



**TRY AND
STOP US!**



REPORT · OCTOBER 14, 2026

MICHIGAN REPUBLICANS TRIED TO OVERTURN AN ELECTION THEY LOST. **THEY ARE STILL TRYING TO REWRITE THE RULES.**

Six years, 39 bills, 16 false electors, one failed petition drive and a proof-of-citizenship bill waiting on a single Senate majority — a step-by-step record of how Michigan Republicans have tried to change who gets to vote and who gets to count it.

THEY CAN'T WIN A FAIR FIGHT IN MICHIGAN — SO THEY KEEP CHANGING THE RULES.

Michigan Republicans have spent nearly six years trying to undo an election they lost. They began in November 2020 by trying to hold up the certification of Detroit's votes, and weeks later 16 Republicans gathered in their party's basement to sign certificates declaring themselves Michigan's presidential electors. They followed with 39 bills to tighten the rules before their own Senate investigation found no evidence of widespread fraud, and when the governor vetoed the core of the package, they ran a petition drive to route it around her.

Michigan voters answered in 2022 by rejecting the party's statewide slate and writing voting rights into the constitution. Republicans came back with a constitutional amendment their own House could not pass, then an allied petition drive that fell three signatures short in a state sample of a thousand, and now a proof-of-citizenship bill that passed the House and stopped there.

They keep trying to change who gets to vote and who gets to count it. Here is what they've tried, step by step.

THE MARGIN

154,000

Votes by which Michigan Republicans lost the 2020 presidential race — the result they tried to stop the state from certifying.

THE PACKAGE

39

Bills Senate Republicans filed in March 2021 to tighten voting rules, three months before their own investigation found no widespread fraud.

THE MARGIN NOW

3

Signatures by which an allied proof-of-citizenship amendment missed the 2026 ballot, in a state sample of 1,000.

KEY FINDINGS

01 Michigan Republicans want to make Michiganders prove their citizenship before they can register to vote.

The state House passed a bill doing exactly that in April, on a party-line vote, and it would create a class of “federal-only” voters — Michiganders the state cannot match to a citizenship record, who could vote for president but not for governor or school board. The bill stopped at the Democratic-held Senate.

02 Michigan Republicans tried to write that requirement into the constitution, and an allied petition drive missed this year’s ballot by three signatures in a state sample of a thousand.

A Republican resolution drew 58 of the 74 House votes a constitutional amendment needs. An outside campaign then filed 709,841 signatures for an amendment that would also have ended the option for voters without a photo ID to sign an affidavit and cast a regular ballot. After challenges to a random sample of 1,000 of those signatures, the Board of State Canvassers counted 626 valid where 629 were needed and deadlocked 2 to 2 on certifying it.

03 Michigan Republicans tried to throw out Detroit’s ballots in 2020, and Trump personally pressed them to reverse course.

The two Republicans on Wayne County’s canvassing board deadlocked its certification, and one proposed certifying every community in the county except Detroit — the state’s largest city and a majority-Black one. Shortly after the board reversed itself and certified 4 to 0, Trump and the chair of the Republican National Committee called them both. “If you can go home tonight, do not sign it,” the party chair said on a recording the *Detroit News* published three years later. Both signed affidavits the next day trying to take their votes back.

04 Michigan Republicans’ own investigation found no widespread fraud, and the party has run on the claim ever since.

The Republican-led Senate Oversight Committee reported in June 2021 that it “found no evidence of widespread or systematic fraud,” and the state’s review of the 2024 election turned up 15 potential noncitizen ballots out of more than 5.7 million cast. Republicans still gave the House elections committee to a member who says 2020 was stolen, and nominated for governor a candidate who asked the state to delay certifying his own defeat.

SIX YEARS OF TRYING.

NOVEMBER
2020

Michigan Republicans tried to stop the state from certifying a presidential result they lost by 154,000 votes.

Michigan certifies through county canvassing boards before anything reaches the state. The two Republicans on Wayne County's board, which covers Detroit and about 16 percent of the statewide vote, voted against certifying, deadlocking the board 2 to 2, before reversing themselves that evening and certifying 4 to 0. About half an hour after the meeting ended, Trump and the chair of the Republican National Committee reached both Republicans by phone, and the party chair told them not to sign and promised them lawyers. The next evening each signed an affidavit asking to rescind a vote already cast. John James, the party's nominee for U.S. Senate that year and its nominee for governor this one, wrote to the Board of State Canvassers days before it met to ask for a two-week delay and an audit, and conceded only after the state certified without him.

DECEMBER
2020

Sixteen Michigan Republicans signed certificates in their party's basement claiming to be the state's presidential electors.

Michigan's actual electors met in the Capitol on December 14 to cast the state's votes for Joe Biden. Sixteen Republicans met instead in the basement of the state party's headquarters and signed documents describing themselves as the "duly elected and qualified electors" for president, and some of them then tried to enter the Capitol, where law enforcement turned them away. The certificates went to the vice president and the National Archives as though they were an official record of Michigan's vote. Three days later, a bipartisan hand audit of every presidential ballot in Antrim County — the rural county whose election-night reporting error had become the foundation of nearly every Michigan fraud theory — confirmed the certified result, with a net gain of 12 votes for Trump.

