



NATIONAL
WOMEN'S
LAW CENTER
ACTION FUND



2022 Michigan Gender Justice Candidate Guide

The NWLC Action Fund aims to inform the public about candidates' positions on issues affecting gender justice. We encourage voters to get informed, learn where their candidates stand, and to encourage candidates to adopt policy positions that support women and girls.



YES	X
NO	



Michigan Governor



Gretchen Whitmer	Policy	Tudor Dixon
CHAMPION	Protect and strengthen abortion and contraception access	OPPOSES
SUPPORTS	Fund affordable and accessible child care	UNKNOWN POSITION
SUPPORTS	Strengthen paid family and medical leave	OPPOSES
SUPPORTS	Raise the minimum wage	UNKNOWN POSITION
SUPPORTS	Protect women, especially women of color, and others from discrimination and harassment in the workplace	UNKNOWN POSITION
SUPPORTS	Keep all children—including LGBTQI+ children and children of color—safe from discrimination and harassment	OPPOSES
SUPPORTS	Oppose censorship in school curricula	OPPOSES
SUPPORTS	Advance gun safety measures that keep schools free from gun violence	OPPOSES
SUPPORTS	Expand voting access	OPPOSES
UNKNOWN POSITION	Build diverse courts that work for everyone	UNKNOWN POSITION
SUPPORTS	Strengthen and expand access to maternal health care	UNKNOWN POSITION
SUPPORTS	Strengthen and expand access to affordable housing	UNKNOWN POSITION
SUPPORTS	Protect and expand food security	UNKNOWN POSITION

NWLC Action Fund does not endorse candidates. These voter guides are an educational resource for the public and are not intended to be an endorsement of any candidate or political party. Candidates' positions on the issues are determined using recorded votes for and against legislation; statements from interviews, press appearances, press releases and candidate events; social media posts from verified accounts; and endorsements from organizations and associations.

Champion: This candidate has led legislative efforts addressing the issue, including introducing and/or co-sponsoring legislation; created an organization or association dedicated to supporting the issue; and/or made the issue stance a cornerstone of their campaign on their website or in speeches.

Support: A candidate is considered in support of an issue area if they have shown support for the majority of policies within the issue area.

Unknown position: We could not find a record of a clear policy position from this candidate during our research.

Opposes: A candidate is considered in opposition to an issue area if they have shown opposition for the majority of policies within the issue area.

Gretchen Whitmer – Attorney General

Abortion

- Codify the right to abortion in-state and support the creation of a nationwide right that stops abortion bans and guarantees that the right and access to abortion does not depend on where a person lives.
 - » Governor Whitmer supports federal legislation protecting the right to abortion. Whitmer joined a coalition of 17 governors [asking the Senate to pass the Women’s Health Protection Act](#) to federally codify the right to abortion.
 - » Governor Whitmer supports codifying the right to abortion under Michigan’s constitution. In April 2022, Whitmer [filed a lawsuit](#) with the Michigan Supreme Court asking them to recognize a right to abortion under Michigan’s constitution.
 - » Governor Whitmer has prioritized protecting the right to abortion prior to the overturn of Roe. Whitmer [urged the 2021 state legislature](#) to pass legislation repealing Michigan’s 1931 abortion ban, saying “I have always stood with those fighting for their right to choose, and I will not stop now. I will stand in the way of any bills that seek to strip away fundamental rights from women or get in the way of doctors’ ability to do their jobs.”
- Ensure that people’s access to health care is free from stigma, barriers, and restrictions, including abortion care, contraceptives, and maternal health care.
 - » Governor Whitmer supports insurance coverage of abortion care. In 2014, then-Senator Whitmer introduced [Senate Bill 1010](#) to repeal Michigan’s 2013 Abortion Insurance Opt-Out Act which required the purchase of coverage for elective abortion in a health care plan to be by an optional rider only, required notice to employees for whom elective abortion coverage is purchased by their employer, and provided penalties for violations of the act.
 - » Governor Whitmer opposes restrictions on state funding for abortions. In July 2022, Whitmer [vetoed budget items](#) in [House Bill 5783](#) that involved restrictions on the use of state funds to pay for abortions or funding for pregnancy and parenting centers that promote alternatives to abortion.
 - » Governor Whitmer expanded maternal and postpartum care for prisoners. Whitmer [issued a policy directive alongside](#) the Michigan Department of Corrections that “guarantee critical medical resources and support to pregnant and postpartum prisoners and their newborns.”
 - » Governor Whitmer opposes barriers to abortion access for minors. In 2007, then-Senator Whitmer voted against and protested the passage of [SB 1059](#), a bill that intended to restrict a minor’s ability to seek a waiver of parental consent for an abortion. Whitmer rose in opposition to the passage of the bill, stating “This bill aims to create further hurdles for pregnant female minors in crisis seeking a judicial waiver so that she can secure an abortion.” [[MI Legislature](#), p. 399-400]
- Make sure quality pregnancy supports are accessible, affordable, and culturally competent for all - including protections and supports that advance the maternal health of Black and Indigenous women and pregnant people in Michigan.
 - » Governor Whitmer declared [Black Maternal Health Week](#) in April 2022 to highlight Black maternal health disparities.

