

## My Take on Health Care Reform by Connie Glave

August was not a vacation for the thousands of people who lost their jobs, whose homes were foreclosed, who became ill without health care, or who went bankrupt, due to medical expenses. America has lost its humanity, but we, as its people, have not.

**Single Payer, Not-for-Profit Health Care For All** is the most cost effective means of providing health care. Administration in Private Insurance runs about 30%. Medicare ran 3-5% until they implemented Medicare Advantage, when it jumped to 14%. Government tax dollars should not subsidize inefficient private insurance. Instead resources should be going to patient care.

It is surprising how many people do not realize that the VA health system for Veterans, Medicare for the elderly, Medicaid for the low income and SCHIP to insure children are all government-run social health care and we still manage to stay a democracy.

If the goal is cost savings, then this is where to start, but it will probably take years to implement and you would have to overcome resistance from those who

can still afford their current coverage with the higher deductibles and haven't gotten sick enough to find out what their insurance doesn't cover. No matter what, it should continue to be part of the discussion as the eventual goal.

**A Single Payer Government Option**, open to everyone, has to be the very least we accept, with provisions that no one can be denied care because of pre-existing conditions and no one can be dropped from an insurance plan because they get sick. Then let people choose where they want to go in a free market, not insurance monopolies.

If your goal is to get those who need it the most covered as soon as possible, then the Government Option is probably the way to begin. Adding funding and staff to open Medicare and/or the VA to anyone who wants it should be attainable within a year. Open up the VA, which already negotiates for better pricing, to provide prescription service for anyone in a government programs including Medicare, Medicaid, SCHIP and the Government Option

**Co-ops** have already been tried and have

not had any affect on the cost of health insurance the last 10 years. Volume creates competition and spreads the risk between the healthy and the sick to reduce costs. Inconsistent service could result from co-op to co-op as with Canada, where each Province determines what will be provided. Under funding in more conservative provinces can mean less service. You could still purchase supplemental insurance for the services that are not covered, whether it would be prescription, dental, or optical, but the premium would be lower with little or no deductibles, because the big costs are removed.

### Conclusion

Single Payer, Not-for-Profit, Health Care for All is the most efficient and cost effective way to cover everyone, provides the most competition to bring down costs and is what we should still be asking for, but it will take longer to implement.

A Public Option is something that could be implemented quickly by increasing funding hiring more staff and using the VA and/or Medicare systems that are already in place. It is the least we should accept out of health care reform. ■

### Midland County Democratic Party "Politics in the Park" Saturday, September 26<sup>th</sup> 4-6 P.M.



**Emerson Park, Pavillion D**  
\$15.00 per person or \$30.00 per family.



Tickets are available at the door, or by calling 631-3625, or by email [habdeb@aol.com](mailto:habdeb@aol.com)

**Menu:** Brats, Baked-beans, Coleslaw, Toni's homemade applesauce, Desserts, Beverages and More!

Speakers: Rep. Alma Wheeler-Smith Candidate for Governor,  
Jocelyn Benson-Candidate for Secretary of State, Rep. Joel Sheltroun-Candidate for State Senate  
Toni Sessoms - Candidate for State House 99th District.  
Others to be announced.

# ODDS ON THE 2010 MICHIGAN RACE FOR GOVERNOR

Bob Ciaffone

The 2010 Michigan race for the governor job is expected to be a close contest between the two major parties. Here is what it looks like a little over a year from election day.

The Democratic contest looks like a forgone conclusion, with Lieutenant Governor John Cherry far out in front. The only other candidate with statewide recognition is House Speaker Andy Dillon. State Representative Alma Wheeler Smith of Ann Arbor is a stranger to most of the rest of the state. Cherry has been running hard since spring and has the support of most prominent Democrats and many local parties. I would put the odds to be the Democratic nominee as Cherry 90%, Dillon 7%, Smith 1%, and others 2%.

The Republican race is far more interesting to an odds maker, with no clear frontrunner and many announced and prospective candidates. I will list some of the more prominent entrants, in the order of how I view their prospects.

Attorney General Mike Cox (25%). Cox has made more noise than any of the others so far. He is well-known throughout the state—as are his marital and other indiscretions. When the mud starts flying, he is likely to get hit with it more than anyone else in the race. Cox is no centrist, but neither is he a right-wing nut like a number of his GOP opponents.

US Representative Peter Hoekstra (25%) Hoekstra represents Michigan's 2nd congressional District, which borders Lake Michigan from Holland to Ludington and beyond. He is not so well known outside his district, but that will change.

Politically, he is probably even further right than Midland's own Dave Camp. This makes him one of the darlings of the GOP's religious right, meaning he will get plenty of support in his party. He has a business background and the connections to raise a lot of campaign money. However, it is hard to see the relevance to Michigan's problems of his work on the House Intelligence Committee, his most prominent endeavor in Congress.

Oakland County Sheriff Mike Bouchard (12%). Bouchard ran against Stabenow for US senator in 2006 (she won by a landslide). This was not enough to give him name recognition with the public. Our current Secretary of State, Terri Lynn Land, has endorsed Bouchard, and he has said that she would be his running mate (Lieutenant Governor). This may help legitimize his candidacy but it will not win him any votes in Saginaw County, where her efforts to close the Buena Vista DMV made her a hate object.

Of course, what GOP contest does not have prominent businessmen involved! The governor's race has two very wealthy contenders. Rick Snyder (10%) of Ann Arbor is a former CEO of Gateway Computers and presently heads a venture capital group. David Brandon (8%) is the CEO of Dominos Pizza.

Other entrants (20%) include US Congressman Mike Rogers of the Lansing area, former US Representative Candice Miller, and a flock of people I never heard of.

