

INSIDE MICHIGAN POLITICS

Inside: Who Will Be Detroit's Next Mayor?
Religious Affiliation of State Lawmakers
America's Longest-Serving Congressmen

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DETROIT & FLINT: CAN THESE CITIES BE SAVED?

No, but that doesn't stop various politicians from trying to keep hope alive in two of the country's most beleaguered municipalities.

Just last week, *Forbes* magazine released its latest list of "most miserable" communities in the U.S. Flint actually improved its standing from a year ago, falling from third to sixth on the national "misery index" (Stockton, California, was #1).

The bad news for the Vehicle City is that it is still considered slightly more abysmal than its larger neighbor 60 miles to the southeast, Detroit, which lagged in at seventh on the same list. Both cities were cited by *Forbes* for the "double whammy" of high crime and unemployment.

So, does it matter who's mayor in these woebegone enclaves? If it does, all the recent news has been bleak:

- Everyone knows about the saga of former Detroit Mayor **Kwame Kilpatrick** and the infamous "text-messaging scandal," which cost Motown taxpayers some \$10 million, forcing Hizzoner's resignation last fall and landing him in jail. Now, a 15-candidate scramble is underway to replace Kilpatrick, starting with a primary tomorrow (Feb. 24) and followed by a May 5 general election runoff between the top two finishers in the primary. Whoever wins must immediately prepare to run for a full four-year term in an Aug. 4 primary and Nov. 3 general election.

- In Flint, controversial 75-year-old mayor **Don Williamson** abruptly resigned on Feb. 9, two weeks before voters appeared poised to recall him in a special election. He's been replaced temporarily by a caretaker city administrator preparatory to a special May 5 primary that will sort out two finalists who will square off in an 8/4 general election for the remainder of The Don's term, ending in 2011.

For more on the Detroit/Flint mayoral dynamics, we've asked **IMP** editor **Bill Ballenger** to answer a few questions:

IMP: *What's next in Flint?*

Ballenger: *The city council met last week (after IMP's publishing deadline) to determine a filing date, which will be sometime next month. Candidates have to collect more than 900 signatures to qualify. The leading contender will be **Dayne Walling**, now with the Genesee Co. Land Bank, who came within a half-thousand votes of beating Williamson in 2007. Another strong contender may be **Darryl Buchanan**, now the deputy mayor and formerly Williamson's city administrator. He's also an ex-city councilman and ombudsman. Other possibilities include **Sheldon Neeley** and **Scott Kincaid**, who are current councilmen, and **Brenda Clack** and **Raynetta Speed**, a current and a former*

county commissioner, respectively. All but Walling and Kincaid are African-American in a city that is roughly 60% black.

IMP: *What about tomorrow's election in Detroit?*

B: *If anybody expected this to have been a hot campaign, they've got to be disappointed. It's been overshadowed by the inauguration of our first black president and his efforts to resuscitate the nation's moribund economy. Most importantly, the candidates were plagued by a lack of money. The PACs sat this one out. There were hardly any mailings and no robocalls. Only Rev. **Nick Hood III**, the former councilman, put up expensive freeway billboards, and only a couple of candidates had any significant presence on TV — surely, not enough to dominate the campaign or fire up the electorate.*

IMP: *What will turnout be?*

B: *Terrible — probably under 15%, and possibly under 10%. That's less than a quarter of the turnout in the presidential election last November. About 35,000 absentee ballots were sent out, and by the end of last week some 25,000 had been returned to the city clerk. AVs account for about 45% of the total overall tally in Detroit, which officially has 626,133 registered voters, although some consider that number grossly inflated.*

