



GREEN PARTY OF MICHIGAN



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In May five of the world’s largest banks pleaded guilty to felonies of price-fixing in the biggest win, on paper, against the banks since the 2008 financial meltdown. The Libor price-fixing scandal settlement underlined the fear of the federal government to restrict the banks no matter what they do. “Too big to fail” referring to banks that the government must back no matter what they do has now become “too big to jail” for the same reason. The federal government, bomber of unarmed citizens around the globe, quakes in fear before the parasites of Wall Street. It is so important to support the Green Party and Green Party candidates. The Republicans and Democrats are incapable of defending the American people from the insatiable greed of American banks. It is amusing that the

federal prosecutor in the eastern district of New York had to travel all the way to Switzerland to find some felons to arrest. You can spit outside their office in New York and hit more felons who have hurt the people of the United States than in the entirety of all of world soccer. It is likely the source of the “inspiration” to combat “corruption” in a sport most Americans have never even seen, is some whiny corporate owners wanting somebody else’s profits. The defeat of Proposal 1 on May 5 at the ballot box by 80/20 margins was a defeat for both political parties and the corporate interests behind them. The more people learned about the proposal, the more they opposed it. As the “Davos on the Island” (the Mackinac Conference as the Michigan equivalent of the World Economic Forum) met this month, the three horsemen who visited Detroit with gentry-

fication, pension cuts and emergency management – Mayor Duggan, EM Orr and Gov. Snyder – were feted. Support is now building among the elite and their minions for a 1% sales tax to pay for paving roads as “what the voters really wanted.”The International Social Movement Gathering on Water and Housing at the end of May in Detroit with over 300 registered attendees from 47 states and 13 countries showed the growing movements in the United States around water and land justice. From Baltimore to California, people came to report on their work on water and housing as well as strategize on how to move forward. See the D-REM (www.d-rem.org) website for the follow up to the conference’s work. This issue should be printable. Stay tune for more improvements.

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Fred Vitale, Editor

How Financial Crisis Affected Water Dept.

This financial report, prepared for the city by an outside firm, shows how the economic crisis of 2008 rapidly accelerated Detroit's financial decline. The crisis turned what would have been a slight downward trend in city water revenues into a death spiral of debt that ultimately drove the city into bankruptcy. During the nine fiscal years from FY 2006 through FY 2014, the reported total fund net position for the combined Water and Sewer Systems has deteriorated by approximately \$1.547 billion. The report goes on to...

[Read more on pg.4](#)



Petition for Detroit

Water is a human right. Yet, thousands of families in Detroit, Mich., have no water due to mass water shutoffs that put low-income people at risk. Payment plans offered by the Detroit Water and Sewerage Dept. are unsustainable. Mr. President, we need your immediate assistance to stop these water shutoffs. Sign this petition for Pres. Obama to offer immediate assistance with utility bills and enforcement of affordability standards. Support programs to stop foreclosures related to water bills and to address public health...

[Read more on pg.4](#)

Critical Points of Struggle: *Water*

Implement the 2005 Water Affordability Plan

Unaffordable water/sewer bills pose substantial problems to low income Detroit residents. Not only do unaffordable bills impede the ability of low income customers to make their water/sewer payments, but such bills also impose substantial physical, emotional and social hardships even on low income customers that make their payments. Beyond the impacts on low income customers, water/sewer bills that are unaffordable to low income Detroit residents pose a business problem for the Detroit Water and Sewerage Department (DWSD). Increased financial costs to the DWSD result from increased credit and collection expenses arising from the need to "chase" bill payments; increased working capital expenses...

[Read more on pg. 4](#)

Local News:

Michigan Issues

MI Greens Oppose New Loophole for Pipelines

The Green Party of Michigan announces its opposition to Michigan House Bill 4540, which would open a loophole in the state's Freedom of Information Act to keep public records on oil and gas pipelines and plans secret from the public. The bill was introduced May 5 by Kurt Heise (R-020, Plymouth) and assigned to the state House's Committee on Oversight and Ethics. Committee chair Ed McBroom (R-108, Vulcan), who signed on as a co-sponsor, has already scheduled the bill for two hearings -- the next one Thursday morning. "Government of the people, by the people and for the people would clearly be violated by the secrecy promoted by House Bill 4540," says Green Party member, lawyer Sherry A. Wells of Ferndale. "Grass-roots Democracy is one of the key values of the Green Party worldwide, as are Ecology, Social Justice and Nonviolence. This Bill violates them all." "The landslide defeat of Proposal 1 by a greater number of voters than usually come out to non-presidential elections is a...

