

STAY INFORMED

STAY UP TO DATE IN DETROIT



A platform that amplifies the voice of the people for collective change.



MICHIGAN EXPANDED VOTER ACCESS

www.michigan.gov/sos



GET THE ACP

WWW.EDUCATIONSUPERHIGHWAY.ORG

# DETROIT CHANGE INITIATIVE



Register to Vote or Update Your Voter Registration



THE POWER IS IN OUR HANDS  
YOUR VOICE MATTERS  
YOUR VOTE MATTERS  
UPDATE YOUR VOTER REGISTRATION TODAY

## STAY ENGAGED, STAY ACTIVE: ELECTIONS MATTER

Elections are held every year. Elections matter for the mayor, city council, clerk, and board of police commissioners. Go to [www.mi.gov/vote](http://www.mi.gov/vote) for details on elections in your community.

## PROPOSAL 2 GUIDANCE

Michigan voters handily approved Proposal 2, which allows early in-person voting, among other changes, had 58.6 percent of the vote with 41.4 percent opposing. Proposal 1 will now [amend the state constitution to allow nine days of early voting](#), permit private funds for election administration,

and require state-funded absentee ballot boxes, among other things. It will also continue to allow registered voters to vote without an ID as long as they sign an affidavit.

“The initiative makes Michigan one of two dozen states to allow early in-person voting and one of 20 states to require the state to cover postage costs for absentee ballots and pay for ballot drop boxes for every 15,000 voters in a municipality.

The proposal [also requires the state to spend more on administering elections](#), including approximately \$2.1 million on absentee ballot drop boxes and \$4.8 million on postage costs on 6 million absentee ballots, according to an analysis from the [nonpartisan House Fiscal Agency](#).

The analysis says that local clerks will shoulder additional early in-person voting costs under the proposal, but some \$16 million in federal election funding could be used to

offset that cost.

## VOTER PROVISIONS

A proposal to amend the state constitution to add provisions regarding elections. This proposed constitutional amendment would:

- Recognize the fundamental right to vote without harassing conduct;
- Require military or overseas ballots to be counted if postmarked by election day;
- Provide voter right to verify identity with photo ID or signed statement;
- Provide voters suitable a single application to vote absentee in all elections;
- Require state-funded absentee ballot drop boxes and postage for absentee applications and ballots;

*Michigan Proposal 2  
passed handily by  
voters*



### *PROPOSAL 2 Guidance*

1. prepaid return postage for absent voter (AV) applications and ballots
2. a permanent AV list
3. required absent voter (AV) applications and ballots drop-boxes
4. Additional changes related to absentee voting, including to signature matching/"curing" and military and overseas voter ballots were also required.
5. Early in-person voting for statewide and federal elections

- Provide that only election officials may conduct post-election audits;
- Require nine days of early in-person voting;
- Allow donations to fund elections, which must be disclosed;
- Require canvass boards to certify election results based only on the official records of votes cast.

For more information, go to [www.michigan.gov/sos](http://www.michigan.gov/sos)



[www.michigan.gov/sos](http://www.michigan.gov/sos)

# Redistricting – and how nonprofits helped to preserve democracy

Norman Clement has set high bars for himself and his neighbors come 2024.

Clement founded the Detroit Change Initiative, a nonprofit dedicated to increasing opportunities for Detroiters by improving civic engagement. With the November 2022 midterms barely behind him, Clement is already locked in on 2024. His aim? To increase voter turnout in Detroit to a staggering 85 percent of registered voters.

For context, the most recent presidential election in 2020 had slightly more than 50 percent of registered Detroit voters cast their ballots. These most recent midterms, in November 2022, garnered a voter turnout

rate of 33.75 percent — through midterm elections historically don't generate nearly as much interest as do presidential elections.

It's a big swing he's taking, though you wouldn't know it from talking to him. Clement's pragmatic approach to community organizing makes it seem like an 85 percent turnout rate is possible. He's analyzing which voting precincts had minor participation and turning his organization's focus there to knock on doors, text when they can, and get more and more Detroiters registered and voting.

Detroit Change Initiative will partner with other nonprofits to get out the vote. Clement is a big believer in the nonprofits' role in democracy, saying that nonprofits "saved America" in this most recent election. Nonprofits like DCI are on the ground and in the neighborhoods and never not working.

