legislation making mailed-in ballots postage free would be a better solution. I oppose dark money and dark pacs. I support campaign contribution limits and support legislative efforts to overrule Citizens United. I oppose just about every provision of the "Secure MI Vote" petition initiative, although I do like the free state ID provision. Finally, firearms of every sort ought to be banned within 100 yards of polling places</p>

Candidate	ENVIRONMENT/ENERGY: What actions or policies do you support to protect Michigan's water, air and land for current and future generations? What is your position on energy efficiency and renewable energy?	SOCIAL JUSTICE: How would you address the racial, economic, health, education, etc. inequities, including Michigan's 20% of children and 17% of seniors living in poverty?	GUNS: Do you believe that Michigan has a gun violence problem? If so, what measures would you support to alleviate this problem?
Alabas Farhat	Michigan is a beautiful state with five incredible great lakes and lush, natural wildlife. We owe it to our children and our children's children to protect our environment so it can be enjoyed for generations to come. In order to make sure we're moving towards a green future, we have to end our reliance on natural gas and transition to solar, electricity, and wind. I will keep on fighting for our right to have clean air to breathe and clean water to drink. And I will continue pushing for our state to be at the forefront in safeguarding our future by investing in green industries and putting greater restrictions on polluters..	Following the protests last year, it became clear just how ingrained inequality and inequity are in Michigan. Across the state, thousands of people try each day to navigate systems that were built to exclude them. The systemic issues that face our state -- racism, classism, ableism, etc -- are interwoven and interlocking. Once we realize this, we can start to make Michigan work for everyone -- across all income brackets, ethnicities races, and zip codes. I will continue to champion legislation that will address these issues at their root, and work on finally addressing these systemic problems.	After the tragedy of the Oxford shooting, It is clear that mental health screening must be a requisite to gun ownership. We need to finally put an end to the cycle of violence and make a path for peace and safety. I will push for sensible, smart, gun control legislation that would work to center the safety of our residents. In our schools, we must strengthen supportive services in school and ensure that tragedies like Oxford never happen again. We must regulate access to firearms and ensure that we implement background checks and mental health screenings for anyone trying to purchase weapons.
Jeffrey Pepper	The transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy needs to be jump started. We must draw down our investment in fossil fuel exploration. I believe in increased tax incentives for energy efficiencies, be it home heating and cooling, EVs, industrial retrofitting or whatever. I support the Governor's call for state tax credits for EV purchases. We need to ensure the chemical, physical and biological integrity of the the Great Lakes and Michigan's other water treasures, from watershed to water tap. Strengthen our commitments to the Great Lakes Compact and Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement. Michigan's water should be kept in Michigan. Protect against toxic pollution and reduce polluted storm water run-off and sewage overflows. Tax credits for back flow prevention devices. Upstream solutions against toxic harm are needed to prevent pollution at its source. Use of safer, biodegradable packaging and other materials is an imperative. Say no to invasive species.	We have improved in this area. The availability of Medicaid for the economically disadvantaged has provided needed relief. Many of the things I discussed in previous answers would continue to address some of these issues--universal pre-school, free community college, raising the minimum wage, supporting renewable energies; These are longer-term solutions that address systemic inequities. I reject "welfare queen" mythology. People need a safety net, and a compassionate society will provide it through support of school nutrition programs, Meals on Wheels and other senior engagement, housing assistance, mental health support, nutrition programs, utility subsidies and such. I would be a hard "no" on the Michigan Senate plan to address our unexpected --and not likely to be replicated-- state surplus by, in part, cutting corporate taxes by 35%. This is short-sighted, fiscally irresponsible performance art. We should make meaningful investment in our people and our future.	Certainly, and it is a school safety issue as well. We should ban assault weapons. We should ban high capacity magazines. I would ban open carry of automatic and semi-automatic rifles. We should require education/training courses and permits for the purchase of all pistols and certain long guns from private sellers and dealers. We should mandate that weapons in homes where minor children or developmentally disabled persons reside be secured in locked safe boxes. We should require that trigger locks be sold at point of sale. I might be persuaded that offering optional gun safety training in our public schools in concert with local police departments is a good idea. Michigan actually has some pretty decent gun safety laws on the books--as compared to say, Texas--and there should be ample funding to enforce these and any new laws. Firearms of any sort should be banned at the State Capitol and polling places.



