



Summary from OCDP “Listening Session with the Chair”

Purpose of meeting: The Chair of OCDP, Jody Job, heard the Black community's concerns and made a decision to host listening sessions where our Black community members could voice their questions and concerns. To ensure these meetings are a safe and equitable space, we asked Stephanie Crider and Amy Mindell, OCDP volunteers, to assist with planning and moderating the listening sessions. This document serves as “*running notes*” so that all members of OCDP have access to the information that was discussed. The OCDP will be working on action items that we can present at the next listening session.

The **first listening session** with community members was held on November 6th, 2021.

The **second listening session** included elected officials and was held on January 8th, 2022.

Next Meeting: March 5th, 12-2pm

Sign up here: <https://www.mobilize.us/oaklandcountydems/event/436182/>

For any question and/or concerns you can always reach the OCDP at staff@ocdp.org.

OCDP Listening Session on November 6th, 2021

Date: 11/06/21

Time: 12:00 - 2:00pm

Location: OCDP Office

OCDP Community Guidelines

- No personal attacks
- One person speaks at a time
- Be respectful, no yelling
- Be generous and accept other views
- Step up and step back /Contribute and don't dominate the conversation
- Be an active listener
- Focus on issues re: the Black community
- Be honest
- Speak from the heart without fear
- Ask clarifying questions

Guidelines were created at our first OCDP Listening Session on November 6th, 2021 and can be amended as needed.



OCDP Listening Session on January 8th, 2022

Date: 01/08/22

Time: 12:00 - 2:00pm

Location: On zoom

Attendees: 96

Electeds Present Electeds:

1. Commissioner Gwen Markham
2. Senator Jeremy Moss
3. Congressman Andy Levin
4. Commissioner Marcia D. Gershenson
5. Commissioner Charlie Cavell
6. Senator Mallory McMorrow
7. Chief Assistant Prosecuting Attorney David Williams on behalf of Karen McDonald
8. State Representative Padma Kuppa
9. Congresswoman Haley Stevens
10. Senator Adam Hollier
11. Senator Stephanie Chang
12. State Representative Mari Manoogian
13. Commissioner Penny Luebs
14. Congresswoman Rashida Tlaib
15. State Representative Brenda Carter
16. State Representative Kyra Bolden
17. State Representative Regina Weiss
18. County Commissioner Janet Jackson
19. Senator Marshall Bullock

Resources and comments from Elected Officials in the Zoom chat:

State Representative Brenda Carter:

I introduced Michigan House Resolution 123 of 2019 to directly address Black maternal mortality. As a Black mother, who lost a child, I know first hand the plight of Black women. Please read the resolution that was adopted in the House of Representatives. <http://www.legislature.mi.gov/documents/2019-2020/resolutionintroduced/House/pdf/2019-HIR-0123.pdf>

TO ALL: Please join the youth in our community as we listen to their voices. Our listening tour will be March 18th from 3 p.m. until 6 p.m. at Oakland University in the Oakland Center. More information to come! If you want more information, email us at brendacarter@house.mi.gov.

There is a great organization in Pontiac, Life Beyond Re-entry. Please email my office at brendacarter@house.mi.gov

Congresswoman Rashida Tlaib:

Black Maternal Mortality

Full link:

<https://underwood.house.gov/media/press-releases/president-biden-signs-first-bill-underwood-s-historic-momnibus-legislation-law>

Black Maternal Health Caucus:

<https://blackmaternalhealthcaucus-underwood.house.gov/Momnibus>

A national organization called The Center for Popular Democracy supports and funds local organizations on civic engagement can be found here:

<https://populardemocracy.org/sites/default/files/High%20School%20Registration%20Toolkit%20Final%20-%20Web.pdf>

Good background information from the National Education Association about the dark money and groups behind the attack on our school boards:

<https://www.nea.org/advocating-for-change/new-from-nea/who-behind-attacks-educators-and-public-schools>

Michigan Liberation has made a huge difference in our communities. Learn more about their work: <https://miliberation.org>

State Senator Stephanie Chang:

Here is some info about a bill Senator Geiss introduced regarding doula care access last term, I don't think it has been reintroduced yet:

<https://senatedems.com/geiss/news/2020/06/12/geiss-introduces-bill-to-allow-doula-services-for-medicaid-recipients/>

Currently working on a bill regarding scholarships for aspiring doulas who are low-income and need some assistance -- not yet introduced.

12 bill package regarding police accountability and transparency:

<https://senatedems.com/chang/news/2021/05/25/victory-chang-announce-bipartisan-police-improvement-measures/>

Senator Chang has facilitated a Girls Making Change fellowship for the past 6 years for high school girls of color (predominantly Black/Latina) every year as a way to provide opportunities for leadership/community action training, shadowing elected women of color and work on a community action project in the community.

State Rep Mari Manoogian:

Here's the first report from LG Gilchrist's task force on MI Covid Racial Disparities: https://content.govdelivery.com/attachments/MIEOG/2020/12/03/file_attachments/1616552/COVID-19%20Task%20Force%20on%20Racial%20Disparities%20Interim%20Report.pdf

Commissioner Janet Jackson:

Oakland County Board is Commissioners resolved "Racism as a Public Health Crisis" after the George Floyd murder. We increased promotion and health care services at our Southfield and Pontiac health divisions. Covid information, testing and vaccines have been instituted in conjunction with our black churches and public schools as outreach into our communities has been strengthened during the pandemic.