- » Governor Whitmer supports investments in maternal health care. In her [2021 budget](#), Whitmer proposed \$37.5 million for the [Healthy Moms, Healthy Babies](#) initiative to expand maternal health care. This [initiative](#) is meant to expand Medicaid family planning services to 30,000 Michigan women.
- » Governor Whitmer [expanded](#) Medicaid coverage for moms and babies. Michigan’s request to expand Medicaid coverage for a full 12-month postpartum period, a key part of Whitmer’s Healthy Moms, Healthy Babies initiative, was approved by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.
- » Governor Whitmer supports funding for reproductive health care services through Title X clinics. In July 2022, Whitmer [stated in a press release](#) that “Low or no-cost reproductive health services are available at Michigan’s 92 Title X clinics — an important reminder during these times. We will continue using every tool in our toolbox to make sure Michiganders have access to comprehensive health care and reproductive freedom.”
- » Governor Whitmer issued an [executive directive](#) protecting reproductive health care. Whitmer’s May 2022 executive directive “instructs departments and agencies to increase protections for reproductive health care within their purview and offer residents comprehensive information about the cost and availability of care.”
- Safeguard and expand access to contraception.
 - » Governor Whitmer issued an [executive directive](#) instructing state departments to provide accessible, comprehensive information about contraception. Whitmer’s May 2022 executive directive instructs departments and agencies to “Adopt measures to increase public awareness about the availability and safety of contraception, including long-acting reversible contraception, such as intrauterine devices and others, and emergency contraception.”
 - Governor Whitmer applauded the [successful expansion](#) of birth control access as a result of her May 2022 executive directive. Following Whitmer’s executive directive, Michigan’s Department of Management, Technology, and Budget has moved to guarantee access to generic, prescription oral medication for 200,000 additional Michiganders starting in September 2022.

Family Economic Security

- Make millionaires and billionaires pay their fair share of taxes.
 - » Governor Whitmer opposes tax cuts for the wealthy. In March 2022, Whitmer vetoed [Senate Bill 768](#) which would have reduced Michigan’s income tax rate but provided unequal tax cuts across income brackets. [Data from the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy](#) found that the bill would provide an average tax cut of \$4,901 for the top 1% of MI earners, compared to \$12 for the states lowest 20% of earners.
 - » In 2018 Whitmer [tweeted](#) to highlight the inequity that proposed tax cuts would perpetuate.
- Help families with the rising cost of child care by investing in high-quality, affordable child care.
 - » Governor Whitmer supports access to quality and affordable child care. In March 2022, Whitmer pledged \$365 million to keep child care programs in effect and \$1,000 bonuses for childcare professionals, [stating](#) “Today, I’m fighting to make sure every family has access to quality, affordable child care that meets their needs... That starts with making sure our local childcare businesses can stay open and pay their staff a living wage.”

