

# BYLAWS (LAST UPDATED 3/6/2017)

## ARTICLE I: NAME

This organization shall be known as the Michigan Democratic Environmental Caucus, commonly referred to as Environmental/Energy Caucus.

## ARTICLE II: PURPOSE

"A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community, it is wrong when it tends otherwise." (Aldo Leopold)

**Section 1.** The Caucus's Mission is to work with the people of Michigan, the state government, and the Democratic Party to promote all aspects of environmental sustainability. The Caucus affirms that all people have a right to a healthful environment, in which the air, land, and water are free of toxins or other contaminants. The Caucus opposes any use of the state's natural resources or public lands that is not sustainable. The Caucus is committed to replacing the use of fossil fuels with renewable energy in all contexts. The Caucus affirms that the loss of biodiversity and the reality of climate change are serious threats that must be addressed and protected against.

**Section 2.** The Caucus will accomplish this mission by mobilizing statewide actions on behalf of significant environmental issues. The Caucus intends to coordinate no less than four of these actions each year. The actions shall include, but not be limited to, the following.

- A.** Public engagement, education, and direct action events.
- B.** Corporate policy actions that encourage greater environmental responsibility by businesses operating within Michigan.
- C.** Governmental actions that address environmental threats to Michigan. These actions may include, but not be limited to, support for legislation, endorsement of Democratic candidates, opposition to legislation, and reporting on the actions of governmental officials at the local, state, or federal level as relevant to environmental issues in Michigan.

## ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP AND FUNDAMENTAL PROCEDURES

**Section 1.** Membership in the Caucus is granted to any individual who successfully completes the application to join the Caucus and dedicates a minimum of five hours each month to acting on behalf of environmental sustainability and protection.

- A.** Voting rights shall be limited to members of the Michigan Democratic Party.

**Section 2.** All public meetings of the Caucus shall be open to the public regardless of actual or perceived race, color, creed, gender, age, national origin, economic status, religion, ethnic identity, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, physical appearance, or disability.

**Section 3.** Neither test for membership in, nor any oath of loyalty to, the Caucus shall be required or used which has the effect of requiring prospective or current Caucus members to acquiesce in, condone or support discrimination on the grounds of actual or perceived race, color, creed, gender, age, national origin, economic status, religion, ethnic identity, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, physical appearance, or disability.

**Section 4.** The time and place for all public meetings of the Caucus shall be publicized fully and in such a manner as to assure timely notice to all interested parties. Such meetings must be held in places accessible to all Caucus members and large enough to accommodate all interested persons.

**Section 5.** The Caucus shall publicize fully and in such a manner as to assure notice to all interested parties a full description of the legal and practical procedures for selection of Caucus officers and representatives. Such publication shall be done in a timely fashion so that all prospective candidates or applicants for any elected or appointed position within the Caucus will have full and adequate opportunity to compete for office.

**Section 6.** Votes shall not be taken by secret ballot at any meeting of the Caucus.

**Section 7.** All rules and bylaws of the Caucus shall be consistent with the Rules of the Michigan Democratic Party and shall be available upon request, in writing, by any member of the Caucus.

**Section 8.** The unit rule is prohibited in the Caucus.

**Section 9.** No rule shall be adopted at any level of the Caucus which would require a person to cast a vote or be recorded voting contrary to that person's judgment.

**Section 10.** The rules contained in the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* shall govern the Caucus in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with the laws of the state of Michigan, the Rules of the Michigan Democratic Party, these Bylaws, and any special rules of order the Caucus may adopt.

**Section 11.** Election of a member to any office within the Caucus shall require a majority of members voting. If no candidate is elected following an initial vote, the candidate receiving the fewest votes is removed, and the vote is repeated, until one candidate receives a majority.

- A.** District Representatives shall be elected by members of their congressional district present at the meeting when the election is held.
- B.** Lots shall be drawn to break any ties during elections.

#### **ARTICLE IV: OFFICERS AND LEADERSHIP STRUCTURE**

**Section 1.** Together the Executive Committee shall be comprised of the Executive Board and the fifteen district Representatives. The Executive Board shall be comprised of the Chair, First Vice-Chair, Second Vice Chair, Corresponding Secretary, Recording Secretary, and Treasurer. Each member of the Executive Committee shall have a two-year term and be elected at the Spring State Convention in odd numbered years, and shall be elected by all members present. The Executive Committee shall work on behalf of the Caucus as a whole have voting authority for, and general supervision of the affairs of the Caucus between full membership meetings of the Caucus. All Executive Committee meetings shall be open to all members of the Michigan Democratic Party.

