

**Michigan State AFL-CIO  
Election  
Candidate Questionnaire**

Candidate: **Eric Coleman** District: **35** House District  
Campaign: **Citizens to Elect Eric Coleman**  
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1. Have you previously held public office? If so, what position and for what time frame?  
**Yes. Southfield Board of Education, 1986-1990; Oakland County Board of Commissioners, 1996 to present.**
2. What is your opinion on granting tax credits as an incentive to locate in Michigan?  
**It's a tool that should be used to attract companies to relocate here and to bring jobs. However, companies who do locate here and receive tax breaks should be held accountable to their stated job creation.**
3. As an elected official how would you support K-12 public education?  
**I would fight to keep at least current funding levels and try to increase it with new revenue, such as taxes on services.**
4. Do you support bargaining rights for all public school employees?  
**As a former public school teacher, college instructor and teacher union's vice president, I most definitely do!**
5. Do you believe part-time workers or unemployed worker in a training program should have the same level of unemployment benefits as full-time unemployed workers?  
**I do believe both the part-time worker and the unemployed worker who are in a training program should receive unemployed benefits that allow a modest standard of living while being trained for a new career path.**
6. Employers considering a move to Michigan take into consideration the "Quality of Life" in the state – including such things as parks, police and fire protection, quality of schools, access to universities, affordable training options for employees, etc.. Discussion over state revenues, often focus only on business tax levels. Will you commit to holding the line on measures that will reduce revenue for public services for Michigan citizens?  
**Yes. The reduction in revenue sharing has seriously damaged our quality of life and has caused our residents to seek other places that support these amenities that Michigan use to support through revenue sharing.**
7. Please comment on your feelings about both "Prevailing Wage" and "Living Wage" legislation and/or local ordinances.  
**I support both. I was a co-signer on a proposed "Living Wage" resolution in Oakland County that was defeated by the Republican majority. We do have, here in Southfield, a "Living Wage" ordinance, in which I participated in and spoke before council in support.**

8. In recent years, the legislature has reduced pension and health care benefits to state employees and school employees-including retirees. Would you vote against further reductions? Would you vote to restore retiree health and benefits cuts for retirees?

**Yes to both questions.**

8. Please express your thoughts on making Michigan a "Right to Work" state or Zones within the state.

**I am a lifelong unionist and have a record that proves that. I would vigorously fight against any movement in that direction and fight any legislation offered.**

- 10., Michigan is suffering from a structural budget deficit resulting in cut to programs and services. Should we continue this course and what is next or what would you do to resolve it?

**No – this can't continue. I support a change to our tax structure, either a graduated tax or/and an additional tax on service. In addition, I would propose a 3-5 year budget projection. I would also eliminate tax incentives and loopholes for companies failing to create and retain jobs. Require yearly performance reviews for all remaining tax credits and incentives and audit government contracts to eliminate waste.**

**Establish a budget based on the priorities of our local communities: education, health care, public safety and services for children and seniors.**

- Offer incentives for college graduates and young families to locate in Michigan and buy homes
- Close corporate tax loopholes
- Implement a graduated income tax
- Require performance audits of state departments
- Find ways to collaborate with nonprofit organizations to provide services
- Recognize the important economic contribution of small businesses and Entrepreneurs – offer incentives and ease burdensome regulations
- Make community college and state college tuition affordable for all families

11. One of the key employment opportunities in our state and bridge construction and repair – financed primarily by the gasoline tax. Would you support state road funding initiatives such as raising the gas tax to provide adequate transportation funding and to improve Michigan roads?

**Yes**

12. What campaign reforms might you champion in the Legislative?

**Improve transparency by requiring full disclosure of those involved in "issue" campaigns; and quarterly reports for all candidate committees and PAC reports.**

13. Do you commit to voting in support of a resolution favoring the Federal Employee Choice Act? If so what more can be done to assist workers who want to join a union?

**Yes. The financial penalty for an employer that interferes with a worker's right to join a union should be severe in order to discourage such acts from the employer.**

14. Would you publicly defend Prevailing Wage or Living Wage laws or ordinances against attacks by speaking out/writing letters to the editor/or commenting on radio talk shows?  
**Yes, most definitely.**
15. Do you support a strong public school system – as opposed to privatization by way of vouchers or tuition tax credits?  
**Yes. As a former teacher, educator, I definitely support strong schools.**
16. Would you support or consider a public option with a national health care plan?  
**Yes.**
17. What is your position on privatizing public services? Why?  
**I'm against it. In the long run, it does not save money. Unionized positions can provide services at a competitive price. Contractors are typically eliminating health care benefits for employees. These costs then fall upon taxpayers to pick up.**
18. Labor often supports basic consumer protections – What is your position of pricing?  
**All items should have their prices attached, not just affixed on the shelves.**
19. What is your understanding of the state Unemployment Benefits and Taxes in Michigan?  
**First, the worker who receives Unemployment Benefits must pay taxes on benefits received, which I consider unfair. Secondly, all unemployed workers deserve a safety net. Unemployment benefits need a long-term strategy, starting with an extension of benefits until the end of 2010. The computation of the Michigan Unemployment Benefits needs to shift to offering incentives to companies that hire employees in special classes (like displaced workers). Also we need greater enforcement to ensure that all employers who should be paying into the system are doing so, including those that employ household and agricultural workers.**
20. Will you work with Labor, your teammates, from your election, when the Legislative caucus chooses its leadership team, including Speaker, Majority and minority leaders?  
**Yes.**
21. Would you support reform of Michigan's Workers Compensation legislation, and – if so what kind of improvements?  
**The issue of Michigan's Workers Compensation is that it has not been increased for sometime and should be.**
22. Will you support wage parity legislation?  
**Yes.**

Submitted by:  
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