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LEGISLATIVE SCORECARD

BASED ON THE THE U.S. CONSTITUTION

The Legislative Scorecard is a nationwide, nonpartisan educational program of The John Birch Society intended to inform voters about legislators' voting records. It does not promote any candidate or political party. Bills are chosen for their constitutional implications and taxpayer costs.



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Richard M. Steenland

Michigan

Representative, HD-022 (D)

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17

Lifetime
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Score

MI Legislative Scorecard 2021-2022

Based on the Principles of the U.S. Constitution

★ Constitutional	✗ Unconstitutional	? Did not Vote	Vote
1. SB0845 K-12 "School Aid" Budget (passed 99 to 7 on 7/1/2022). Provides \$19.6 billion to public school districts, as part of the state's education omnibus appropriation bill for FY 2022-23. Estimated cost per household: -\$5,565.00/year.			YES ✗
2. HJRR Mandatory Term Limits and Public Financial Disclosure (passed 76 to 28 on 5/10/2022). Would amend the Michigan Constitution to reduce current term limits for state legislators to a combined total of 12 years and require state elected officials to file an annual public financial disclosure report.			YES ✗
3. SB0011 Rights of Concealed Pistol License (CPL) Holders (passed 58 to 43 on 3/10/2022). Would amend the state's handgun licensing law to provide that an executive emergency order does not affect the issuance or renewal of a concealed pistol license (CPL).			NO ✗
4. SB0303 Voter Identification (passed 56 to 51 on 10/14/2021). Would require that a voter without his or her identification for election purposes vote with a provisional ballot to be processed after the election.			NO ✗
5. HB4047 Federal COVID-19 Funds for Social Services (passed 85 to 25 on 3/3/2021). Appropriated \$1.3 billion in federal COVID-19 funding for FY 2020-21, including \$600 million to support Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits. Estimated cost per household: -\$353.00/year.			NO ★
6. SB0001 Limiting Emergency Public Health Orders (passed 59 to 50 on 3/9/2021). Would limit the effectiveness of an emergency public health order to control an epidemic to 28 days unless an extension is approved by the Legislature.			NO ✗

Scorecard Votes: 17%

Why do these votes matter?

1. K-12 “School Aid” Budget

SB0845 is the state’s education omnibus appropriation bill for FY 2022-23. It includes the public K-12 “School Aid” budget, which provides \$19.6 billion to 537 local school districts, 293 public school academies, and 56 intermediate school districts.

Education is not the legitimate object of government, but rather the responsibility of--and a fundamental right of choice retained by--a child’s parents or legal guardians. Forcing American citizens to furnish taxpayer money for a compulsory, government-run K-12 school system violates their individual freedom guaranteed by the Bill of Rights and the 14th Amendment.

2. Mandatory Term Limits and Public Financial Disclosure

HJRR would amend the Michigan Constitution to reduce current term limits for state legislators to a combined total of no more than 12 years (including service in the House or Senate). Additionally, state elected officials would be required to file an annual public financial disclosure report specifying income, assets, liabilities, positions held, future employment agreements, gifts, travel reimbursements, and other payments.

Mandatory term limits conflict with the right of the American people to choose their representatives. Moreover, this resolution would subject individual citizens to another involuntary and sweeping layer of government-sanctioned financial surveillance, which amounts to a direct and continual violation of the personal privacy protections under the 4th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

3. Rights of Concealed Pistol License (CPL) Holders

SB0011 would amend the state’s handgun licensing law to provide that an executive emergency order does not affect the issuance or renewal of a concealed pistol license (CPL).

The fundamental right of the American people to keep and bear arms should not be infringed, as guaranteed by the 2nd Amendment of the U.S. Constitution.

4. Voter Identification

SB0303 would require that a voter without his or her identification for election purposes vote with a provisional ballot to be processed after the election. In addition, it would require a voter to vote with a provisional ballot if the digitized signature in the electronic poll book does not match the signature on the voter’s application to vote.

States should exercise their authority, under Article 1, Section 4, of the U.S. Constitution, to implement free, fair, and secure elections, guaranteeing equal protection of the right of citizens of the United States to vote.

5. Federal COVID-19 Funds for Social Services

HB4047 appropriated \$1.3 billion in federal COVID-19 funding for FY 2020-21, including \$600 million to support Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits.

This spending bill was made possible through unconstitutional funds from the federal Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act. States should oppose the use of federal taxpayer money for purposes not authorized under Article 1, Section 8, of the U.S. Constitution.

6. Limiting Emergency Public Health Orders

SB0001 would limit the effectiveness of an emergency public health order to control an epidemic to 28 days unless an extension is approved by the Legislature. It would also prohibit the issuance of a new emergency order for the same epidemic without approval by the Legislature. The Senate passed SB0001 on March 2, 2021, by a vote of 20 to 15, prior to it being vetoed by the Governor.

The exercise of executive emergency powers ought to be strictly time-limited, not indefinite, and the abuse thereof checked against by periodic legislative oversight. Article IV, Section 4, of the U.S. Constitution guarantees each state a republican form of government, which requires a limitation and separation of powers.