IMP: *What's the likely outcome?*

B: *I'll defer to **Mark Grebner** and his robo-poll (see below), but it should be pointed out that there were seven fairly "big name" candidates in the race, making the lack of excitement about the outcome all the more puzzling. It might be expected that the accidental incumbent, **Ken Cockrel, Jr.**, has an advantage. Perhaps so, but Hizzoner may be spooked by the "**Gil Hill Effect**." Both **Erma Henderson** and Hill (of "Beverly Hills Cop" fame) were (like Cockrel) seemingly popular city council presidents who ran for mayor and flopped miserably. Also in the mix are former Deputy Mayor **Freman Hendrix**, who had Kilpatrick on the ropes in 2005 only to be upset in the end; former Detroit Pistons All-Star **Dave Bing**, a successful businessman who has probably raised and spent as much money during the campaign as all his opponents combined; Wayne Co. Sheriff **Warren Evans**, who came out of the **Ed McNamara** machine before being appointed to his current job (he has the support of the Black Slate, which may mean more than usual in this climate); Hood; 26-year-old state Rep. **Coleman A. Young II** (D-Detroit), son of the legendary former mayor; and **Sharon McPhail**, who has a rich and checkered history as a city councilwoman, mayoral finalist, and, most recently, legal counsel for the embattled Kilpatrick.*

COCKREL, BING WILL BE MOTOWN MAYORAL FINALISTS: GREBNER

A Detroit News poll released last Wednesday found **Ken Cockrel, Jr.**, and **Dave Bing** virtually tied for the lead in the race to win the unexpired portion of **Kwame Kilpatrick's** term as mayor of Detroit.

That's exactly what **Mark Grebner** of East Lansing-based Practical Political Consulting has found in three weeks of robo-calls PPC has made into Motown. **IMP** asked Grebner to elaborate:

IMP: So, what did you find?

Grebner: It's over, and I'm calling it in this order: Cockrel, Bing, Hendrix, Evans, Young, McPhail, and Hood.

IMP: What makes you so certain there couldn't be some final week-end 'reversal of fortune' before on-the-ground voting begins tomorrow?

Grebner: I'm sure there will be some drama in the final few hours, but too much of the vote has already been cast and the trends are too clear to allow such movement. The important fact is that Cockrel and Bing will emerge to contest the special general election, although it's still conceivable that their order of finish might reverse.

IMP: Explain why and how your robo-polls work, and why you're convinced they've yielded what will be the true final result.

Grebner: Robo-polling has strengths and weaknesses. PPC ran about 50 polls for legislative races last year, many of them in rural areas. We were happy with the results — none of them resulted in making a wrong call about who would win.

IMP: Are you saying that your robo-polling is more cost-effective, and just as accurate, as conventional polling?

Grebner: Well, robo-polling is cheap! \$400 buys you a sample, the interviewing, and a one-page analysis. You don't get much information. Basically, we can tell if somebody is way ahead, or if the race is too close to call. Conventional polling is beginning to fail more and more often, mainly due to the proliferation of cell phones. Fortunately for us, in this particular election (on 2/24) so few of the people who will vote use only cellphones to communicate that I'm not worried. Plus, these candidates are not stirring such deep currents in the electorate that they will draw anybody who's not a hard-core voter.

IMP: So, how did you conduct the Detroit mayoral poll?

Grebner: In the table (see below), you'll find the 'four-day moving average' containing some of the results of each day's calling, over time. We made 1,000 calls every day, resulting in only about 100-140 usable interviews per day. Even though there are 15 candidates in the race, we offered a choice only of Bing, Cockrel, Evans, Hendrix, Hood, McPhail, Young or "other."

IMP: What was the sample you used?

Grebner: We used a list of the roughly 100,000

registered voters in Detroit who are most apt to vote in the Feb. 24 election. They're about 90% black, have an average age of 55, and don't miss many elections. The raw results jumped around from day-to-day — it's the normal statistical jitter associated with such a small sample. For example, we got a low of 103 responses on Sunday, Feb. 8, and highs of 141 on each of two days back on Jan. 27 and 29. Combining four days' calls gives us about 500 interviews, resulting in greater stability. The confidence interval for a specific candidate's results are about + or -4%, and for the comparison between two candidates, about + or -7%.

IMP: Was there a pretty clear trend?