- » Governor Whitmer has worked to expand access to free or low-cost child care. In August 2022, Whitmer [announced](#) a bipartisan investment expanding access to child care for 150,000 additional Michigan children.
- Establish universal paid family and medical leave.
 - » Governor Whitmer supports paid family leave. In February 2020, Whitmer announced the State of Michigan would provide 12 weeks of paid leave immediately following birth or adoption of a child to the nearly 50,000 State of Michigan employees. Governor Whitmer’s paid family leave policy [celebrated its second anniversary this year](#).
 - » Governor Whitmer supports paid medical leave. In April 2020, Whitmer signed [Executive Order 2020-36](#) which [aimed to](#) expand “protections of Michigan’s Paid Medical Leave Act until the end of the declared state of emergency and prohibits retaliation against workers who are particularly at risk of infecting others in the workplace.”
- Protect women, especially women of color, and others from discrimination and harassment in the workplace.
 - » Governor Whitmer supports protections from workplace discrimination on the basis of sexuality or gender. In a [written](#) statement, Whitmer praised the U.S. Supreme Court ruling that Title VII protects gay and transgender people from workplace discrimination on the basis of their sexuality or gender, and she committed to continue the fight to expand Michigan’s Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act to protect members of the LGBTQ+ community.
 - » Governor Whitmer strengthened non-discrimination in state employment. In one of her first [executive directives](#) as governor, Whitmer strengthened non-discrimination protections and expanded them to include discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity or expression.
 - » Governor Whitmer has denounced misogyny in the workplace. In her [2020 State of State Address](#), Whitmer said ““Whether it’s misogyny in the workplace or threats of violence online, this is unacceptable.”
- Create an economy that centers women and people of color and enables them to meet their needs, including affording stable housing and food access.
 - » Governor Whitmer has invested in building affordable housing.
 - In June 2022, Whitmer announced a [plan to invest](#) \$13 million to build affordable apartments, townhomes, and housing units to increase affordable housing options across Michigan.
 - In July 2021, Whitmer proposed \$100 million to expand affordable housing and help close equity gaps and support community development.
 - » Governor Whitmer has made efforts to lower housing costs. Whitmer signed an [executive order](#) in September 2022 establishing a new advisory body with the goal of building more affordable housing, lowering costs, and addressing economic, racial, and geographic inequities.
 - » Governor Whitmer is committed to creating solutions for food insecurity in Michigan. In 2020, Whitmer signed an [executive order](#) creating the Food Security Council, tasked with identifying and analyzing origins of and solutions for food insecurity.

- » Governor Whitmer has expanded assistance to lower the cost of groceries throughout the pandemic and pandemic recovery. The [program](#) to receive additional monthly food assistance began in April 2020 for some Michigan residents, and in May 2021 expanded to all eligible households. Federal approval is necessary every month.
- » Governor Whitmer denounced proposed restrictions to SNAP benefits. Whitmer joined 16 other governors in a [letter](#) to the US Department of Agriculture urging against a proposed rule change that would cause hundreds of thousands to lose food assistance under SNAP.
- Pay workers fairly, including ensuring equal pay for all and raising the minimum wage to at least \$15/hour for all working people.
 - » Governor Whitmer supports a \$15 minimum wage. In May 2022, Whitmer proposed spending \$300 million in federal funds in order to assist businesses in paying employees a minimum \$15 per hour, [stating](#), “Our future is bright, and I will continue working with anyone to get things done on the kitchen-table issues that matter most to families. Let’s stay focused on growing our economy, creating good-paying jobs, and lowering costs for families.”
 - » Governor Whitmer declared Equal Pay Days in Michigan in 2019, 2020, 2021, and 2022. In honor of Equal Pay Day in 2019, she [stated](#) “Equal pay is not only a women’s issue. This is an economic issue that is hurting hardworking families in our state. When we ensure all women in Michigan can earn the same amount as their male counterparts for doing the same job, we can help hardworking families get ahead, grow our economy, and attract the business and talent we need to compete.”
 - » Governor Whitmer supports pay equity. In 2020, Whitmer moved the Michigan Women’s Commission (MWC) from the Department of Civil Rights to the Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity (LEO) [to](#) “help ensure women across Michigan are treated with the same dignity and respect as their male counterparts, no matter their race, socioeconomic status, or sexual orientation.”