They lost by 154,000 votes. Then they tried to stop the count, and signed certificates saying they had won.

MARCH & JUNE
2021

Republicans filed 39 bills to tighten Michigan’s voting rules, then their own investigation found no evidence of widespread fraud.

Senate Republicans introduced a 39-bill package in March that would have required identification merely to apply for an absentee ballot, while closing every ballot drop box in the state at 5 p.m. on the day before an election. The Senate Oversight Committee, chaired by a Republican, had been investigating the election since November 2020, and after more than 28 hours of testimony from nearly 90 witnesses it concluded in June that it had found “no evidence of widespread or systematic fraud in Michigan’s prosecution of the 2020 election.” The committee also recommended that the attorney general investigate people using false claims about Antrim County to raise money or publicity.

OCTOBER 2021 –
JULY 2022

Republicans ran a petition drive designed to carry vetoed voting restrictions around the governor.

The governor vetoed legislation that would have pushed voters who reach the polls without an ID onto provisional ballots, ending Michigan’s affidavit option, under which such a voter signs a sworn statement and casts a regular ballot. Her veto message counted more than 18,000 voters who had relied on the affidavit in recent elections. Because the Michigan Constitution bars a governor from vetoing a law initiated by petition, Republicans began gathering signatures to send language mirroring the vetoed bills’ major provisions straight to the Republican legislature. The campaign discarded roughly 30,000 signatures that appeared to be forged and filed the rest two months past the deadline, and the measure never reached the ballot. Among its supporters at the time was the lawmaker who now serves as Speaker of the Michigan House.

NOVEMBER
2022

Michigan voters rejected the party’s statewide slate and wrote voting rights directly into the state constitution.

Kristina Karamo, who had campaigned for secretary of state on unevidenced allegations of fraud in Detroit, lost by more than 615,000 votes — the worst margin any Republican suffered at the top of Michigan’s ticket that year — and did not concede. Three months later the state party elected her its chair over an opponent whose own campaign for attorney general had been built on 2020 fraud claims. On the same ballot, Michigan voters approved Proposal 2 by nearly 20 points, guaranteeing nine days of early in-person voting along with state-funded postage and drop boxes. The amendment also requires that election results be certified based solely on the votes cast — a direct answer to what Wayne County’s Republicans had attempted two years earlier.

JULY & AUGUST
2023

Prosecutors brought felony charges over the elector certificates and over voting machines taken out of county custody.

Michigan's attorney general charged each of the 16 Republicans who signed the false elector certificates with eight felony counts, among them forgery and conspiracy. A special prosecutor separately charged Matthew DePerno, the party's 2022 nominee for attorney general, over an operation that prosecutors allege took five ballot tabulators out of three Michigan counties and broke into them. More than three years later, that case has yet to reach trial.

FEBRUARY
2025

Republicans handed the Michigan House elections committee to a member who says the 2020 election was stolen.

Taking control of the chamber after the 2024 election, Republicans renamed its elections committee the Election Integrity Committee and gave the gavel to Rep. Rachelle Smit, a former township clerk. "I absolutely think that it was stolen, yeah, and I'm not shy to say that," she told Votebeat on taking the job, repeating claims of post-election "ballot dumps." She has also described the conduct of the 16 Republicans charged over the 2020 elector certificates as "completely legal," and she named a proof-of-citizenship constitutional amendment as her committee's first order of business.

MAY & JUNE
2025

The citizenship amendment died 16 votes short, and Republicans turned on the secretary of state instead.

Amending the Michigan Constitution takes two-thirds of each chamber, and the Republican resolution requiring documentary proof of citizenship to register drew 58 votes on the House floor against the 74 it needed, failing without a single Democratic vote. Within weeks the House voted along party lines to hold Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson in contempt for withholding portions of the clerk training materials its oversight committee had subpoenaed, which her office said posed a security risk. Republicans followed by suing her in the Court of Claims and introducing three articles of impeachment against her. Of the seven election bills introduced in the House by that June, only one would have made voting easier.

SEPTEMBER 2025 ●

MARCH 2026

The false electors case ended without a trial.

A district judge dismissed all charges against the 15 Michigan Republicans still facing them over the 2020 elector certificates, concluding that prosecutors had not shown the intent a fraud case requires. Trump pardoned all 16 that November, a gesture with no effect on the state case, since a presidential pardon covers only federal charges and none of them had ever been charged federally. Michigan's attorney general announced in March that she would not appeal, releasing a 110-page report on the evidence her office had assembled against each defendant.

