



Marquette County Ambassadors

# 2018 Position Paper



## Infrastructure

- Act 51 of 1951 Formula and General Fund
- NMU Broadband Expansion
- Support Poe Lock
- Support Study of Line 5



## Local Government

- Address impact of revenue sharing decreases
- OPEB and Pension Reform
- Tax Tribunal Reform



## Education

- Equitable Funding Statewide
- Equal Opportunities for Students
- Career and Technical Education
- Investment in Higher Education



## Economic Development

- Medicaid expansion
- Great Lakes Sports Coalition
- Project Empire
- MEDC Funding & Resources
- SB 40



Marquette County Ambassadors

# Infrastructure

## **ACT 51 of 1951 General Fund Appropriation**

**We support** legislation to convert the General Fund appropriations to a long-term stable “restricted” or “constitutional” revenue source and believe that all revenue generated shall be distributed according to the current formula in Act 51 of 1951.

## **ACT 51 of 1951 Formula**

**We oppose** any rewrite of ACT 51 that would favor urban areas at the expense of all UP counties. Therefore, the rewrite of Act 51 is not in our best interest.

## **NMU Broadband Expansion**

**We support** the Education Access Network (EAN) that combines credit and non-credit online educational experiences with the educational broadband/LTE system to access these experiences from communities across the U.P. The EAN will also address the “digital divide” by allowing K-12 students to engage with their schools and complete schoolwork without having to leave their homes. It serves as a model for how to provide educational broadband to rural communities and we want to thank the MEDC for partnering with NMU to expand it quickly across the U.P.

## **Efforts of the state for Poe Lock**

**We urge** our federal legislators to take appropriate action to expedite the US Army Corp of Engineers updated study and release approved funding for the project.

## **Study for Line 5**

**We support** the completion of a study for Line 5 under the Straits of Mackinac.

## **How can you support our efforts?**

Look at additional fuel and registration fees or at lowering interdepartmental grants from the Michigan Transportation Fund.



Marquette County Ambassadors

# Local Government

---

## **Reform Michigan's System of Financing Local Government:**

**We support** the creation of stable and properly funded revenue streams for its local municipalities.

## **OPEB and Pension Reform:**

**We support** legislation that would create a secure fund for county revenue sharing and establish a set schedule for increased payments.

## **Tax Tribunal Reform:**

**We support** a legislative fix that mandates a uniform quality standard for decision-making by applying standard appraisal principles and procedures ensuring that the cost, sales, and income approaches are considered by the Tribunal. Further, the legislation should prevent the use of deed restricted properties as comparables, and enhance the training and qualifications of tribunal members.

## **What community solutions have we found?**

- Marquette has closed a Youth Home facility that assisted challenged youth in our region that was in operation for over 40 years. 26 people were laid off.
- Reducing the county's workforce by over 20%.
- Removing the retiree health insurance for new employees. Also, reduced health insurance coverage and changed carriers to reduce costs.
- Changed new employee retirement benefits for county employees. No longer have the Define Benefit retirement.
- Building energy efficiencies implemented along with technology enhancements.

## **How can you support our efforts?**

- Ensure that new legislation does not impose costs to local governments. No new unfunded legislation.
- Consider modifications to "Proposal A" that currently restricts local government from recovering to pre-recession levels.
- Support and create a stable and properly funded revenue source for local government such as Revenue Sharing or other methods.



Marquette County Ambassadors

# Education

## **Equitable Funding Statewide**

**We support** efforts to equitably restructure school funding for Michigan's students.

**We support** maintaining the 2X Formula.

## **Equal Opportunities**

**We support** access to equal opportunities for all students, regardless of where they live.

## **Career and Technical Education**

**We support** increased funding for Career and Technical Education programming, equipment and facilities, which significantly impact local workforce development.

## **Dual and Concurrent Enrollment**

**We support** legislation allowing these opportunities to be funded collaboratively by colleges/universities, school districts, and families, resulting in greater access for students .

## **What community solutions have we found?**

- Overall, our Marquette County schools have exercised fiscal conservatism while also providing progressive educational programs for our students.
- Our Marquette County schools have made expanded opportunities for Career and Technical Education, and Dual and Concurrent Enrollment a reality.
- Productive collaborations between K-12 and higher education (e.g., shared space).

## **How can you support our efforts?**

- Support new revenue and legislation that allows flexibility in educational programming for our students.
- Resist reduced revenue streams, unfunded mandates and unnecessary regulations.
- Reach out to us with any questions, comments or concerns.
- Support Northern Michigan University's 2019 capital outlay request for the Technical Career and Engineering Technology Facility, which is second on this year's capital outlay list.



Marquette County Ambassadors

# Economic Development

## **Michigan's Medicaid expansion**

**We support** the continuation of Michigan's Medicaid expansion.

## **Great Lakes Sports Coalition**

**We support** SB 523.

## **Project Empire**

**We support** the continuation of resources through this initiative. This includes the efforts being made to reopen Empire Mine.

## **Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) Funding & Resources**

**We support** flexible funding and resources from the MEDC.

## **SB 40**

**We support** the ability for our border communities to be able to receive incentive dollars for employees who may not reside in the state or county. With talent being the number one concern of business today, it is not unusual to draw employees from a wider radius. Our counties that border Wisconsin and Canada need the ability to hire cross border and should be able to include those employees in any incentive program.

## **What community solutions have we found?**

- A strong economic development ecosystem to support businesses and inventors (Invent@NMU, Innovate Marquette, Invest UP, Northern Initiatives, Accelerate UP, LSCP, SBDC, Chamber of Commerce).
- Our private-public economic development agency (LSCP) collaborating beyond borders to leverage and share resources.
- Variety of options for businesses to secure capital locally.
- Collaborate efforts around Project Empire, CTE programming, air service expansion, recreation, etc.

## **How can you support our efforts?**

- Respectively consider our point of view when we weigh in on public policy issues.
- Reach out to our communities if you are unclear as to how decisions and legislation will impact our region.
- Support economic development projects that are important to our local economy.