



Dear Michigan State Central Committee Member:

Even though the 2022 elections are barely in the rear-view mirror, we must already start focusing on the 2024 Presidential Election. I write this letter to ask for your support for the Michigan open seat on the Democratic National Committee. It was caused by the sudden and devastating death of a special young woman, Zahra Abbas. Zahra was one of my constituents and she was a friend who brought joy everywhere she went. But more than that, she was a fierce advocate for many critical issues that we all care about, particularly fighting for disability rights and cannabis legalization after medical marijuana showed to be the most effective medicine for her epilepsy. She was committed to strengthening her community and she is deeply missed.

I am seeking this position now to finish a mission started by Senator Carl Levin thirty years ago to change the Presidential Nomination Process so that it more accurately reflects the diversity of this country. No two states should have a monopoly on the first primary and caucus. Other states around the country can highlight critical issues impacting voters, and they should have an opportunity to present those issues to the candidates. I worked with the Senator on this issue for many years and helped lead the issue at the national level. Our work resulted in tweaks to the system in 2008, but it has remained a process that is seriously flawed. Michigan has never given up the fight for a fairer process and the time to get that done is now.

In 2020, the Iowa Caucus had serious technical issues that only underscored the urgency to take another serious look at these reforms. The states of Iowa and New Hampshire have wielded enormous political power because of their coveted early spots in the primary elections. Being first in the presidential election process brings a huge amount of attention to states and local candidates. Presidential candidates treat these early states like second homes and in the process, they bring hundreds of reporters with them. It has a major economic impact by bringing in tens of millions of dollars for hotels, restaurants, and political ad buys. The issues that matter in these states are the issues that Presidents and the country know well, and other states deserve to have that opportunity. But too often a lack of diversity in early states limits discussion on policies that will impact voter decisions in November.

The DNC is actively looking at major changes to the Nominating system, and I have helped lead the current efforts to have Michigan be one of the early states. Michigan made a strong presentation to the DNC this past summer and we are in the second round of states being considered for an early date. I am running now to be the Michigan voice at the DNC on this issue and to fight for what has been a three-decade journey for a fairer Presidential Nominating process. I am asking for your support at the State Central meeting in December.

Michigan is one of the best places to pick a President. Key groups that Democrats need to persuade and turn out to win national elections are the backbone of our state. Michigan is the most diverse battleground state, and a microcosm of America. In Michigan, you see the diversity and wealth of experiences across America: racial diversity, political diversity, geographic diversity, diversity of crops, diversity of industries, and labor. In addition to racial and cultural diversity, Michigan has both industrial urban centers with manufacturing and more rural agricultural areas than many other states. All roads to victory go through Michigan: Democrats win the White House when we win Michigan. A Michigan Presidential Primary is a down payment on the general election. Primaries give us a head start on critical organizing efforts that pay huge dividends in November, so it is critical that early states are competitive in the general election. And the reality is that no state is more competitive than Michigan.

While this is the primary focus of why I am running for this opening, I also promise to continue to fight for the values and vision that unite as Democrats, especially those that were most important to Zahra. Disability rights have always been close to my heart, and as co-chair of the Congressional Disability Caucus I will lead that work in Congress. Working closely with the Cannabis Caucus I will work with my colleagues to advance federal policies to legalize marijuana, right the wrongs of our past, and ensure the safety of this industry in Michigan and across the country. Zahra will always be a reminder for me as I keep working on what mattered to her. I am also a fighter for many issues that impact Michigan families every day. I stand up for unions, fight for universal health care and Medicare for All, protect our environment by passing more environmental policies than any other Member of Congress, lead the effort with my colleague Rashida Tlaib for clean, accessible, and affordable water for all, advocate for children and seniors, address affordable housing, invest in quality education, and much more.

Thank you for your consideration. I am available on my cell if you would like to discuss my candidacy at 313-433-8373. It is my hope that we will win changes to the Presidential Nomination System in the next few months that will be the product of work started by one of Michigan's Hero's - Senator Levin. And please stay safe!