**"Nonprofits? We don't take time off. There's always work to do every year; you have to be there every single year whether there's an election or not," he says.**



Norman Clement Executive Director

# Harnessing the Power of Nonprofits

These most recent midterm elections emboldened Clement's belief in the power of nonprofits. His organization took part in a new initiative from the Michigan Nonprofit Association, which serves on behalf of and advocates for nonprofits throughout the state. MNA organized a coalition of 38 Michigan nonprofits to help guide their respective communities through the new citizen-led redistricting efforts that went into effect ahead of the 2022 elections.

These most recent midterm elections were a first for Michigan. Voters selected their representatives not based on districts drawn by the politicians themselves but instead drawn by the Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission (MICRC). Due to Michigan voters passing Proposal 2 in 2018, the citizen-led commission was put in place to help end gerrymandering and make the redistricting process more transparent.

The 13-member bipartisan commission had to consider seven factors when deciding on the final maps: the Voting Rights Act; contiguity; communities of interest; partisan fairness; incumbency; political boundaries; and compactness.

It was the "communities of interest" factor that MNA and its coalition focused on, a somewhat vaguely defined component of the new law that encouraged residents to submit their political districts for consideration by the MICRC – districts that residents thought best represented their communities. Who better to define a community of interest, after all, than the communities themselves?

The MNA provided their coalition members with the training and resources to draw and submit political districts that they felt best represented them and their communities.

"MNA does this work because we want to ensure that populations that have been historically underrepresented can understand processes like these, and how they affect their communities and what's at stake," says Joan Gustafson, external affairs officer for MNA. "When the voters passed the proposal, we mobilized the nonprofits representing these communities of interest and helped them understand this new process and how they could engage with the commission."



[www.mnaonline.org](http://www.mnaonline.org)

# GET SIGNED UP

## Affordable Connectivity Program

The Affordable Connectivity Program provides eligible households \$30 per month toward high-speed home internet service, making some plans FREE! The ACP benefit can be applied to a new or existing internet plan.

Additionally, eligible households receive a one-time discount of up to \$100 to purchase a laptop, desktop computer, or tablet from participating providers if they contribute \$10-50 toward the purchase price.

### GET CONNECTED to FREE HOME INTERNET

The Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) is a federal government program that offers eligible households **\$30/month** toward home internet services.



ACP makes home internet  
**FREE** with some plans.

**4 steps To Get Connected**

- 1 QUALIFY**  
Check if you qualify
- 2 APPLY**  
Apply for ACP
- 3 CONFIRM**  
Receive confirmation that you qualify
- 4 ENROLL**  
Select Internet Service Provider and enroll in service plan

Education SUPERHIGHWAY

## WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR THE ACP BENEFIT?

Your household qualifies for the Affordable Connectivity Program if your total income is at or below 200% of the federal poverty guidelines OR

if any member of the family:

Participants in specific assistance programs, such as **SNAP, Medicaid, Federal Public Housing Assistance, SSI, WIC, or Lifeline;**

Received a **Federal Pell Grant** in the current award year;

Received approval for benefits under the **free and reduced-price school lunch program or the school breakfast program**, including through the USDA Community Eligibility Provision (CEP), in the current or previous school year; or

Meets the eligibility criteria for a participating provider’s existing low-income program

**Only one monthly service discount and one device discount are allowed per household.** [Program rules](#) acknowledge that more than one eligible household may reside at the same address. In cases where only one fixed connection can be purchased at a given address, but two families live there, the second household can buy a mobile plan to receive their ACP discount.

# FIND OUT IF YOU QUALIFY

Visit [GetACP.org](https://www.getacp.org) to learn if you qualify, what documents you'll need to apply, and how to connect to home internet plans that are free with ACP. **Please answer a few simple questions to receive, and it provides a personalized checklist that saves you time when you apply.** It takes about 5 minutes.

## HOW DO HOUSEHOLDS APPLY FOR THE BENEFIT?

There are three ways to apply for ACP benefits:

Visit [affordableconnectivity.gov](https://affordableconnectivity.gov) to submit an application or print out a mail-in application. Contact your preferred internet service provider directly to learn more about the application process.