Read more on pg.6

Defeat of Prop.1

On May 5, the citizens of Michigan voted down Proposal 1 by a margin of 80% to 20%. That saved Millennials across the state from increases in the sales tax and gas tax as well as additional surcharge and registration fees. The stated intent was to raise more money to repair Michigan's infrastructure, among other things, but it actually would have been a detrimental blow to young Michiganders. The fundamental problem with Proposal 1 was...

Read more on pg.7.

Other News:

World & National

Devoted to Justice

The announcement by State's Attorney Marilyn Mosby that the six officers involved in the murder of Freddie Gray will be prosecuted was welcomed with cheers at City Hall and in Freddie Gray's community, car horns were honked in celebration. The welcome announcement is a first step toward justice for the family of Freddie Gray and a hopeful beginning for the kind of account...

Read more on pg.5

A Solution to the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict

As we note the anniversary of the "Arab Spring's" revolts against repressive regimes in the Middle East, democracy remains uncertain. But a linchpin around which these regimes have long operated continues: the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. As Egypt's revolution began, James Jones--former commander of all NATO forces, former national security advisor to President Obama, and former special ME envoy to President George W. Bush--addressed the 2011 Herzliya Conference in Israel insisting that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is the "knot that is at the center of the mass" of all regional and most global diplomatic problems today, . . . "1 According to Israel Today, "Jones rejected the notion that the current turmoil in Egypt proved that even without Israel and its land dispute with the Arabs the Middle East would not have peace...

Read more on pg. 5

Petition for Detroit

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Dear President Obama,

Water is a human right. Yet, thousands of families in Detroit, Mich., have no water due to mass water shutoffs that put low-income people — including children, seniors, veterans, and people living with disabilities — at risk. Payment plans offered by the Detroit Water and Sewerage Department are unsustainable. Mr. President, we need your immediate assistance to stop these water shutoffs. We ask you to help residents of this great U.S. city by doing the following:

Offer immediate assistance with utility bills and enforcement of affordability standards.

Support programs to stop foreclosures related to water bills and to address public health needs created by the shutoffs.

Instruct all relevant federal agencies to send representatives to Detroit to meet with residents during the solidarity convening May 29–30, 2015.

No mother should have to choose between paying a water bill and meeting her family's other basic needs. This crisis is growing, and Detroit's low-income families need your help. Please take immediate steps to protect their human right to water.

Sign the petition: <http://actnow.uusc.org/>

Water

How Financial Crisis Affected Detroit Water

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The report goes on to break down this decline and what caused it, particularly bad financial “swap losses” from soured credit default swaps from the financial crisis, amounting to about \$561 million, or 1/3 of the total losses. It goes on to say that DWSD would actually be operating with positive financial health if it weren't for the crisis:

“Absent occurrence of these unforeseen events, the net position of the combined DWSD water and sewer funds would be comfortably over \$1 billion, substantially mitigating concerns regarding the financial health of the DWSD utilities.”

Read the full report at: <http://detroitwaterbrigade.org/>



Implement the 2005 Water Affordability Plan

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In 2005, Roger Colton, an expert consultant to municipalities on low income affordability programs for utilities, presented a 44 page Water Affordability Program (WAP) for the Detroit Water and Sewerage Department (DWSD). The WAP proposal was presented to the DWSD and Detroit City Council on behalf of Michigan Poverty Law Program, Michigan Legal Services and their clients, including Michigan Welfare Rights Organization. Mr. Colton spent several weeks reviewing DWSD operations; and speaking with DWSD and City of Detroit officials, local attorneys, residents of the city and community groups to establish a program that addressed the consumer protection and business needs of DWSD customers and stakeholders. Increased financial costs to the DWSD result from increased credit and collection expenses arising from the need to “chase” bill payments; increased working capital expenses associated with higher arrears, and increased bad debt/uncollectible expenses associated with long term nonpayment. This proposal contains three sets of recommendations to address these social and business problems associated with the unaffordability of water/sewer bills. The proposal recommends:

1. Adoption of a rate affordability program, consisting of a rate discount component, an arrearage management component and a water conservation component.
2. Adoption of designated fundamental consumer protections involving late fees, service disconnections, and payment plans; and
3. Adoption of designated collections initiatives directed toward customers having an ability to pay.

The combined effect of these three sets of recommendations will not only be to address the unaffordability problems facing low income Detroit water/sewer customers, but also to rationalize the overall collections efforts undertaken by DWSD.

