

### **Why would you be the best Attorney General candidate for the small business community?**

Stability, predictability, and fidelity to the rule of law benefit existing businesses as well as help create an environment to start new businesses or attract others to locate to Michigan. The same applies to welcoming communities, where fairness and respect are the rule and intolerance and oppressive policies are not accepted.

I first ran for office because I wanted to help families like my own with everyday challenges. I was a Wayne County Assistant Prosecutor for 11 years, and I operated a small business in the form of a private practice focused on civil rights, criminal defense, and family law. I tried the *DeBoer v Snyder* case, which was eventually folded into *Obergefell v Hodges*, the US Supreme Court decision that granted Americans the right to marriage equality. Throughout my nearly 30-year legal career, I've tried hundreds of cases and successfully argued two cases before Michigan Supreme Court.

During my first term, I started the first-of-its-kind Hate Crimes and Domestic Terrorism unit in a state AG's office; safeguarded the 2020 election; and started new units focused on elder abuse, payroll fraud, public integrity, and more. I took on Eli Lilly to lower the price of insulin, held accountable corporate polluters that were poisoning our natural resources, led two of the largest child sexual assault investigations in the country, and secured an \$800 million settlement from opioid manufacturers. I hope to have a second term to continue the work I've done.

### **What are your top priorities should you be elected to office following the November 2022 election?**

Consumer protection; safeguarding the rights of all Michigan residents, including reproductive, civil, and voting rights; enacting policies that are not just tough on crime but smart on crime; and fighting for the things I've not yet accomplished. On Oct. 1, my office will launch a new Job Court initiative to help ease labor shortages while providing non-violent offenders with a productive path forward, as well as a new Organized Retail Crime unit, and I'll continue hosting expungement and driver's license restoration fairs to help get people back in the workforce.

### **How do you approach violations that are unintentional/technical in nature?**

There is no one size fits all solution. My experience as a prosecutor, attorney in private practice, and as Michigan's Attorney General have demonstrated that many things occur in life and during the course of conducting business that are not black or white. Prosecutorial discernment matters. I have a 30-year record – including time on both the prosecutorial and defense sides of matters – that speaks to my approach: look at the law, look at the offender, look at the circumstances, look at the options, and look for solutions. Are we following the law and allowable remedies? Are we protecting consumers from bad actors? Will justice be served? Will precedents be established?

**What safeguards have you/would you put in place to ensure powers of the Attorney General's Office are not used for political purposes?**

I have gone to great lengths to ensure issues political in nature do not affect the conduct of the attorney general's office or staff. I take pride in the bipartisan/nonpartisan environment I've fostered in the Department of Attorney General. I have trusted deputies who are Republicans, Democrats, and Independents. What matters is their ability to do their jobs – not what their political leanings may be.

I do not believe that being a political candidate shields one from criminal accountability. I also adhere strongly to demanding the highest professional and ethical standards in the Department of Attorney General. When the conduct of my (then) potential opponent surfaced during an investigation into criminality pertaining to election equipment during the aftermath of the 2020 election, I recused myself and department from any further investigation and any decisions about bringing criminal charges against not only my opponent, but several other people who emerged during the initial course of the investigation. This action was the only proper way to ensure that the rule of law is evenly applied while avoiding any appearance of conflicted interest.

Similarly, in the Flint water case, I put a conflict wall in place and turned the case over to Wayne County Prosecutor Kym Worthy and Solicitor General Fadwa Hammoud to lead. I, in turn, led the civil portion of the case and obtained a historic settlement for Flint residents harmed by lead poisoning.

**How do you/will you plan to gain insights on the small business community and their needs?**

As during my first term, I will endeavor during my second term to seek even better relationships with business owners and associations in order to continue finding ways for the Department of Attorney General to partner with and help them, their employees, and our economy thrive while safeguarding consumers and prosecuting bad actors.

I'm very proud of our upcoming Job Court program, which I partnered with the business community in developing. It allows eligible non-violent defendants to avoid jail if they commit to working at a job provided by one of our partner employers for at least a year. The offenders get skills training, a living wage, benefits, and a path forward to reduce their chances of recidivism. The employers get a safer community, assistance with labor shortages, and hopefully very dedicated employees who are committed to doing an exemplary job.

**Do you believe that the Attorney General's role of enforcement includes aiding and assisting small business with compliance?**

There are many areas of the Department of Attorney General that intersect with small businesses in Michigan: Consumer and Regulatory Enforcement Bureau, Corporate Oversight Division, Labor Division, Licensing & Regulation Division, and more. While the primary role of these divisions is to enforce the laws evenly across the state, I have welcomed dialogue and partnership with business owners and groups during my first term as attorney general and I will welcome productive collaboration with any and all during my second term, especially if I can be helpful to business owners trying to do right by their customers, the law, and their bottom line.