- A.** Candidates for caucus office is limited to members of the Michigan Democratic Party.
- B.** The Chair and the First Vice-Chair shall be members of the opposite gender.
- C.** The Chair shall fill any vacancies of the Executive Committee with a person eligible for that office who shall remain in that office until a special meeting shall be called not less than 3 months later and not more than 6 months later when the temporary officer must receive a majority vote of all members of the Executive Committee present to complete the remainder of the term.
- D.** The Chair shall, in consultation with the Executive Board, appoint Regional Coordinators as defined by Article IV, Section 8.
- E.** Officers may be removed from their positions with demonstration of cause and a 3/4 majority vote of the Executive Committee present at the time of the vote.
- F.** All terms of Officers shall begin upon completion of the election of their respective offices.

**Section 2.** The Chair shall preside at all meetings, serve as official representative of the Caucus, report at each meeting, prepare an Annual Report, sign documents on behalf of the Caucus, make appointments to the Caucus, work with all officers to prepare the agenda for the meeting and other such duties applicable to the office as prescribed by the parliamentary authority adopted by the Caucus.

**Section 3.** The First Vice-Chair shall assist the Chair in the discharge of his/her duties, shall temporarily assume the duties and responsibilities of the Chair in his/her absence, and other such duties applicable to the office as prescribed by the parliamentary authority adopted by the Caucus. The Vice-Chair shall serve as Chair if that office should become vacant during his/her term, but only serve in that capacity until a majority vote of the Executive Committee at the next regular meeting to appoint a new Chair for the remainder of the term.

**Section 4.** The Second Vice-Chair shall organize the outreach activities of the Regional Coordinators as directed by the core leadership team, and perform other such duties applicable to the office as prescribed by the parliamentary authority adopted by the Caucus.

**A.** The Second Vice-Chair shall be responsible for updating Appendix 1 following reapportionment.

**Section 5.** The Corresponding Secretary of the Caucus shall coordinate all communication and outreach activities of the Caucus. These communications include, but are not limited to oversight of all social media, press releases, requests from media outlets, in print, digital, and other formats. The Corresponding Secretary shall also create, maintain, and make available a speakers' bureau endorsed by the Caucus. He/She shall see that proper notification is given of the Caucus meetings, and other such duties applicable to the office as prescribed by the parliamentary authority adopted by the Caucus.

**Section 6.** The Recording Secretary of the Caucus shall keep an accurate record and minutes of the proceedings of all meetings. The Secretary completes the Roll Call at all Caucus meetings. He/She shall keep and preserve all the books, documents, correspondence, records, minutes, effects, and any other property of the Caucus, and when a new secretary is elected the past secretary shall forthwith deliver to the newly elected secretary all the previously mentioned items kept and preserved during his/her tenure in office, and other such duties applicable to the office as prescribed by the parliamentary authority adopted by the Caucus.

**Section 7.** The Treasurer shall be responsible for the financial receipts and disbursements of the Caucus subject to the approval of the Executive Committee. The Treasurer shall make financial reports to the Executive Committee and the full membership, and other such duties applicable to the office as prescribed by the parliamentary authority adopted by the Caucus. When a new Treasurer is elected, the past Treasurer shall forthwith deliver to the new Treasurer the funds and all the books and records kept during his/her tenure in office.

**A.** The funds of the Caucus shall be deposited in banks or credit unions approved by a majority vote of the Executive Board.

- B.** Funds shall be drawn upon only when such debit is approved and recorded by any two of the following officers: Chair, First Vice-Chair, Second Vice-Chair, Corresponding Secretary, Recording Secretary, and Treasurer.

**Section 8.** Regional Coordinators, as directed by the Executive Board, shall organize the activities of the District Representatives within their region (see Appendix 1) and perform other such duties applicable to the office as Executive Board. Individuals who hold the Regional Coordinator positions may be from either sex, but must declare residence within the Region they coordinate and provide information to support their declaration. A member who no longer resides in the Region he/she coordinates during the term of office must provide written resignation to the Executive Board. A Regional Coordinator may be appointed to his/her new Region of residence by the Chair of the Caucus only if a vacancy currently exists.

- A.** Regional Coordinators shall provide written updates on their activities and the activities of District Representatives within their Regions on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> of each month or twice per month as agreed to by the majority of the Executive Board and the Regional Coordinator.
- B.** Regional Coordinators shall maintain full privileges of Caucus membership, but as appointees of the Executive Board they are not members of the Executive Committee.
- C.** Regions are subject to change following reapportionment. Appendix 1 shall be updated according to Article IV, Section 4, Part A.