Each set of recommendations should be adopted.

<http://www.d-rem.org/>

Devoted to Justice

Continued from pg. 3

...accountability that has been missing in Baltimore when it comes to police violence. This would probably not have occurred without an urban revolt in Baltimore. We won't know if it was the mass protest marches of thousands of people or the anger boiling over into rage that led to property damage or both that pressured leadership to press charges. We do know that the week after Freddie Gray's death, Baltimore police were harassing students at the Mondawmin Mall, making unnecessary arrests of students waiting for their buses. On Monday, the day of Freddie's funeral, police diverted buses from the mall because of Internet rumors, making it impossible for students to go home. Dressed in full riot gear, police created an escalated situation that began the so-called riots. The previous night, conflicts between baseball fans and protesters had erupted into violence. The state and city governments declared a state of emergency, with the governor calling in police from all over the state along with the National Guard. This was an over-reaction as the community calmed itself. By the next morning, teams of volunteers came out to clean up the mess made the day before and community leaders and protest organizers planned nonviolent protests where the atmosphere was peaceful. The following protests turned away from violence and grew

into a massive force, led by young African Americans and joined by people of all races and ages. Participating in those protests was a joyful and powerful experience which we hope is the beginning of people demanding long overdue change in policing and economic justice. On Friday, announcing the charges, State's Attorney Mosby said to the protesters: "I commend your courage to stand for justice" and "I heard your call for 'no justice, no peace.' Your peace is sincerely needed as I work to deliver justice on behalf of this young man." And, to the youth who led the protests she said: "To the youth of this city, I will seek justice on your behalf; this is a moment, this is your moment. Let's ensure that we have peaceful and productive rallies that will develop structural and systemic changes for generations to come. You're at the forefront of this cause, and as young people, our time is now." There is concern that Mosby did not mention the beating of Freddie Gray that took place before he was put in the police van. Videos and testimony indicate this was an important contributing factor in Gray's death. For Mosby not to mention this, and not charge those who did the beating with murder may be a fatal error in the prosecution. In our view all six officers should have been charged as accomplices to murder, not just the driver (who happens to be African American).

For more go to <http://greenshadowcabinet.us>

Newa



A Solution to the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict

Continued from pg. 3

The "two-state solution" is a chimera, at best meant only to end Israeli military occupation in parts of the West Bank (WB). It is not, nor has ever been, a sustainable solution to the core problem between Israelis and Palestinians: Israel's continuing dispossession of Christian and Muslim natives of Palestine and refusal to allow Palestinian refugees to return to their homes because they are not Jews. This solution is premised on legitimizing permanent inequality between Israeli Jews and Palestinians who would remain dependent

on Israel. Concomitantly, it would legitimize ethnic-cleansing and seizing territory by force. How can this not be a recipe for ongoing insecurity, conflict and violence? Ironically, because of its structural inequality and "facts on the ground," the two-state solution is already dead. The WB has been integrated into Israel demographically, economically as well as territorially. Palestine-Israel is one de facto state, where one group dominates another. Israel's orgy of settlement building following the 1967 war have now created 600,000+ Jewish-Israeli colonizers in the WB, many in what are



now large cities engulfing Jerusalem. Israel continues to evict East Jerusalem Palestinians to build 13,500+ new homes for Jews only, a policy publicly condemned by South Africa as reminiscent of “forced removals” of their apartheid era. Thus, 2.4 million Palestinians are left scraps–fragmented Bantustans–in the WB, separated from 1.7 million besieged Palestinians in Gaza. Describing the WB as the egg that cannot be unscrambled, 4 former Israeli Deputy Mayor of Jerusalem, Meron Benvenisti recognizes the “Inevitable Bi-National Regime” One must therefore seek a different paradigm to describe the state of affairs more than forty years after Israel/Palestine became one geopolitical unit again, . . . The term “de facto bi-national regime” is preferable to the occupier/occupied paradigm, because it describes the mutual dependence of both societies, as well as the physical, economic, symbolic and cultural ties that cannot be severed without an intolerable cost. Describing the situation as de facto bi-national does not indicate parity between Israelis and Palestinians–on the contrary, it stresses the total dominance of the Jewish-Israeli nation, which controls a Palestinian nation that is fragmented both territorially and socially. No paradigm of military occupation can reflect the Bantustans created in the occupied territories, which separate a free and flourishing population with a gross domestic product of almost 30 thousand Dollars per capita from a dominated population unable to shape its own future with a GDP of \$1,500 per capita. No paradigm of military occupation can explain how half the occupied areas (“area C”) have essentially been annexed, leaving the occupied population with disconnected lands and no viable existence. Only a strategy of annexation and permanent rule can explain the vast settlement enterprise and the enormous investment in housing and infrastructure. Similarly, former national director of the American-Jewish Congress, Henry Seigman, regards Jewish settlements in the WB as having created an “irreversible colonial project” intended to prevent a viable Palestinian state: “Israel has crossed the threshold from ‘the only democracy in the Middle East’ to the only apartheid regime in the Western world.”