Education

- Support students’ ability to learn and be themselves by keeping them safe from discrimination and harassment in school.
 - » Governor Whitmer recognizes racism as a public health crisis. In August 2020, Whitmer signed an [executive directive](#) recognizing racism as a public health crisis stating “This is not about one party or person. I hope we can continue to work towards building a more inclusive and unbiased state that works for everyone.”
- Oppose efforts to fuel divisions in our communities by vilifying and excluding transgender students.
 - » Governor Whitmer opposes excluding transgender athletes. In a [press release](#) on her office’s work advancing the LGBTQ+ community Whitmer stated that she “strongly opposed and committed to veto any anti-trans legislation that hit her desk, including [Senate Bill 218](#) which was introduced earlier this year and bans trans high school athletes from playing on a team consistent with their gender identity.”

- Oppose censorship of schools' ability to teach truth, including about race and gender and how they have been used to divide us.
 - » Governor Whitmer supports using education to promote social justice. In July 2020, the Governor's Educator Advisory Council released a [Proclamation for Social Justice](#) pledging to "promote educational policies, practices, and resources which will help put an end to systemic racism."
 - » Governor Whitmer supports ending discrimination in schools. In February 2021 Whitmer created a COVID-19 Student Recovery Advisory Council, that stated in its [recovery report](#): "The racial disparities seen throughout the Covid-19 pandemic and the systemic cycle of discrimination and injustice must be accounted for in our schools." The report went on to identify that one of the root causes of these inequities is "systemic racism, classism, sexism, and discrimination based on religion."
- Safeguard students' ability to live full, dignified lives free from gun violence.
 - » Governor Whitmer supports increasing safety in MI schools. In June 2022, she signed [House Bill 6012](#) that helps schools perform risk assessments on campus safety, ensure that emergency protocols are in place, and "[directly invests](#) in Oxford Community Schools to help them recover from the shooting late last year."
 - » Governor Whitmer supports reducing crime and gun violence. In July 2022 she signed an [executive directive](#) that "[directs](#) state government departments and law enforcement agencies to coordinate and invest all available federal resources into crime and gun violence intervention and prevention."
- Oppose discriminatory discipline policies in schools, including increased policing of students
 - » Whitmer has not commented on discriminatory discipline policies in schools.
- Ensure full funding that meets every school's needs - including schools building safer environments by prioritizing COVID safety measures.
 - » In May 2020, Governor Whitmer created a [COVID-19 Return to School Advisory Council](#) that resulted in a 2020-2021 [Return to School Roadmap for COVID-19](#) safety in schools.
 - » In March 2021, Governor Whitmer created a [COVID-19 Student Recovery Advisory Council](#) to address the impact of COVID-19 in schools.

Education

- Protect and expand access to the ballot and restore the Voting Rights Act.
 - » Governor Whitmer supports federal voting rights legislation. Whitmer [led a letter from 17 governors](#) urging the passage of the Freedom to Vote Act and the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act stating "Our democracy works when everyone can be heard, when every eligible voter-no matter where they live or who they support-has safe, convenient, and secure access to the ballot.... Protecting the right to vote is not a political or partisan issue. It is foundational to who we are."
- Unrig our democracy by ending corporate and PAC donations to extremist politicians who support voter suppression efforts.
 - » Governor Whitmer supports federal legislation that would prevent coordination between super PACs and campaigns. Whitmer [led a letter from 17 governors](#) urging Congress to pass the Freedom to Vote Act.

- Ensure all voters have equal access to the ballot box and their votes are counted fairly, including expanded early voting days, language access protections for Limited English Proficient (LEP) voters, and a district map that empowers all voters.
 - » Governor Whitmer is committed to protecting the right to vote, making participation in our democracy accessible, combating misinformation, and empowering all eligible voters to make their voices heard. Whitmer signed an [executive directive](#) directing departments and agencies to identify and assess potential opportunities to expand the ability of eligible voters to register and gain access to reliable voting information.
 - » Governor Whitmer opposes restrictions on voting access. In October 2021, Whitmer vetoed a series of bills that would have imposed strict voter ID rules, [writing](#) to lawmakers that “voting restrictions that produce such a racially disparate impact must never become law in this state.”
 - » Governor Whitmer supports federal legislation that would ban partisan gerrymandering. Whitmer [led a letter from 17 governors](#) urging Congress to pass the Freedom to Vote Act.
- Reshape the makeup of the judiciary by working with federal lawmakers to nominate and confirm judges with a strong record of supporting gender and racial justice issues and who affirmatively declare they will uphold equality, opportunity for all, individual liberty, and the freedom to make personal decisions about our bodies and relationships.
 - » Governor Whitmer has a strong record of appointing progressive judges. As Governor, Whitmer has [appointed multiple circuit](#) and [district court judges](#) who have pledged to equity, accessibility, and respect in their positions.

