1. Purpose and Responsibility

I grew up understanding that government does not give you your life. You build it. And when government gets in the way of that, people suffer quietly and often alone.

My current district covers parts of Ionia, Kent, Barry, and Eaton counties. It is rural Michigan. The roads are long, the hospitals are stretched, the small businesses are the ones holding communities together, and the feeling that Lansing is making decisions for someone else is something my constituents know well. That is not unique to my district. It is the same reality that defines northern Michigan and the Upper Peninsula. Different geography, same fight.

I am seeking the 33rd Senate seat because rural Michigan deserves someone in that chamber who has lived what these communities live. Two terms in the House taught me how Lansing works and where it fails. I am ready to take that fight to the Senate. The responsibility of this office is straightforward. Show up. Tell the truth. Fight hard. Never forget who sent you.

---

2. Jobs, Investment, and Competitiveness

Northern Michigan and the UP are not lacking in potential. They are lacking a fair shot. State and federal dollars flow toward population centers, and rural communities get what is left. That is not an accident. It is a pattern, and it has to be broken.

In the Senate I will fight for infrastructure investment that reflects the real geography of this state. Broadband is not a luxury. For a business owner in rural Michigan it is the difference between staying open and closing. I will push for economic development policy that does not forget the counties between the cities. And I will carry forward the work I have done on the Natural Resources and Tourism Committee to grow the outdoor economy, which is one of the most powerful and underused engines this region has.

---

3. Housing and Regional Partnerships

Employers across this region tell me the same thing. I can find workers. I cannot house them. People turn down good jobs because there is nowhere to live. That is not a quality of life problem. It is a workforce crisis with real consequences for every business in this region.

I support cutting the regulatory and permitting barriers that slow housing development and drive up costs before a single nail is driven. I support targeted incentives for workforce housing in rural communities where the market alone will not get there. And I want to work directly with the NMCA on this. You know this market. You know what your members need. The solutions that actually hold are built with people who understand the region, not sent down from Lansing.

---

4. Workforce Development and Talent Attraction

Going PRO and Michigan Reconnect work because they are built around real careers. In rural communities these programs are often underused not because people do not want them but because awareness and access fall short. That gap needs to close.

But I learned something in 20 years of healthcare. You can train someone and still lose them. People stay where they can afford to live, where childcare exists, where there is a future for their family. Northern Michigan and the UP have something genuine to offer. The quality of life here is real. What we need is to remove the barriers that make it hard to put down roots, and to make sure people who are looking for exactly what this region has know it exists.

---

5. Childcare Access

This is simple. When parents cannot find childcare, they cannot work. When they cannot work, employers go without, families struggle, and the regional economy weakens. I watched this play out in healthcare for years. Childcare is not a social program. It is infrastructure.

In rural Michigan the shortage is severe. Providers are scarce, distances are long, and wages in the sector do not attract enough people into it. I support flexible licensing that allows small and in home providers to operate without unnecessary barriers, employer partnerships that expand options in the community, and targeted funding for areas where the private market will not fill the gap on its own. I want to work with the Alliance and regional employers to find what is working and scale it.

---

6. Education Outcomes and Funding

Students in rural Michigan deserve schools that focus on the fundamentals. Reading. Math. Preparation for a career, whether that means college or a skilled trade. In the House I led HB 5364 to ensure that changes to Michigan's curriculum standards require approval from elected legislators before they take effect. An unelected board should not be able to quietly rewrite what Michigan children are taught without accountability to the people.

On funding, rural districts carry costs that per pupil formulas do not fully account for. Declining enrollment, transportation, difficulty attracting and keeping good teachers. In the Senate I will fight for formulas that reflect what it actually costs to educate a child in a rural community. On higher education, tuition has climbed while employers in healthcare and the skilled trades cannot find enough people. That disconnect has to be addressed, and funding should follow outcomes, not just enrollment.

---

7. Regulatory Climate and Small Business Growth

The word I hear most from small business owners is predictable. They do not need government to disappear. They need it to be consistent. A permit that takes six months with no explanation is not regulation. It is obstruction. A mandate written for a large manufacturer applied blindly to a small family business in a rural county is not protection. It is burden.

I introduced HB 4160 to do something about it. That bill restricts state agencies from enforcing regulations that go beyond federal standards without clear and convincing public justification. Michigan has a habit of stacking state mandates on top of federal ones. If Washington has already set the standard, Lansing should have to make a compelling case before it goes further.

---

8. Affordability and Economic Vitality

Michigan is losing people. Not because the land is not good or the communities are not strong. Because the cost of staying has gotten too high. Property taxes, energy bills, the cost of starting a business, the weight of mandates and compliance that pile up year after year. Families do the math and some of them leave.

I support real tax relief for working families and small businesses. I support energy policy that puts reliability and cost first, not ideology. And I support a serious review of every mandate on the books to ask whether it is actually delivering what it promised or just adding to the burden of people trying to build a life here.

Northern Michigan and the UP have something most of the country would move here for if they could afford to stay. Making this region more affordable is not just an economic policy. It is how we honor what these communities are and secure what they can still become.