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REPUBLICAN BALLOT

Candidate	EDUCATION: What is your position on the role of public funding of education in Michigan? What measures do you support/propose to improve educational outcomes and accessibility for all Michigan students?	ECONOMIC SECURITY: What policies do you support to increase jobs and help Michigan residents improve their economic positions, in general and given the pandemic?	ELECTIONS: What state policies do you support regarding Michigan elections, voting and campaign funding? Do you support mailing ballots to all eligible voters?
<p style="text-align: center;">Ginger L. Shearer</p> <p>Occupation: Single stay home mother Website: Education: Gibraltar Carlson High School Vocational Studies – Nurse Assistant Certification Program through the State of Michigan (not active). College courses and studies. Graduate of Flat Rock High School. Qualifications and Experience: An honest and hardworking single mother who will fight to lower property taxes, increase resources for Dearborn Schools, and increase funding for Police and Fire Departments, veterans and seniors.</p>	<p>Public funding of K-12 education should be the highest priority in our State's budget. All children, especially those with disabilities, must have an opportunity in the education system to achieve their goals. I will fight to expand programs for students with physical and mental challenges, reduce classroom sizes, and provide educators with the required resources, technology, security, and salaries needed to deliver world-class education in our schools. I will fight to help create the very best education system possible that each child deserves in our community.</p>	<p>Increase programs that target non-employed individuals by training that can link them with companies to provide jobs. Reduce government spending and lower taxes. Provide additional funding to Dearborn to promote and support small businesses and increase jobs and wages in our community. Fight for incentives to bring Electric Vehicle manufacturers, suppliers, and technology to Dearborn to secure our future, protect quality jobs, and increase jobs. Provide local and small businesses with Michigan tax credits to reduce the Pandemic's economic impact and offset the cost of creating safe workplaces for employees and the public.</p>	<p>We need to create policies that will increase voter awareness, turnout, and accessibility. Campaign funding must be modified to allow all candidates for public office an opportunity to serve and lead based on qualifications and commitment, and not simply an ability to raise campaign money. Additional audits and updates of eligible voter registration records must be completed to maintain a high level of confidence in the election results. More funding must be provided at the local level to continuously improve the election process, train election workers, update election equipment, and improve the election system.</p>
	<p>ENVIRONMENT/ENERGY: What actions or policies do you support to protect Michigan's water, air and land for current and future generations? What is your position on energy efficiency and renewable energy?</p>	<p>SOCIAL JUSTICE: How would you address the racial, economic, health, education, etc. inequities, including Michigan's 20% of children and 17% of seniors living in poverty?</p>	<p>GUNS: Do you believe that Michigan has a gun violence problem? If so, what measures would you support to alleviate this problem?</p>
	<p>Protecting the Great Lakes and all Michigan water systems must continue to be one of the top priorities in the State government. I will continue to fight for clean air in Dearborn. Specifically, I will focus on supporting improvements in South Dearborn to clean up the air, noise, and traffic-related pollution. The quality of life and the health of Dearborn residents must improve. Unlawful pollution needs to be eliminated with strict enforcement. We must embrace renewable and carbon-neutral energy. Economic incentives will help manufacturers, like Ford Motor Company, transition to alternative fuel sources for vehicles. Michigan's natural resources and State Parks must be protected for our families and the future. Infrastructure funding must be delivered to Dearborn to provide the necessary improvements to the City's aging sewer system. Increasing the capacity of the sewer system to prevent flooding in our neighborhoods must be immediately addressed at the State and local levels.</p>	<p>I will continue to support legislation that will protect Michigan residents living in poverty. I will fight to update laws, programs, and services for each resident without discrimination for race, gender, age, or faith. In Dearborn, we must continue to embrace change, progressive thinking, and policies that are inclusive to everyone. I am a candidate for Dearborn State Representative asking for your vote. I was once told a women's place is in the "house" and I say a women's place is in the State House representing Dearborn and our families.</p>	<p>Law enforcement, at the local level, needs State funding to remove illegal weapons from criminals and individuals that are not eligible to possess guns. Training, education, technology, and other resources need to be available to keep illegal weapons and guns out of our neighborhoods. Please vote for Ginger L. Shearer for Dearborn's State Representative! I will represent you and your family with honesty, integrity, and strong values.</p>