Tudor Dixon – Attorney General

Abortion

- Codify the right to abortion in-state and support the creation of a nationwide right that stops abortion bans and guarantees that the right and access to abortion does not depend on where a person lives.
 - » Dixon does not support exceptions for abortion in any case except for the life of the mother. Dixon does not support exceptions for abortion including rape, incest, or the health of the mother, but specifies that she does support exceptions for the [life of the mother](#).
 - » Dixon supports a total abortion ban with no exception for rape or incest. In a recent [debate](#) when asked if she would support a [1931 Michigan law](#) that punishes performing or obtaining abortion with up to four years in prison and does not provide any exception, she stated “I think it is appalling to hear our attorney general say she won’t enforce these laws.”
- Ensure that people’s access to health care is free from stigma, barriers, and restrictions, including abortion care, contraceptives, and maternal health care.
 - » Dixon supports a total abortion ban with no exception for rape or incest. In a recent [debate](#) when asked if she would support a [1931 Michigan law](#) that punishes performing or obtaining abortion with up to four years in prison and does not provide any exception, she stated “I think it is appalling to hear our attorney general say she won’t enforce these laws.”
 - » Dixon is endorsed by Right to Life Michigan, which [opposes federal funding for abortion](#).
- Make sure quality pregnancy supports are accessible, affordable, and culturally competent for all - including protections and supports that advance the maternal health of Black and Indigenous women and pregnant people in Michigan.
- Safeguard and expand access to contraception.

Family Economic Security

- Make millionaires and billionaires pay their fair share of taxes.
 - » Tudor’s [economic policy page](#) states:
 - “Develop and enact a plan to phase out Michigan’s personal income tax over time”
 - “Cut, reduce, or streamline 40% of Michigan’s enormous regulatory code in four years. Unleash entrepreneurs, unlock economic growth, and attract new businesses and workforce talent to the state.”
 - “Cut corporate welfare”
 - “Make Michigan open for business.” “Rapidly enact pro-growth policies and rehabilitate the state’s image as hostile to businesses.”
- Help families with the rising cost of child care by investing in high-quality, affordable child care.
- Establish universal paid family and medical leave.
 - » Dixon does not support universal paid family leave. In a [press release](#) she stated “That means corporations should step up and support paid family leave. No, this doesn’t have to be a mandate. Great companies are built on great people. People will be happier, healthier, and more productive if their home life is good their family is a source of joy, not stress.”

- In another [press release](#) she also stated “Let’s work together to lift up life and family. As Governor, I will encourage companies to offer paid family leave.”
- Protect women, especially women of color, and others from discrimination and harassment in the workplace.
- Create an economy that centers women and people of color and enables them to meet their needs, including affording stable housing and food access.
- Pay workers fairly, including ensuring equal pay for all and raising the minimum wage to at least \$15/hour for all working people.
- Expand food assistance programs like SNAP, school meals, and WIC
 - » Dixon has been silent on food security support.
- Expand rental assistance
 - » Dixon has not commented on rental assistance programs
- Improve down payment assistance programs for first time home buyers
 - » Dixon has not commented on down payment assistance programs
- Expand refundable tax credits
 - » Dixon is endorsed by [Americans for Tax Reform](#), which [supports](#) things like the Earned Income Tax Credit and the Child Tax Credit unless it costs money to taxpayers

