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Bittersweet victory: The Detroit Lions defeated Minnesota in a NFC North matchup, but linebacker Jack Campbell was hospitalized with neck injury. C1

ELECTION 2026

The bright spotlight now shifts to voters

Today's voting in Michigan has been called "the most important election in the United States of America."

Danielle James *djames@mlive.com*

LANSING — In the span of four days starting Oct. 24, Michigan had five visits from current and former presidents, sitting U.S senators and Trump administration cabinet officials.

Former President Barack Obama arrived Oct. 24. President Donald Trump came on Oct. 25. Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. and U.S. Sen. Bernie Sanders each showed up Oct. 26, and Vice President JD Vance appeared last Tuesday.

All came with one message. Get out and vote.

The wave of high-profile political visits, national media attention and more than $700 million in political advertising reflects Michigan's major role in the 2026 midterms, with closely watched races for

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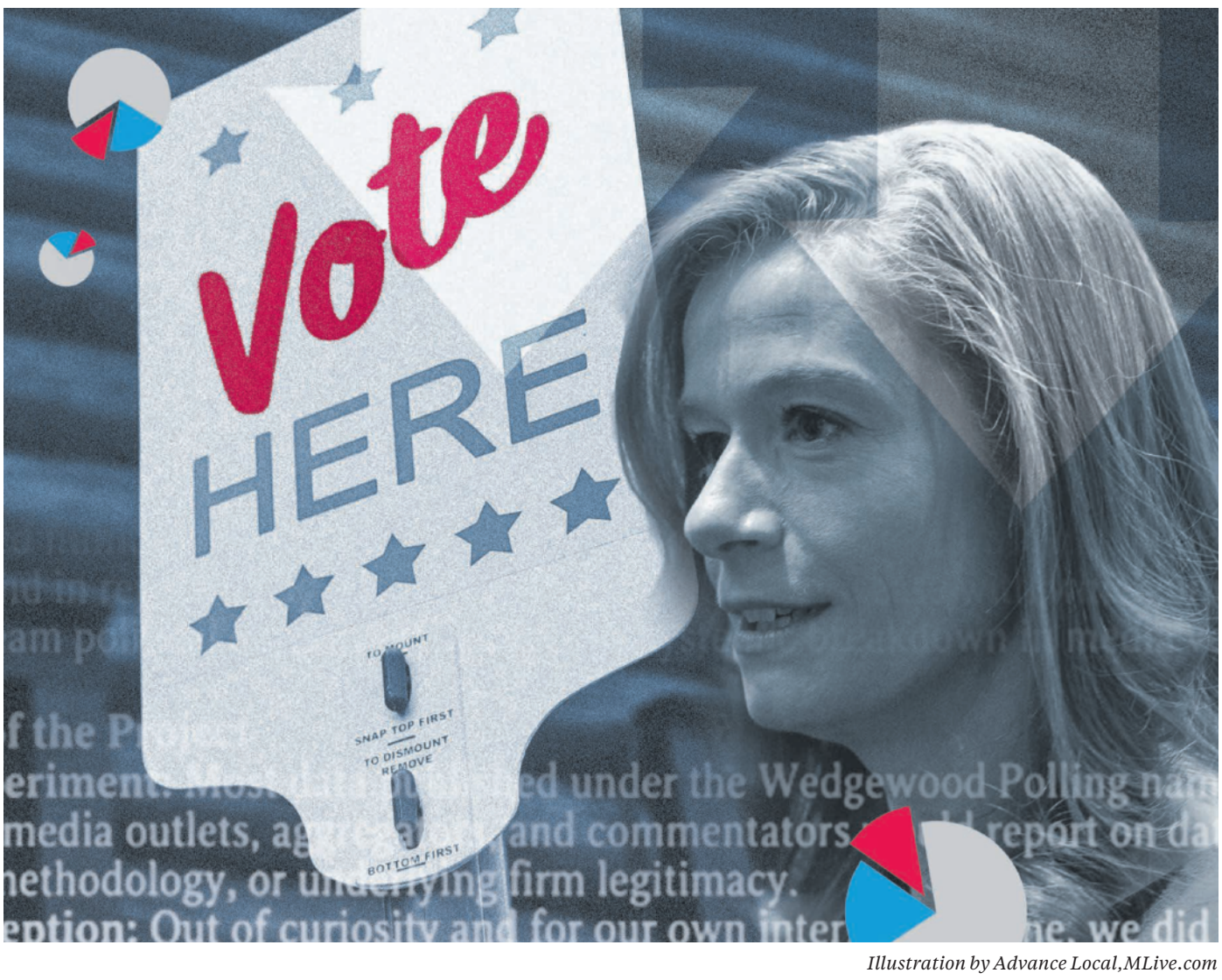


