

State Legislative Candidates – SD 32 – Terry Sabo**1. Why are you interested in serving the people, families and businesses in northern Michigan?**

My grandfather was a sheriff's deputy in Muskegon County and very involved in the community. I grew up watching how he and others came together to make the community a better place. He was a huge influence, and it is one of the reasons I am involved in politics today. Giving back to the community and being part of the solution is important to me. It continues the sense of purpose I saw in my grandfather and other family members. After serving in the Air Force as a military police officer, I worked in Muskegon Heights as a police officer and firefighter for 25 years. After serving as Muskegon County commission chair, becoming a state representative for the greater Muskegon area was a natural continuation in my desire to make our community a great place to live and work. Now I am running for state senator in the new 32nd district which covers five counties. Although these lakeshore counties vary in size and demographics, they share many of the same challenges—economic growth, tourism, affordable housing, and lack of broadband services, to name a few. My leadership experience and strong belief in listening to people, building relationships, and finding consensus will serve this beautiful district well if I am elected state senator.

2. How will you use your role to support the economic vitality of our region?

As state representative, I worked hard to make our area a tourism and entertainment destination and a place where entrepreneurs and start-ups can flourish. My most recent effort as state rep was helping to procure \$800,000 to repair the decaying Muskegon lighthouse which was doomed to topple because of decay. The five counties in the new 32nd district are some of the most beautiful in the state. Let's keep them beautiful while growing their economies. One way to do this is to have stronger communication and collaboration among the counties. If the counties share their resources, work toward solutions that benefit everyone and yet each keep their distinctive qualities, we have a district that will attract the best and brightest to live and work here. I will also make sure at the state level we have the resources we need to serve our counties and provide new opportunities for industry, agriculture, and tourism.

3. Do you believe local government should have broad authority to regulate short-term rentals?

In a word, yes—but with some conditions.

4. How would you address the shortage of skilled labor in northern Michigan?

This problem demands a look at several issues. A fair wage, good affordable housing and quality childcare create balance and opportunity for those seeking jobs. These are not easy to achieve. Raising wages is effective but not always long-term. The challenge of labor requires a far-reaching approach that includes collaboration among the business

community, education providers, nonprofits and other groups that contribute to the communities' growth.

5. How would you prioritize leftover funds from federal aid packages and surplus dollars in the state's general fund?

The first step would be to determine the priority of needs of each county by listening to the leaders and people in the district. I have been traveling around the district for months now and it is already clear that the five counties have some common priorities—affordable housing, internet broadband and the balance of economic growth and tourism while maintaining quality of life for those who live in the communities year-round.

6. The availability of housing is a barrier to business growth and talent attraction in our region. How do you intend to address the affordable housing shortage?

I am proud to have sponsored House Bill 4647 which will enable local governments to support and encourage investment into the rehabilitation of attainable housing in Michigan communities. Several state senate bills are coming to the House Floor that will support the need for affordable housing. I support these bills. They create tools for local governments to partner with non- and for-profit developers, builders and property owners to create or retain affordability and drive investment in housing that is attainable to more households across Michigan. The public and private partners will make decisions based on community goals and site-specific needs, project costs and economic viability of potential investments. But we need to do even more. Many households spend more than half of their income on rent, leaving little money for other expenses. In fact, there are no counties in Michigan where a person earning minimum wage in a full-time position can afford a one or two-bedroom rental home at fair market rent (National Low Income Housing Coalition). That means we must increase wages as well as develop affordable housing. Stable housing is key to economic security and affects people's ability to have food security and to have other necessities in their lives. And not only is there a shortage of affordable homes, there is also a high level of lead, mold, and asbestos in many older homes and apartments today. We need to take a strategic approach and investigate incentives like zoning, grants, low -cost loans and tax credits.

7. Many families struggle to secure quality child care. This can be a barrier to attracting talent and keeping people in or bringing people back into the workforce. How will you work to increase access to affordable and quality child care?

Quality child care is not only important for families so they can work but it is essential for the healthy development of children—which helps them become responsible citizens and adults. I support the bipartisan childcare package passed and signed by the governor which expands access to quality, affordable childcare for families. This package is a culmination of bills that expands access to high-quality childcare by strengthening existing childcare programs and opening more childcare businesses

across the state. The bill also delivers \$1,000 bonuses to childcare professionals and increases childcare subsidy rates to better align state payments with the cost of providing high quality care. Although this is an excellent bill, we need to continue to monitor it and repair any gaps that remain.

8. What are your solutions for supporting businesses being affected directly by inflation and supply chain costs?

Inflation has been building in our economy due to the pandemic and Russia's war with Ukraine, and inflation is an issue worldwide. The newly passed Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) will address health care costs, prescription drug reform, tax reform and climate change. I believe the IRA addresses inflation directly and will be effective at reducing inflation in our economy. The IRA relieves the threat of supply chain bottlenecks by investing in domestic manufacturing and deployment of reliable clean energy that will bring down long-term costs.

Most people experience inflation through the prices they pay for their regular expenses.

Keeping prices down for categories

- The IRA closes tax loopholes exploited by large corporations which will help reduce inflation.
- The IRA empowers Medicare to negotiate lower prescription drug prices, thus lowering costs.
- The bill extends enhanced Affordable Care Act premium tax credits for the next three years.
- The legislation provides money for home energy rebates, consumer tax credits for energy-efficient homes and vehicles, and grants to make affordable housing more energy efficient.

I support these efforts of the IRA and will continue to study and re-evaluate supply chain costs and inflation going forward.