Grebner: So far, the data tell us just a few things. First, Cockrel is leading just slightly over Bing. Freman Hendrix is a solid third, well ahead of Warren Evans, who is followed distantly by the rest of the gang. Finally, there's a hint that what had been a consistent Bing lead has disappeared over the past week or so. The clock is running out, particularly since nearly half the votes cast will be absentee, most of which have already been mailed in. Unless something big has happened over this past final week-end, we know who's going to make the top two spots in the primary, even if we don't know in which order. Here are the numbers:

Four-day moving average

Range	Bing	Cockrel	Hendrix
2/16-2/19	26%	29%	18%
2/15-2/18	25%	29%	19%
2/12-2/15	32%	24%	17%
2/9-2/12	26%	29%	18%
2/6-2/9	25%	25%	23%
2/1-2/6	30%	21%	21%
1/27-2/4	32%	20%	19%

PRAY TELL

Does religious affiliation affect the way politicians vote?

Almost certainly it does. If so, the Michigan Catholic Conference may feel it's got an edge in the 95th Michigan legislature — Roman Catholics continue to constitute by far the largest sect represented among the 147 lawmakers (there's one vacancy) in the state Capitol.

That could become important with the expected introduction of legislation to "clarify" in statute the ramifications of voter approval last fall of Proposal 08-2, which legalizes stem cell research in Michigan.

In fact, the 43-member Catholic contingent is nearly as large as last year's — and that was as big as it had been since 1999-2000, when there were 47 Catholics. There were 44 RCs in the last Legislature; 40 in the one before that; only 37 in 2003-04; and 44 at the beginning of the 91st Legislature in 2001. A dozen years ago, in the 1997-98 session (the 89th), there were 46, and in the 88th Legislature, 48. If you go back even further, to the 87th, the numbers were even larger (52), and there were a whopping 55 at the start of the '90s in the 86th.

Then and now, there were in each session more than three times the number of Roman Catholic legislators as the next-largest specific sects. This session, that would be the Baptists and Methodists — if we don't count the 14 members who consider themselves unaffiliated or non-

denominational "Christians" or "Protestants."

Representation by most of the other denominations that populate the 95th Legislature is pretty even with what it's been throughout the past decade, although there have been some ups and downs. An example would be the sect that was invariably the runnerup to the Catholics until six years ago, the United Methodists; in the last session, they dropped to seventh place — but now they're back to runnerup status. The numbers of Episcopalians, Lutherans, Jews and Presbyterians stayed roughly the same.

As usual, **IMP** had some trouble compiling its tabulation — in most instances because politicians and/or their protective staffs were loathe to be pinned down, preferring to give the impression that the legislator could be affiliated with any number of faiths with whose parishioners s/he might actually worship over a period of time.

Here's **IMP's** list of the affiliations of all 37 senators now seated in the 95th Legislature (there is one vacancy):