Complete the application and Household Worksheet and mail them, along with copies of proof documentation, to:

ACP Support Center PO Box 7081 London, KY 40742

*Note: Mail-in applications may take several weeks to process.*

## PLANS AVAILABLE IN <<INSERT CITY NAME>>

NAME	Name of Plan	Name of Plan
<b>SPEED</b>	XX Mbps	XX Mbps
<b>MONTHLY COST</b>	\$XX	\$XX
<b>COST WITH ACP BENEFIT</b>	FREE	FREE
<b>BEST WAY TO ENROLL</b>	Online at ProvidersWebsite.com Note: Add any additional information here	Call XXX-XXX-XXXX Note: Add any additional information here

## SELECT THE BEST INTERNET PLAN FOR YOUR HOUSEHOLD

### How many people will use the Internet?

When more people share the same connection, a faster plan is needed to accommodate their devices.

### How will you be using the internet?

Downloading is when the internet shares information with your computer. You'll need higher download speeds when watching Netflix and online gaming than if you only surf the web, use social media, and shop online.

More day-to-day activities also require the fastest upload speeds (when computers share information with the internet), e.g., Zoom and audio calls, online gaming, and sharing photos on social media.

High-speed home Internet allows Americans to work remotely, send their children to school, participate in the social safety net, and access healthcare, job training, and critical government services. The [Affordable Connectivity Program \(ACP\)](#) is a federal benefit that aims to connect these individuals by providing eligible households a \$30/ month discount toward their home Internet bill or \$75/ month for families on Tribal lands. The benefit provides a one-time \$100 deal toward a connected device through a participating provider.



## NEED HELP GETTING STARTED?

Visit [GetACP.org](https://www.getacp.org) to learn if you qualify, what documents you'll need to apply, and how to connect to home internet plans that are free with ACP. Answer a few simple questions, and we'll give you a personalized checklist that saves you time when you apply. **It takes about 5 minutes.**



# Detroit Requires Ground-level Outreach

By Norman Clement

When the COVID-19 pandemic hard-hit Detroit, community activists launched a grassroots campaign to vaccinate our neighbors. When Detroiters' political participation was at risk, concerned citizens pounded the pavement again to register eligible voters.

And now that access to digital opportunity is on the line for low-income Detroiters. We need another all-out effort to mobilize the Motor City.

The Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) – a federal initiative that covers the total cost of home internet service for families in need – is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to close Detroit's digital divide. It's a cornerstone of the Biden administration's efforts to advance digital equity in communities of color.

But to realize the ACP's transformative potential, we'll first need to do the hard work on the ground to get every eligible family signed up. That demands an all-hands-on-deck effort – from city leaders, the business community, and community activists – and the discipline to see the job through without getting distracted or discouraged.

This collaborative vision was on full display at a recent ACP enrollment event at the Focus: HOPE headquarters on Oakman Boulevard, where the Detroit National Action Network (DNAN) and Detroit Change Initiative joined the hosts to help more than 100 community members sign up for the ACP's \$30-a-month benefit.

Paired with Comcast's Internet Essential Plus, AT&T's Access offering, or the Verizon Forward program, the ACP makes home internet service accessible for any Detroit family earning up to 200% of the poverty limit (around \$60,000 a household of four).

But complex math isn't required to determine whether your family is eligible. If you're enrolled in SNAP, Medicaid, public housing assistance, Lifeline, Pell Grants, WIC, or other federal benefits, you qualify for ACP. And because every Detroit Public Schools Community District student participates in the National School Lunch Program, every district family can benefit from the ACP.

But first, these eligible families have to sign up.

Here's the good news: More than 99% of Detroit homes already have broadband service at their doorsteps. They could sign up today and be connected to digital opportunities almost immediately.

But, here's the challenging news: Despite this universal availability – and now, through ACP, universal affordability – of home internet service, only 66% of Detroit residents subscribe to home broadband.

This “adoption gap” – not any physical infrastructure – drives Detroit's digital divide. So, this is where city officials, broadband providers, and community groups need to invest their energy and resources.

Research shows that these low broadband adoption rates are driven by complex factors – from tight household budgets to digital skills gaps.

With 32% of Detroit's residents living at or below the federal poverty level, some unconnected residents would be hard-pressed to cover a monthly internet bill as they're already struggling to make rent, feed and clothe their kids, and pay their utility bills. The ACP allows low-income families to connect without sacrificing other necessities by freeing home internet service.

Still, families can't log on to home internet if they're among the 25% of Detroit households who don't have a desktop, laptop, or tablet computer in their homes. The ACP's one-time \$100 discount on select computers is critically essential. Providers are stepping up, too: Comcast donated 100 computers to families at the recent Focus: HOPE enrollment event.