APRIL –
SEPTEMBER
2026 ●**Republicans moved a citizenship bill through the House, and an allied petition drive missed the ballot by three signatures in a state sample.**

House Republicans approved House Bill 4765 along party lines in April, requiring documentary proof of citizenship to register and creating a class of "federal-only" voters shut out of state and local races. It went to a Senate that Democrats control, where it has not moved since. A separate campaign had filed 709,841 signatures in March for a constitutional amendment that would have required proof of citizenship and ended the affidavit option for voters without a photo ID. State election staff reviewed a random sample of 1,000 of those signatures, and after challenges the Board of State Canvassers counted 626 valid where 629 were needed and deadlocked 2 to 2 along party lines on certifying it. Neither the Michigan Supreme Court nor the U.S. Supreme Court would order it onto the ballot.

One Senate majority and one governor's signature are all that stand between House Bill 4765 and Michigan law.

BY THE NUMBERS**15**

Potential noncitizen ballots found in Michigan's review of the 2024 election.

5.7M+

Ballots cast in that same election.

0

Evidence of widespread or systematic fraud found by Republicans' own Senate investigation.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT IS UP TO US.

MICHIGAN'S ELECTIONS WORK, AND REPUBLICANS KEEP SAYING SO THEMSELVES.

The Republican-led Senate investigation of 2020 found “no evidence of widespread or systematic fraud,” and concluded that those promoting Antrim County as proof of a stolen election had put everything else they said “in a position of zero credibility.” A bipartisan hand audit of every presidential ballot in Antrim confirmed the certified result. The state's review of 2024 turned up 15 potential noncitizen ballots out of more than 5.7 million.

MICHIGAN REPUBLICANS NEED ONE MORE ELECTION TO FINISH THE JOB.

The proof-of-citizenship bill that cleared the GOP-controlled state House in April would block tens of thousands of eligible Michiganders from voting in state and local races, and it is one Senate majority and one governor's signature away from taking effect. Republicans have been clear about what follows if they get both: the chair of the House elections committee calls that bill “the most important thing” the legislature could do, and the party's nominee for secretary of state wants tighter monitoring of ballot drop boxes. The backers of the failed citizenship amendment have promised to return. This November, Michigan voters alone decide whether these bills have an opportunity to become law.

WHAT MICHIGAN VOTERS NEED TO KNOW.

Voters pick our leaders, not the other way around. Michigan Republicans spent 2020 trying to flip that, lost in court, lost at the canvassing board, lost their own investigation and lost at the ballot box in 2022, then spent every year since trying to write the result they wanted into law. They can't win a fair fight here, so they are trying to shrink the electorate instead, rigging the game at our expense while Michigan families pay more at the grocery store and autoworkers absorb the cost of Trump's tariffs. Their plan only works if a missed deadline or a slow mail truck hands them our vote. They are counting on us to stay home. Don't give it to them.

**Voters pick our leaders,
not the other way around.**

MAKE YOUR PLAN · ELECTION DAY IS NOVEMBER 3, 2026

HERE'S WHAT EVERY MICHIGANDER NEEDS TO KNOW.

They are counting on a missed deadline. Five dates and five facts that make sure your vote counts.

BY MON
OCT 19

Check your registration today, and register by Monday, October 19.

Look yourself up at michigan.gov/vote, which is also where you register online through that Monday. Miss it and you can still register in person at your clerk's office through 8 p.m. on Election Day, with proof of where you live.

STARTS SAT
OCT 24

Vote early and in person, starting Saturday, October 24.

Every Michigan community runs at least nine days of early voting, through Sunday, November 1, and some open sooner or add the Monday before the election.

REQUEST BY
OCT 30

If you vote by mail, hand your ballot back — don't mail it late.

Request your ballot online or by mail by 5 p.m. Friday, October 30, or in person at your clerk's office by 4 p.m. Monday, November 2. Your ballot must reach your clerk by 8 p.m. on November 3, and a postmark will not save it — so use your city or township drop box, or walk it in yourself.

NO PHOTO
ID? VOTE.

If you do not have a photo ID, you can still cast a regular ballot.

Michigan asks for one at the polls, but a voter without it signs an affidavit and votes a ballot that counts like everyone else's. Republicans have tried to take that option away, and it is still the law — so do not leave the polls without voting. Polls are open 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

CURE BY
NOV 6

If there is a problem with your signature, you can still fix it.

Clerks must contact you when a signature is missing or does not match, and you have until 5 p.m. on Friday, November 6, to cure it — so watch for that call.



**VOTERS PICK OUR LEADERS.
NOT THE OTHER WAY AROUND.**



MAKE YOUR PLAN • MICHIGAN 2026

Oct 19

Last day to register online or by mail.
In person at your clerk's office
through Election Day.

Oct 24

Early in-person voting opens
statewide and runs at least nine days,
through Nov 1.

Nov 3

Election Day. Polls open 7 a.m. to 8
p.m. Ballots must reach your clerk by
8 p.m.

Check your registration and find your clerk at michigan.gov/vote

ABOUT TRY AND STOP US

Try And Stop Us is an organization fighting to defend elections in 2026 and beyond. As Donald Trump and his allies work to rig the game and sow distrust in our elections because they can't win a fair fight, Try And Stop Us moves quickly to amplify the work of organizers and local leaders — helping their voices reach further, faster, as one unified story.

For more information, please reach out to info@tryandstopus.org