For more go to <http://greenpapers.net>

MI Greens Oppose New Loophole for Pipelines

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clear signal of unhappiness with the legislators,” notes Candace Caveny of Lapeer, GPMI’s 2014 candidate for lieutenant governor. “Woe to those who are ignoring this.” Caveny adds that shots were nearly fired in Lapeer County over the would-be ET Ranger pipeline when the public was not well notified. “Any attempt to block public notice of pipeline plans could well be endangering the safety of multiple lives when pipeline surveyors appear. Legislators sponsoring this legislation might end up with blood on their hands, and should think long and hard before proceeding.”

John Anthony La Pietra of Marshall was disappointed to find his hometown’s current House member David Maturen as a co-sponsor of HB 4540. He wrote Maturen, “[T]he district you were elected to serve is where Enbridge had its massive spill in 2010. If you want to maintain your claim to be a representative of the 63rd District, you need to oppose this giveaway to Enbridge and its partners in pollution.”

Chris Wahmhoff of Kalamazoo, GPMI’s co-meeting manager, agrees. “This takes more local control away from local communities and puts it in the hands of a state that does not have our interests in mind. I think it’s important right now to be in the streets like people are today, to be calling our legislators as people are today, and signing petitions and sharing on social media as people are doing today.”

For more go to <http://gp.org>



Defeat of Prop. 1

Continued from pg. 3

...that Michigan legislators didn't want to acknowledge that the state has a spending problem, not a revenue problem—and simply continuing to throw money at the problem without spending smarter is not a solution. Proposal 1 would have increased the sales tax to seven percent, making Michigan the state with the second highest sales tax in the country. It would have also increased the fuel tax by seven cents a gallon, and it would have added surcharge fees on electric and hybrid cars. Moreover, it would have eliminated the 10 percent depreciation discount on lifetime registration fees for cars. Proposal 1 would have affected Millennials every day as they bought new vehicles, drove to work, and made purchases locally as well as online. Increasing the cost of everyday travel and shopping is not the antidote for economic stagnation. The proposal would have made Michigan a less attractive place for our generation to innovate, invest, and grow. If the proposal had passed, Michigan's legislature would not only have raised taxes on our generation that we couldn't afford, it would have succeeded in accomplishing a short-term way to gain revenue. The Michigan state legislature left the responsibility for raising taxes in the hands of Michigan's citizens. Fortunately, residents recognized that Proposal 1 would be bad for Michigan, and they voted it down, thereby forcing the legislature to do what it should have done in the first place—create a plan that uses existing revenue, or new revenue through economic growth to solve the problem. Michigan's Proposal 1 shows us that we do not have to settle for the only solution that our legislators offer. We can oppose their plans, offer solutions from our perspective, and force them to be wise with our money. If our generation stands up and holds lawmakers accountable, young Americans can bring back limited, smarter, and more responsible government.

For more go to <https://generationopportunity.org>



GPMI Updates: *Events & News*

State GP Meeting

The next State Meeting of the Green Party of Michigan will be in Grand Rapids, on Saturday, June 6, 2015. The meeting will run from 9:00 A.M. until 4:00 P.M.

It will be at the Migrant Legal Aid Office located at 1104 Fuller Ave., Grand Rapids, 49503

Demonstrate Against Tax Foreclosures!

Monday, June 8, 12 noon, 400 Monroe, Detroit – Tax Assessor's Office – Demand a one year moratorium on tax foreclosures! For more information visit:

<http://www.Moratorium-mi.org>

Allied Media Conference

June 18 – June 21-- Detroit – To register and for more information see: <https://www.alliedmedia.org/amc>

Detroit Metro Greens Meeting

Detroit Metro Greens Meeting
Thursday, June 18, 7 pm
Phoenix Cafe, 24918 John R, Hazel Park 48030

US Social Forum

June 25th- June 28th in Philadelphia and San Jose. See <https://www.ussocialforum.net/> for more information.

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Some articles have been modified to save space. If you would like to view the full article please visit the link located at the bottom of the article.