Secure ☑ Democracy
FOUNDATION

Michigan on Offense
The Path Forward to Strengthen Our Elections

Michigan's elections follow a rigorous system of checks and balances that ensures every election is free, fair, and secure. In recent years, however, we've seen bad actors exploit weaknesses in state law — fueling misinformation, legal battles, and spurious attempts to overturn the will of the voters.

This factsheet outlines three commonsense policy solutions that Michigan lawmakers and election administrators can consider to close those gaps — before and after Election Day. For a deeper dive into the national context and proven solutions, see our full report, "States on Offense: The Path Forward to Strengthen Our Elections." For more information, please contact us.

This resource is strictly nonpartisan and for educational use only. It is 501(c)(3) compliant and is not intended for any partisan, political, or electioneering activities.

Michigan Elections By the Numbers

Registered Voters: 8,250,203[1]
Voter Turnout (Registered Voters %): 2022 – 62% 2024 – 79%[2]
Voting Methods (Election Day/Early In-Person/Mail %): 2022: 58%/5%/37%; 2024 : 43%/21%/35%[3]
Recent Attempts to Exploit Election Vulnerabilities:
- Lawsuit Seeks to Disqualify Certain Overseas Voters
- Court Rejects SOS Guidance on Signature Verification

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[1] "Voter registration statistics", Michigan Voter Information Center. Accessed at https://mvic.sos.state.mi.us/VoterCount/Index on Sept. 3, 2025.
[2] 2022 EAVS Report, p. 6, Appendix A: Descriptive Tables, Overview Table 1: 2022 EAVS at a Glance; 2024 EAVS Report, p. 6, Appendix A: Descriptive Tables, Executive Summary Table 1: 2024 EAVS at a Glance.
[3] *Id.*

Three Fixes for Stronger Michigan Elections

1	**Build voter confidence in elections** by conducting statewide post-election, pre-certification audits.
2	**Limit frivolous challenges** by establishing explicit standards, processes, and deadlines for post-election judicial challenges.
3	**Increase transparency about the election process** by clarifying the signature verification process for absentee ballots and applications.

Fix #1: Build Voter Confidence in Elections

Lawmakers can implement a uniform statewide audit process that requires localities to verify tabulation and other processes before submitting them for county certification. This process would allow election officials to identify and fix any discrepancies, increasing voter confidence in Michigan's elections.

Current Michigan law requires the Secretary of State to coordinate statewide audits after each election; however, the statutes do not clearly define the scope, timing, or process. Audits typically occur after certification, which does not leave election officials time to address any issues that may arise.

Fix #2: Limit Frivolous Post-Election Challenges

Lawmakers can establish explicit grounds, clarify proper venue, and set minimum evidentiary standards for post-election challenges. They can also set firm deadlines to ensure the timely resolution of post-election challenges.

Michigan law currently provides few safeguards against frivolous post-election challenges. Unclear rules for venue, process, and evidentiary standards can create confusion and cause unnecessary delays. While nearly all challenges have ultimately been rejected, unclear deadlines for resolution cause delays in certification. These delays could jeopardize Michigan's ability to meet federal deadlines for electing presidential electors or appointing new officeholders.

Fix #3: Increase Election Transparency

Lawmakers or election administrators can clearly and publicly define signature verification standards to increase transparency and reduce the risk of litigation.

In 2023, Michigan enacted legislation that provided a general framework for verifying voter signatures on absentee ballot envelopes and applications. However, the statutory framework lacks the transparency found in states like Colorado, Arizona, and Oregon. Ahead of the 2024 election, this lack of statutory clarity resulted in litigation and could continue to trigger judicial challenges.