In the general election, John Cherry has been running slightly behind the better-known Republicans in some polling. This is the result of our bad economy, not anything specific he has done, so a lot depends on what the Michigan economy is going to look like a year from now. If the GOP had a strong gubernatorial candidate, Cherry would be an underdog. They don't, so I make his chance to be about even money.

John Cherry lacks the flamboyance of Jennifer Granholm, but he is a real solid and experienced person, and those who know him well all speak highly of him. Cherry is from Clio, a small town just north of Flint. The Great Lakes Bay Region would be delighted to have a person with such a deep knowledge of our area as our next governor. ■



## Report: Renewables and Energy Efficiency Are Enough to Power the State

by Peter Sinclair

According to a new report, Michigan's power needs can be delivered by a combination of wind power, biomass, and other sources of renewable energy coupled with aggressive energy efficiency programs.

The report, out released recently from the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), comes as the Michigan Public Service Commission is set to make

recommendations to the Department of Environmental Quality on the need for power and availability of cleaner alternative to coal later this month. "Michiganders need to think about energy like an investor right now," said Rebecca Stanfield, a senior energy advocate at NRDC. "Would you put all your money towards yesterday's dirty technology? No. And Michigan ratepayers shouldn't be saddled with that sort of risky investment either. The state has the enviable opportunity to rebuild its economy with cutting edge energy technologies which will create jobs and clean the air."

A Green Energy Alternative for Michigan, written by Synapse Energy Economic, a consulting firm on energy and environmental issues, is a deep analysis of the state's projected electricity demand, the liabilities associated with air and global warming pollution, as well as the opportunities offered by clean energy technologies for job creation, industrial investment, and resilience in the face of changing circumstances. ■

## Campaign Finance Supreme Court Case

by Connie Glave

Keep your eye on the Citizens United vs. FEC case before the Supreme Court. In the case, Citizens United created a film critical of Hillary Clinton. They wanted to run it as a documentary. The lower court determined it was campaign advertising and subject to (McCain Feingold) campaign law.

Citizens United wanted to take it to the Supreme Court right away, but Justice Roberts convinced them to wait until fall and look at all campaign finance legislation. The focus is on the constitutionality of limiting corporations' independent spending during campaigns for the Presidency and Congress and could possibly remove all remaining protection against corporate power in our political system.

Campaign finance issues came about as a result of corporations, which are legal creations, being granted the same free speech rights that are generally reserved for human beings. This case which will probably be decided 5 to 4 in favor of Citizens United could put unlimited corporate money into the election process, subverting the will of the people as a whole.

When you write your congress person about other issues, also express your concern over corporate personhood and corporate money in our election process. ■

## Contact Your Legislators

By Joe Weir

We have all seen the on-line petitions and form letters that we are continuously asked to sign or e-mail our legislators. However the most effective way to provide input to your legislators is a personal, handwritten letter. E-mails and form-letters are discounted and sometimes are not even received, but all handwritten letters are opened and read. And remember, letters don't have to be long, one ore two sentences may be adequate to make your position known. Remember to provide your address so that your legislator knows that you are one of his constituents.

If you would like to write a letter to your federal legislators it is best to send the letter to their local office. Letters sent to the Washington offices are still screened for anthrax which results in a multiple week delay in the delivery of the letter. The local addresses of our federal legislators are:

**Senator Carl Levin**  
515 N. Washington, Suite 402  
Saginaw, MI 48607

**Senator Debbie Stabenow**  
221 W Lansing Rd. #100  
East Lansing, MI 48823-8661

**Representative Dave Camp**  
135 Ashman St.  
Midland, MI 48640

**CONTACT US**

**Phone Us**  
989-832-3952

**E-mail Us At**  
[democrats@midland-dems.org](mailto:democrats@midland-dems.org)

**Visit Our Website**  
[www.midland-dems.org](http://www.midland-dems.org)

**Visit Our Office**  
Open *Tuesday and Thursday*  
*12:00 Noon to 5:00 pm*

711 Ashman Plaza (on Ashman  
between Union and Pine Streets)

**MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

**PLEASE HELP SUPPORT THE  
MIDLAND COUNTY DEMOCRATIC PARTY**

(Suggested Annual Dues: \$10)

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
(First) (Last) (Initial)

Home Address \_\_\_\_\_  
(Street) (City) (Zip Code)

Home Phone \_(\_\_\_\_)\_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to: **Midland County Democratic Party**

Please write "**Membership Dues**" on check.

Mail check and completed form to: **Treasurer, Midland County Democrats**

**P.O. Box 2205**

**Midland, MI 48641**

**EVENTS CALENDAR**

**September 26<sup>th</sup> "Politics in the Park "**  
**4-6 PM Emerson Park Pavillion D**

**Oct 1<sup>st</sup> - Political Discussion Group 7:00**  
PM Conference Room A of the Grace Dow  
Library. Subject "Persepolis" by Marji Satari

**October 21<sup>th</sup> – Regular Monthly Meeting**  
7:00 PM in the Midland County Building.  
Topic to be announced.

**Wednesday Nov 18<sup>th</sup> – Regular Monthly**  
**Meeting 7:00 PM** in the Midland County  
Building. Topic: To be announced

Our monthly general membership  
meetings are held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of  
the month at 7:00 PM in the Midland  
County Building.

Our Political Discussion group meets on  
the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of every month at 7:00  
PM in Conference Room-A of the Grace  
A Dow Library. Everyone is invited to  
attend an evening of pilot informal  
discussion.

Check Our website at [www.midland-dems.org](http://www.midland-dems.org) for updates.



Midland County Democrats  
P.O. Box 2205  
Midland, MI 48641