



1. Michigan government is rated in the bottom 5 states for openness. There has been legislation introduced in Lansing that would subject elected members of the House and Senate and the Governor's office to expanded openness under the Freedom of Information Act and the Legislative Open Records Act. Will you support legislation that subjects elected leaders to more openness?

**Transparency in governance is a cornerstone in a democratic society. Just as we would expect transparency from the unelected government officials in the bureaucracy we should without a doubt expect transparency from those elected to office by the people. Expanded openness to elected members of the House, Senate, and Governor's office would facilitate a more open Michigan especially considering such high profile events such as the Flint Water Crisis. I would support legislation like this as there is no reason for elected officials not to have transparency.**

2. Do you believe newspapers serve an important role in your community regarding keeping citizens informed of important local government actions and other community events (i.e. obituaries, school news, engagements etc.)?

**Yes, the power of print is a cornerstone of our democratic Republic and a means for non-biased information to be shared at a local and national level.**

3. Have you had experience dealing with the Freedom of Information and Open Meetings laws in Michigan? If yes, please explain. **Personally, no. As a trustee on a board of education for a public school district we are subject to FOIA and comply with any requests in as timely a manner as possible. I do see the additional costs (in both employee hours and materials) to meet some FOIA requests however, I believe in the use of FOIA and the Open Meetings act as a way to increase transparency and trust for public institutions. I would work to make Michigan's public institutions a leader around the issue of transparency as we are currently one of the worst states in the country for government transparency and accountability.**

*Currently, Michigan law requires many official activities and statements such as notices of upcoming elections, zoning changes and possible millage increases to be published in local newspapers. The purpose behind this law is to provide as much notice to the public as possible of government actions that will take place or are planned to take place. Newspaper publication also serves as a permanent record of governmental actions, serves an important due process function and helps assure that information received by the public is unfiltered, reliable and independent of governmental influences. Legislation being considered in Lansing would remove the requirement for publication of government actions in local newspapers and instead, require these public notices to be placed on the state, city or township government web sites. Please answer the following questions with the above statements in mind:*

4. Do you feel that providing public notices of governmental actions in a printed newspaper is important to Michigan citizens? Yes or No
5. Would you oppose or support legislation to end newspaper publication of public notices? Oppose or Support

Name: Barb Annese District 45 Party Democrat