



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?

*Yes YES, FOIA and ~~Open Records~~ other similar laws provide an important tool for accountability in government.*

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.)?

*A free and independent and objective press is an essential element of our democracy. They serve as an important check and balance on government and helps inform the public of what is going on locally, regionally, nationally and globally. A vigorous media is an absolute must to preserve and protect our democracy.*

3. Have you had experience dealing with the Freedom of Information and Open Meetings laws in Michigan? If yes, please explain.

*Yes As City Clerk, I handle providing notice to the news media outlets regarding upcoming public hearings. I also handle the FOIA requests for the city. I believe it is an important to meet these requests timely and on the side of*

*transparency.*  
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:

*+ wish we had more staff to assist in meeting press requests.*

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: Richard M. Steenland District: 2nd House District Party: Democrat