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Muskegon Chronicle



International appeal: The Detroit Lions defeated New England 35-10 on Sunday for their fifth consecutive win. C1

ELECTION AFTERMATH

Two weeks on, here's what we learned from Election Day

As analysts dig into why Michigan's 'blue tsunami' occurred, election winners are shaping their plans for Michigan's future.

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It's been a series of newsy days since the Nov. 3 general election.

Voters selected the state's next leaders amid a "blue tsunami" that pushed Democrats into power down the ballot and across the state.

As analysts dig into why the blue wave occurred, election winners are shaping their plans for Michigan's future. Utilities and a think tank have already challenged one of voters' choices in court.

Here are six things we learned from Election Day.

RETURN OF THE TRIFECTA

After losing a majority in the state House in the November 2024 election, Michigan Democrats won big in Tuesday's general election.

The party regained control of the state House, meaning Democrats will again have a majority in both Michigan's legislative chambers, as well control of the governor's office.

In the state Senate, Democrats expanded their majority margin to 23-15,



U.S. Sen.-elect Abdul El-Sayed gives his victory speech during the Michigan Democrats watch party on election night in the early morning hours of Nov. 4 at the The Department at Hudson's in Detroit. *Jake May, MLive.com*

the party's largest number of seats in decades.

Jocelyn Benson's victory in the governor's race also marks the first time Democrats have won three consecutive terms for governor since the 1960s. She will succeed outgoing Democratic Gov. Gretchen Whitmer in January after beating Republican U.S. Rep. John James, R-Shelby Township, in the general election.

If the party works in sync, Democratic lawmakers could face few barriers to passing their agenda items, but they'll have to come up with creative ways to pay for solutions to the state's lagging educational attainment and per-capita income.

Democrats additionally kept seats for attorney general, where Washtenaw County Prosecutor Eli Savit beat Eaton County Prosecutor Doug Lloyd; and secretary of state, where Lt. Gov. Garlin Gilchrist beat Macomb County Clerk Anthony Forlini.

Benson said Democrats have a mandate to work on bringing down costs for Michiganders.

She said she would explore reducing the state gas tax to bring relief to drivers, restructuring the state's budget process to identify new revenue sources while streamlining spending, and working on the state's school funding formula "so that the funding is more effective, efficient and transparent."

NATIONAL INFLUENCE

Several big Michigan wins also contributed to the new Democratic majority in both chambers of Congress.

Abdul El-Sayed, who beat Republican Mike Rogers in Michigan's open U.S. Senate race, will become the country's first Muslim senator after winning a competitive and record-breaking, expensive election. According to unofficial vote totals, El-Sayed had 52.5% of the vote, compared with Rogers' 45.5%.

Democrats also flipped three Republican-held U.S. House seats.

In the Lansing-area 7th District, community organizer William Lawrence took the seat held by Republican U.S. Rep. Tom Barrett, R-Charlotte. In West Michigan's 4th District, state Sen. Sean McCann, D-Kalamazoo, beat U.S. Rep. Bill Huizenga, R-Zeeland, who has held a

SEE ELECTION AFTERMATH, A2

ENERGY ISSUES

Feds issue 7th order keeping coal plant open

Consumers Energy's last coal plant in West Olive was scheduled to close in 2025.

