

JOCELYN BENSON

for GOVERNOR



Building the future we deserve



Ensuring every Michigander can thrive

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My Environmental Agenda

I love Michigan. From running on our miles of trails to swimming in our Great Lakes, to getting engaged on Isle Royale and then married on Belle Isle – I know the abundant natural beauty of our state is among our greatest strengths. But protecting Michigan's natural resources isn't only about preserving what we have. It's about building the future we deserve.

Michigan is home to twenty percent of the world's fresh surface water. It's one of our most unique advantages and preserving it is one of our most profound responsibilities. 15 million people in the Great Lakes region get their drinking water from the Great Lakes, while our recreational and northern Michigan economy is reliant on clean, resilient fresh water in those lakes. And in this era of rapid climate change, protecting our water, air, and natural resources preserves what makes Michigan special and ensures it is a safe, healthy home for all of us – for generations to come.

Caring for our environment, protecting human health, creating good-paying jobs, and lowering costs for Michigan families aren't competing priorities. They're the same fight. Clean, renewable energy is the cheapest form of energy. When we invest in clean energy, we lower utility bills. When we hold polluters accountable, we protect the drinking water families depend on. When we lead in clean manufacturing, we create the union jobs that keep Michigan's economy strong. Every choice we make about our natural resources is a choice about what kind of state we're building – and who it's built for. If we make the right choices now, we can leave the next generation a Michigan that's more affordable, prosperous, cleaner, safer, and stronger than the one we inherited.

I am the only candidate for governor who is unabashedly championing these issues so Michigan can continue to be the beautiful place we call home for generations to come.

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Leading the nation in clean energy



Modernizing our energy infrastructure

Lead the Country in Clean Energy and Lower Utility Costs for Families

The transition to clean energy is already underway, but the question is whether Michigan will lead, or be left behind. Michigan should lead the nation in clean energy, advanced manufacturing, and innovation. That's why as governor, I'll grow Michigan's clean energy industry to create thousands of well-paying union jobs, strengthen our manufacturing economy, and lower energy costs for families.

- ✔ **Expand opportunities** for residential communities to invest in their own union-built solar and other renewable energy infrastructure, empowering every Michigander to participate in the clean energy future.
- ✔ **Modernize Michigan's electric grid and build smart infrastructure** to reduce power outages and ensure reliable service, even in bad weather.
- ✔ **Require utilities to improve service, compensate customers for repeated and excessive power outages**, and ensure Michiganders have the right to generate their own clean energy.
- ✔ **Invest in building clean and renewable energy infrastructure**, creating good-paying union jobs and lowering energy costs for everyone.
- ✔ **Launch programs to weatherize homes** throughout Michigan to reduce energy bills and help improve energy efficiency.
- ✔ **Develop affordable, convenient options for transit and electric vehicles** to give families cost effective ways to get around when gas prices rise.

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Protect Our Great Lakes and Drinking Water

Every Michigander deserves access to safe, affordable, reliable drinking water, no matter where they live. As governor, I'll protect the Great Lakes for future generations and make sure every community has the infrastructure to support it.

- ✓ **Modernize aging water infrastructure** in communities across the state so every community has access to safe, clean, affordable drinking water.
- ✓ **Conduct a statewide audit of aging and antiquated pipes and pipelines** and implement a plan to replace any pipes or pipelines, including Line 5, that pollute our water or create environmental hazards.
- ✓ **Hold polluters accountable** for the PFAS contamination and plastic pollution they've caused.

Invest in Michigan's Parks, Trails, and Public Lands

Our lakes, rivers, trails, forests, campgrounds, and public lands are a big part of what makes Michigan unique and beautiful — an advantage few states can match. It's vital that we preserve these economic engines and natural treasures. They attract families, workers, and businesses, and support local tourism economies, making them critical to Michigan's future.

- ✓ **Develop a strategic plan in the first 100 days** to modernize and adequately fund the Department of Natural Resources to ensure the agency is empowered as a full partner in protecting our public lands and natural resources.
- ✓ **Partner with local communities** to invest in outdoor recreation infrastructure, parks, trails, and waterfronts across the state.
- ✓ **Support the expansion of local businesses and a tourism economy** that helps celebrate Michigan's natural beauty.

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Fighting pollution



Transparency and accountability

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Hold Corporations and Utilities Accountable

Too many corporations have polluted our water and air or treated Michigan as a dumping ground while Michiganders foot the bill to clean up the mess. Utility companies go unchecked as they consistently raise their rates, charging families more and delivering less. This era of unaccountability ends when I'm governor. I'll demand transparency and make sure Michigan families stop paying for others' mistakes.

- ✔ **Strengthen enforcement and increase penalties** for corporations that pollute Michigan's water, land, and air.
- ✔ **Require utility companies to compensate customers** when the power goes out and meet higher service standards.
- ✔ **Ensure corporations responsible for contamination pay** for cleanup, not Michigan taxpayers.
- ✔ **Raise tipping fees** to stop out-of-state companies from Canada, New York, Ohio, and other states from treating Michigan like a dumping ground.
- ✔ **Enact comprehensive guardrails to limit data centers** from excessive water use, driving up energy costs, or any other negative environmental impacts.

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Giving communities a seat at the table



Protecting our land, water, and wildlife

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Implement Guardrails to Protect Our Environment, Health, and Natural Resources

Michigan is open for business and we welcome the jobs of the future in advanced manufacturing, clean technology, and other new or emerging opportunities – but not at the expense of our environment and natural resources. I'll ensure that any corporation – including data centers – seeking to do business in Michigan is required to meet rigorous standards and transparency requirements to protect our water, air, energy costs, and other natural resources. And we'll ensure communities have a seat at the table for any significant business developments.

- ✔ **Require large industrial developments, including data centers, to protect Michigan's water, public lands, wildlife, and other natural resources** through rigorous environmental standards, transparent reporting, and accountability for environmental impacts.
- ✔ **Limit any corporation, including data centers,** from excessive water use.
- ✔ **Require data centers to pay for much-needed upgrades** to help modernize Michigan's energy grid.
- ✔ **Ensure large industrial uses pay the full cost of the energy and infrastructure** needed to serve their facilities, protecting residents and local businesses from higher energy bills.
- ✔ **Enact a comprehensive data center guardrail plan,** and require data centers and corporations to engage local communities and enter into enforceable community benefit agreements that include plans to shoulder the burden of any increased electricity costs, create union jobs, and support and pay for the clean energy resources needed to keep Michigan on track toward its clean energy goals.

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Fight Environmental Injustice

Every Michigander deserves to live in a thriving and healthy community, where the air is clean to breathe and the water is safe to drink, while enjoying the benefits of economic prosperity. No community should be treated as a dumping ground, especially because of its ZIP code, income, or race. But right now too many Michigan families — particularly in communities of color and low-income communities — are left to live with polluted air, contaminated water, and industrial waste. That changes when I'm governor.



Prioritize environmental enforcement and cleanup resources in overburdened communities.



Ban NDAs and require meaningful community engagement through transparent and open discussions, enforceable community benefits agreements, and other requirements to ensure residents have a voice in major permitting and development decisions on industrial developments that affect their health, air, water, and land.



Hold corporations accountable if they target vulnerable communities as dumping grounds for pollution and waste.



Require permitting decisions to evaluate and address environmental justice impacts, while ensuring transparent processes and meaningful opportunities for affected communities to participate.



Protecting communities from pollution



Thriving and healthy communities

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