Education

- Support students’ ability to learn and be themselves by keeping them safe from discrimination and harassment in school.
 - » See below evidence
- Oppose efforts to fuel divisions in our communities by vilifying and excluding transgender students.
 - » Dixon supports transgender athlete bans in schools. In an [interview](#) she stated that she “wants to limit transgender student athletes by only allowing students of the same biological gender to compete against one another in school-sanctioned, gender-specific athletics.”
 - Dixon’s [education policy page](#) includes banning “born boys” from playing on girls’ sports teams.
 - » Dixon is against gender-affirming care to transgender children. In an [interview](#) she stated, “I think that especially parents of girls, but I think parents in general are saying we want to protect women and we want to protect their rights...We don’t want it to be that trans people are supreme to the female.”
- Oppose censorship of schools’ ability to teach truth, including about race and gender and how they have been used to divide us.
 - » Dixon does not support school instruction about sexual orientation and gender identity. She [recently stated](#) that she would support a Michigan-version of Florida’s Parents Rights in Education law, which would prohibit any instruction related to sexual orientation or gender identity before fourth grade.
 - She also stated “It’s not appropriate in the classroom, where they should be focused on learning, especially in the state of Michigan, where we have such a low rate of reading literacy... We have to focus on the things that they need to be learning in school. Those social issues have to come from home.”

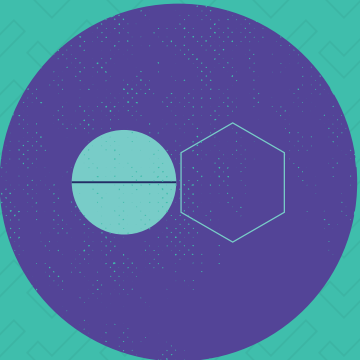
- » Dixon does not support teaching critical race theory. In a [recent interview](#), she stated “Farmington Public Schools is unfortunately just the latest but not the only public school district in Michigan we’ve found to be openly promoting critical race theory and other radical ideologies to our young school children,”
 - She also [stated](#) “It’s obviously seeping into every part of a society where we’re telling people that a certain race is a terrible race. And we fought so many years to make sure that we were all considered the same. I mean, that everybody should have the same opportunity. And now you’re saying we should take opportunities away from certain children? That’s unacceptable,”
 - In another [interview](#), she also stated that she “would bar drag queens from schools and ban students from learning about things like critical race theory.”
 - Tweet: “I will fight Critical Race Theory and all its forms in Michigan schools and proudly defend and restore the American Dream.”
- Safeguard students’ ability to live full, dignified lives free from gun violence.
 - » Dixon includes “2nd Amendment” under “Issues the Matter” on her website. It [says](#) “Regarding school safety, she has called for all so-called ‘diversity/equity/inclusion’ consultants and administrators in public schools to be cut and the funding for their positions to be repurposed and used for armed school security.”
- Oppose discriminatory discipline policies in schools, including increased policing of students
 - » Research into this candidate has yielded no statements indicating support or opposition
 - Dixon was endorsed by the Police Officers Association
- Ensure full funding that meets every school’s needs—including schools building safer environments by prioritizing COVID safety measures.
 - » Dixon opposes mask mandates in schools. She has [committed](#) to block mask mandates in schools.

Democracy

- Protect and expand access to the ballot and restore the Voting Rights Act.
 - » Dixon wants to restrict access to the ballot. Dixon [supports stricter voter laws](#) such as voter ID and signature match requirements.
- Unrig our democracy by ending corporate and PAC donations to extremist politicians who support voter suppression efforts.
- Ensure all voters have equal access to the ballot box and their votes are counted fairly, including expanded early voting days, language access protections for Limited English Proficient (LEP) voters, and a district map that empowers all voters.
 - » Dixon supports voter identification. On her campaign [website](#) she stated that she “wants to make Michigan’s Voter ID laws the strongest in the country.”
 - She also tweeted the following in response to Governor Whitmer’s voting reform pledge.
 - » Dixon supports the Big Lie and Stop the Steal movements. Following the 2020 election she stated multiple times that there was “[widespread fraud](#).”

- Reshape the makeup of the judiciary by working with federal lawmakers to nominate and confirm judges with a strong record of supporting gender and racial justice issues and who affirmatively declare they will uphold equality, opportunity for all, individual liberty, and the freedom to make personal decisions about our bodies and relationships.

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