Congressman Andy Levin:

A few ideas on strategies: (1) Hire Black people and for important positions in your official office! (2) Organize special events. In my case, I organized a series of anti-racism workshops for constituents and created an annual MLK student summit. (3) Introduce and co-sponsor legislation to transform the power structure and empower African Americans and other people of color. There are so many examples. Here are a few:

- Bobby Rush's Emmett Till Anti-Lynching Act
- Sheila Jackson-Lee's bill to set up commission to study/develop proposals for reparations
- Ayanna Pressley's Ending PUSHOUT Act (to stop discriminatory school discipline victimizing Black girls)

How about this to engage young Black voters - extend the voting age to 16! That's something I voted for, but less than 100 Dems went along (much less, any Republicans!). I guess big change takes time.

One other important strategy, to me, is not only to introduce bills that focus on racial justice, but to include racial justice in *every* bill we pass. An example from my own work is my EV Freedom Act, which is mostly about installing EV chargers throughout the nation's highway system so people can drive EVs anywhere without fear of running out of juice. But the bill also requires that fully 50% of the spending occur in frontline and vulnerable communities. And it focuses on adding chargers in BIPOC-rich communities where people may live in apartments or small houses that do not have personal garages where they can charge their cars.

Another strategy that feels important is tackling racism globally. One amazing country I have long been involved with is Haiti, and I learned to speak Haitian Kreyol while I was helping women of color organize unions in nursing homes in the 1980s. In Congress, I founded a new Haiti Caucus last year. I obtained a list of the congressional districts with the most Haitian Americans, and I sought out and listened to a lot of those members. I asked three powerful Black women who represent some of the most Haitian constituents to co-chair the new caucus with me: Ayanna Pressley from Boston, MA; Yvette Clarke from NYC; and Val Demings from Orlando, FL. It's such an honor to work with them. We are rocking!

State Senator Mallory McMorrow:

Some of our work here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HV04aMXcd5s&t=174s>

Speech in the wake of murder of George Floyd on racism at home

Bills

Senate Joint Resolution K (2019)- removes "except for as punishment for crime" for involuntary servitude

SB 0069 of 2019 - Extend time for compensation for wrongfully convicted folks

SB 1168 of 2020 - penalties for false report of a crime to law enforcement based solely upon the alleged perpetrator's race or ethnicity

SB 1034 of 2020 - Civil rights: racial discrimination; African, Caribbean, and diaspora affairs commission act; create.

SB 0905 of 2020 - state buildings; display or use of the Confederate battle flag on the grounds of the capitol building; prohibit.

General Civil Rights

SB 1166 of 2020- individuals filing complaints against law enforcement; allow to remain private.

SB 1006 of 2020

(PA 392 of 2020)- Human services: food assistance; considering an individual ineligible for food assistance based on a felony conviction; prohibit

Environmental Protections

<https://www.detroitnews.com/story/news/local/michigan/2021/08/10/michigan-democrats-promote-climate-resilience-plan-wake-flooding/5546806001/>

Resolutions

SR 0033 of 2019 - Black Maternal Health Month

SR 0040 of 2019 - Black April Memorial Week

SR 0062 of 2019 - Juneteenth

Senate Resolution 0066 (2021) - Juneteenth (yearly)

SCR 0027 of 2020 - A concurrent resolution to declare that racism is a public health crisis in the state of Michigan

Here's a shared Google Doc with clickable links that my team will update with more of our work on environmental justice/protections, paid leave, economic development etc:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1MKr_D829O8fTJoHCjPUD2SPLmGzpE-YOLEXmvMUvcUQ/edit?usp=sharing

Additionally - our office eliminated the practice of unpaid internships. All of our internships are paid and we've been proud that it's created opportunities for multiple young women of color to step into this space and gain experience. Unpaid internships mean those opportunities are only available to those with the means to afford unpaid work. I hope all of us in the party can focus on ensuring we have the financial resources to ensure more of our campaign side roles can be paid to allow more people to get into this work.

Another key thing that many people don't know is possible - some of the proudest work I've done has been introducing bills brought to me by constituents. You can and should bring an idea or a problem to your state Senator or Rep - and all of us in these positions should work to create more avenues for people to engage in that way. I'd love to hear ideas for how we can improve that ongoing dialogue with people. We're ready.

Commissioner Gwen Markham

At a local level, the Board of Commissioners makes appointments to many committees and local boards and authorities. We are intentionally reaching out to BIPOC members of the community to ask them to serve. Local boards and commissions are great places for people to start into the system.

Congresswoman Haley Stevens

I commit to coming to the church (and school boards), learning more and joining forces in what's needed to protect these essential initiatives.

VOTING RIGHTS legislation now. Repeal the filibuster. Get it done.

I have seen it with my own eyes and will do whatever it takes to ensure Michigan has black representation in Congress, in State office and beyond. Count me as a partner, ally, and collaborator.

Senator Jeremy Moss

<https://senatedems.com/moss/news/2021/01/04/governor-whitmer-signs-additional-bills-expanding-criminal-justice-reform-in-michigan/>

Commissioner Marcia Gershenson

Contact me about running for county commissioner mgershenson22@gmail.com,
248-808-1032

OCDP Next Steps:

1. The OCDP will reach out to Senator McMorrow to put together an educational session on what the role of legislators are and how we can better engage w/ constituents.
 2. The OCDP will reach out to State Representative Brenda Carter to learn more about issues that face the BIPOC community.
 3. School board meetings will be added onto the OCDP website, app and newsletters. The OCDP is working to see the best way to be more hands-on with Oakland County School Boards.
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