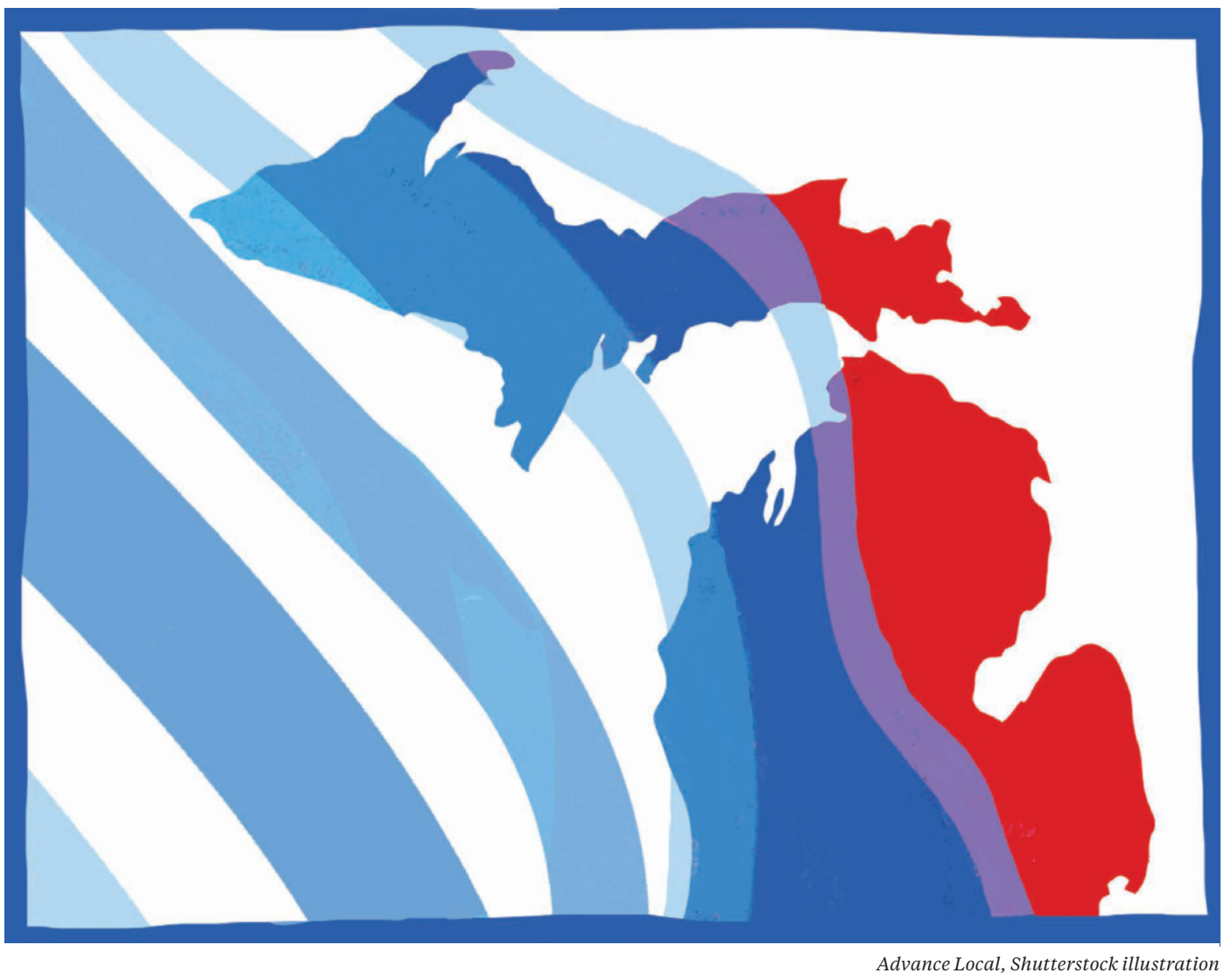
Melissa Frick *mfrick@mlive.com*

WEST OLIVE — The U.S. Department of Energy has issued another emergency order to keep the J.H. Campbell power plant open for three more months.

The order is the seventh time U.S. Energy Secretary Chris Wright has stepped in and used emergency powers to keep the coal-burning power plant from closing. His last order, issued in August, was set to expire on Saturday, but he intervened again on Friday to extend the plant's operations through mid-February.

Wright said the Campbell Plant is "vital" for power generation across the region, particularly during periods of high electricity demand. He continued to warn the power system is being strained by aging coal plants shutting down and new demand from projects such as massive artificial intelligence data centers.

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HIGHER EDUCATION

State enrollment reverses 3-year trend

The number of incoming students fell at 12 of Michigan's 15 public universities this fall.

Michael Kransz *mkransz@mlive.com*

LANSING — After three years of modest growth, enrollment across Michigan's public universities is falling once again.

Enrollment across the state's 15 public universities fell by about 5,200 students, or 2%, this fall compared with fall 2025, according to the Michigan Association of State Universities' preliminary report.

Statewide, 254,107 students were enrolled this fall, compared with 259,330 last year.

Public university enrollment in Michigan peaked at 301,919 students in 2011 and has declined nearly every year since.

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