**Section 9.** District Representatives shall organize activities within their District, as directed by the Executive Board and the Regional Coordinators, serve as voice for that District on the Executive Committee, and perform other such duties applicable to the office as prescribed by the parliamentary authority adopted by the Caucus. One District Representative shall represent each of Michigan's Congressional Districts with the fifteenth set aside to represent the Upper Peninsula. Individuals who hold the District Representative positions may be from either gender, but must declare residence within the District they represent and provide information to support their declaration. A member who no longer resides in the District he/she represents during the term of office must provide written resignation to the Second Vice-Chair of the Caucus. A District Representative may be appointed to his/her new District of residence by the Chair of the Caucus only if a vacancy currently exists.

- A.** District Representatives shall provide written updates on their activities taken on behalf of the Caucus to their Regional Coordinators on the 10<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> of each month or twice monthly as agreed to by the Regional Coordinator and the majority of District Representatives within that Region.

- B.** District Representatives are the core organizing members of the Caucus and as such bear a great responsibility for the success of the Caucus. As a Caucus devoted to grassroots section, this is our fundamental unit.

## ARTICLE V: MEETINGS

**Section 1.** A majority of the Executive Board shall call the regular meetings of the Caucus Executive Committee, on the date, and at the location, and time set forth in the meeting notice. At least fourteen (14) days notice shall be given of the date, time, and place of the meeting. Notice may be given by mail, website, or e-mail. A quorum is required for any official business of the Executive Committee to be conducted. A quorum shall require 2/3 of all filled seats comprising the Executive Board, and 1/2 of all filled District Representative seats. The absence of a quorum will be handled in terms as prescribed by the parliamentarian authority adopted by the Caucus.

**Section 2.** At least once per calendar year there shall be a full membership meeting of the Caucus where the Officers and Executive Committee shall report on the Caucus activities. At least fourteen (14) days' notice shall be given of the date, place, and time of the meeting. Notice may be given by mail, website, social media, or e-mail.

**Section 3.** Special meetings of the Executive Committee or full membership meetings may only be called by a majority of the Executive Committee or full membership, respectively. At least fourteen (14) days' notice shall be given of the date, place, and time of the meeting. Notice may be given by mail, website, social media, or e-mail.

**Section 4.** The full Caucus shall meet in conjunction with the State Convention at the date, time, and place established by the MDP Official Call to the State Convention. The full membership meeting of the Caucus at the State Convention shall constitute the meeting required annually by Section 2 of this article.

**Section 5.** Subject to the Rules of the Michigan Democratic Party and these Bylaws, all meetings shall be conducted according to the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*.

## ARTICLE VI: COMMITTEES

**Section 1.** The Chair shall nominate for approval by the majority of the Executive Committee, the committees and the committee chair necessary for the work of the Caucus. The Chair shall move, for approval by the majority of the

Executive Committee, to dissolve all committees and may dismiss any member or Chair of any Committee.

**Section 2.** Upon the MDP Official Call to the State Convention a Rules and Bylaws Committee will be formed and shall meet as necessary and shall dissolve upon completion of the convention.

## **ARTICLE VII: PARLIAMENTARIAN AUTHORITY**

The rules contained in the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* shall govern the Caucus in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws and the Rules of the Michigan Democratic Party.

## **ARTICLE VIII: AMENDMENTS**

**Section 1.** Proposals for changes or amendments to these bylaws shall first be referred to the Rules and Bylaws Committee for its consideration, which shall report its recommendations to the Executive Committee at the next regular meeting of the Caucus or special meeting called for the purpose of the proposed changes to these bylaws.

**A.** If the Rules and Bylaws Committee is not convened, pursuant to Article VI, Section 1, the Chair shall form a Rules and Bylaws Committee to consider proposals for changes or amendments to these bylaws for consideration.

**Section 3.** These bylaws may be amended by a 2/3 majority vote of the members of the Executive Committee and/or the full membership of the Caucus present at a meeting, provided that written notice setting forth the proposed amendments has been given to the Caucus membership at least 7 days prior to the date of the meeting.

**Section 4.** These bylaws shall be in full force and effect upon their adoption and shall supersede all bylaws, rules, motions, and policies of a contrary nature with the exception of the Rules of the Michigan Democratic Party.