But the most challenging barrier is understanding why or how to navigate online. Nationwide, 71% of unconnected adults say they are not interested in signing up. And one in three U.S. workers lacks basic digital skills.

Addressing these challenges, Mayor Mike Duggan launched Connect 313 in 2020 to promote digital literacy skills, device access, and broadband adoption. It's already making a huge difference, reducing our adoption gap from 46% in 2019 to 33% in 2021.

But now, Detroit needs to double down on what's working. The city earmarked \$11 million in federal stimulus funds to build a new fiber broadband network in one neighborhood, but a year later, that money is still unspent. Why not put those dollars to work funding outreach campaigns and digital navigator programs to help get more Detroiters connected – for free – to the fast networks already in place?

Our goal shouldn't be building expensive infrastructure for its own sake; instead, we must make a connected, digitally literate, and empowered Detroit.

Just as Detroit became the “arsenal of democracy” during World War II and the model for middle-class prosperity for two decades afterward, we can make Motor City a success story for inclusion in the Information Age. We must roll up our sleeves and work hard to connect with every neighbor.

## EVERY VOTE MATTERS - LET'S KEEP UP THE MOMENTUM

### Update from our partners at Promote the Vote

- **Voters who still need to register to vote (or update their registration) for the August 8 primary election must register at their city or township clerk's office with proof of residency. It is too late to register to vote online or by mail for the August 8 election!** More information on verification of residence and registering to vote, generally, is available on [MichiganVoting.org](https://MichiganVoting.org).
- Since the election is less than two weeks away, we recommend that voters who wish to vote before Election Day request an absentee ballot in-person from their city or township clerk. You can take the ballot home or complete it at the clerk's office.
- It is too late to return your completed absentee ballot by mail to be sure it arrives on time! Instead, replace your vote with your local clerk in person or use a drop box provided by your clerk.
- Don't forget - all clerk's offices must be open for eight hours next weekend, August 5-6, for registration and absentee voting! You can find the location and hours of your city or township clerk's office at [mi.gov/vote](https://mi.gov/vote) by clicking "your voter information" and typing in the required information.
- Still unsure if there's an election in your community on August 8? Visit [mi.gov/vote](https://mi.gov/vote), click "your voter information" and enter the required information, or review [this list](#) from the Secretary of State.

For more details and shareable content regarding the August election (and future elections), please [sign up here](#) for our [MichiganVoting.org](https://MichiganVoting.org) Digital Digests. We encourage you to follow [MichiganVoting.org](https://MichiganVoting.org) on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Twitter](#).



## MORE THAN AN ATHLETE

The Sound Mind Sound Body (SMSB) Foundation-a 501(c) (3) non-profit organization-is a leading mentor of students in under-served communities across America.

SMSB is dedicated to reducing high school dropout rates while increasing college readiness and scholarship obtainment among students through extracurricular activities.

The Sound Mind Sound Body (SMSB) Foundation was founded in Detroit, Michigan, in 2004, using sports to connect with students to learn that equal amounts of energy must be applied to both books and balls. Our Sound Mind, Sound Body curriculum combines

academics, athletics, and life skills development training for students and parents to create well-rounded families that understand this formula for a successful life. Our program mission is to improve annual student persistence rates, increase high school graduation rates, and increase enrollment in postsecondary education programs.



[www.smsbacademy.com](http://www.smsbacademy.com)

# CHILDS PLAY FOUNDATION

[www.childsplayfoundation.org](http://www.childsplayfoundation.org)

## THERE ON A MISSION

To provide at-risk and marginalized boys and girls (ages 3-18) access to much-needed sports programs, academic services, financial literacy, nutritional guidance, money management, higher education, and transportation. To that end, our foundation focuses on providing financial assistance and equipment to both traditional and nontraditional sports (i.e., football, soccer, basketball, baseball, chess, lacrosse, swimming, gymnastics, dance, and cheer), as well as mentoring services, conflict resolution, leadership development, financial literacy, and higher education.

Our efforts will help cohesively develop healthy bodies and healthy minds of area youth, readying them to become physically, mentally, socially, academically, and financially competitive today. This makes The Childs Play Foundation one of the most diverse Foundations in Metro Detroit. Go to [www.childsplayfoundation.org](http://www.childsplayfoundation.org) for more information.