Illustration by Advance Local,MLive.com

A pollster ran fake numbers for the primary. What did it do?

Former candidate Mallory McMorrow says the fabricated poll contributed to her decision to drop out of the race.

Danielle James *djames@mlive.com*

A polling firm announced a couple of weeks ago it had published fabricated numbers in races across the country, including Michigan's contested U.S. Senate primary.

In fact, the pollster was fake, too.

And there's a possibility who is on today's ballot is a direct result.

Former U.S. Senate candidate Mallory McMorrow says one of those fabricated polls contributed to her decision to drop out of the August Democratic primary.

"Here's the impact of this 'experiment,'" McMorrow wrote in an Oct. 20 post on X, listing how donations "dried up," volunteers were devastated and pleading for guidance and reporters "hounded me with calls to drop out."

"Sure, a point was proven. Polling is broken," said McMorrow, a state senator from Royal Oak. "But tens of thousands of people poured their hearts, time, energy, hard-earned money into something they believed in for a year-and-a-half, and it was treated like a game."

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U.S. Senate candidate Mallory McMorrows

AN EXPERIMENT?

Wedgewood Polls said its fabricated polling was an experiment to show how easily made-up numbers could gain credibility. The social media account, which has since been deleted, said it "never intended to sway an election or permanently mislead the public," and claimed the project exposed a lack of oversight in polling and the media.

Its Oct. 20 disclosure came a day after FiftyPlusOne, a polling and election analysis site, sought comment for an investigation into its survey research.

How much the fake poll affected McMorrow's campaign is hard to establish. Some other polls also showed her trailing, and political analysts cautioned against attributing her withdrawal to one or two surveys.

But it raises questions about how the falsified numbers could affect broader public trust in elections.

CAMPAIGN KILLER

On June 29, Wedgewood released a fraudulent poll on the three Michigan Democratic Senate candidates.

It placed McMorrow at 9% of the vote. U.S. Rep. Haley Stevens got 39%, while former public health official Abdul El-Sayed, who later won the primary by a slim margin, earned 46%.

The poll, which claimed to survey 602 likely general election voters with a margin of error of plus or minus 4.7 percentage points, described McMorrow as "trailing in third."

Although the numbers were false, Wedgewood's poll wasn't the only one to show McMorrow in third place prior to her dropping out on July 5.

A Glengariff Group poll released in April and commissioned by the Detroit Regional Chamber had McMorrow at a much closer 16%, behind Stevens at 24.9% and El-Sayed at 22.9%. Another 36% were undecided.

An influx of outside spending boosted Stevens, and some argued that McMorrow struggled to find a lane between

SEE ELECTION, A2

MSU CONTROVERSY

Trustees sue own board over 'loyalty oath'

Two people allege a revised code of conduct violates their free speech rights.

John Agar *jagar@mlive.com*

EAST LANSING — Michael Balow, a Michigan State University trustee, filed a federal lawsuit against the board chair, Brianna Scott, alleging that a revised board policy prohibits criticism of MSU leadership.

Balow contends that his refusal to sign a "Statement of Acknowledgment" of what he called "Trustee-Speech Restrictions" has led to his censure, the revocation of resources to support his work and exclusion from university events.

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