- *Antiochian Orthodox (1)*: **Nancy Cassis** (R- Novi).
- *Assembly of God (1)*: **Bill Hardiman** (R- Kentwood).
- *Baptist (4)*: **Irma Clark-Coleman** (D- Detroit); **Valde Garcia** (R- Howell); **Tupac Hunter** (D- Detroit); and **Martha Scott** (D- Highland Park).
- *Bible Church (1)*: **Alan Cropsey** (R- DeWitt).
- *Christian/Protestant (non-denominational or unaffiliated) (3)*: **Ray Basham** (D- Taylor); **Randy Richardville** (R- Monroe); and **Gretchen Whitmer** (D- E. Lansing).
- *Christian Reformed (3)*: **Mark Jansen** (R- Grand Rapids); **Wayne Kuipers** (R- Holland); and **Gerald Van Woerkom** (R- Muskegon).
- *Congregational (2)*: **Patricia Birkholz** (R- Saugatuck) and **Mike Bishop** (R- Rochester).
- *Episcopalian (4)*: **Deb Cherry** (D- Burton); **Hansen Clarke** (D- Detroit); **Jud Gilbert** (R- Algonac); and **Bruce Patterson** (R- Canton).
- *Free Methodist (1)*: **Ron Jelinek** (R- Three Oaks).
- *Greek Orthodox (1)*: **John Pappageorge** (R- Troy).
- *Jewish (3)*: **Liz Brater** (D- Ann Arbor); **Gilda Jacobs** (D- Huntington Woods); and **Roger Kahn** (R- Saginaw).
- *Lutheran (2)*: **Mike Prusi** (D- Ishpeming) and **Tony Stamas** (R- Midland).
- *(United) Methodist (2)*: **Jason Allen** (R- Traverse City) and **Glenn Anderson** (R- Westland).
- *Roman Catholic (6)*: **Jim Barcia** (D- Bay City); **Tom George** (R- Kalamazoo); **John Gleason** (D- Flushing); **Michelle McManus** (R- Lake Leelanau); **Dennis Olshove** (D- Warren); and **Mickey Switalski** (D- Roseville).
- *(United) Church of Christ (2)*: **Alan Sanborn** (R- Richmond) and **Samuel (Buzz) Thomas** (D- Detroit).
- *Wesleyan (1)*: **Cameron Brown** (R- Fawn River Twp).

And of the 110 representatives in the state House:

- *Abundant Life Ministries (1)*: **Paul Scott** (R- Grand Blanc).
- *African Methodist Episcopal (2)*: **Bettie Cook Scott** (D- Detroit) and **Woodrow Stanley** (D- Flint).

- *Agnostic*: **Sarah Roberts** (D- St. Clair Shores).
- *Antiochian Orthodox (1)*: **Justin Amash** (R- Kentwood).
- *Baptist (7)*: **Brian Calley** (R- Portland); **George Cushingberry, Jr.** (D- Detroit); **Fred Durhal** (D- Detroit); **Bert Johnson** (D- Detroit); **Robert B. Jones** (D- Kalamazoo); **LaMar Lemmons, Jr.** (D- Detroit); and **Joel Sheltrown** (D- West Branch).
- *Christian/Protestant (non-denominational or unaffiliated) (11)*: **Doug Bennett** (D- Muskegon); **Darwin Booher** (R- Ewart); **Kevin Green** (R- Wyoming); **Richard E. Hammel** (D- Flushing); **Joseph Haveman** (R- Holland); **Mike Huckleberry** (D- Greenville); **David E. Nathan** (D- Detroit); **Tom Pearce** (R- Rockford); **Wayne Schmidt** (R- Traverse City); **Mike Simpson** (D- Jackson); and **Mary Valentine** (D- Muskegon).
- *Christian Reformed (1)*: **Arlan Meekhof** (R- West Olive)
- *Carpenter's House Outreach (1)*: **Dave Agema** (R- Grandville).
- *(United) Church of Christ (1)*: **Jimmy Womack** (D- Detroit).
- *Church of God in Christ (2)*: **Robert Dean** (D- Grand Rapids) and **Coleman A. Young** (D- Detroit).
- *Church of the Nazarene (2)*: **Richard J. Ball** (R- Laingsburg) and **Kim Meltzer** (R- Clinton Twp).
- *Community of Christ (1)*: **Terry Brown** (D- Pigeon).
- *Congregational (2)*: **Pam Byrnes** (D- Chelsea) and **Goeff Hansen** (R- Hart).
- *Episcopalian (6)*: **Tim Bledsoe** (D- Grosse Pointe); **Barb Byrum** (D- Onondaga); **Andy Coulouris** (D- Saginaw); **Marie Donigan** (D- Royal Oak); **Tonya Schuitmaker** (R- Lawton), and **Rebekah Warren** (D- Ann Arbor).
- *Greek Orthodox (1)*: **Andrew Kandrevas** (D- Southgate).
- *Jewish (4)*: **Vicki Barnett** (D- Farmington Hills); **Lisa Brown** (D- West Bloomfield); **Ellen Cogen Lipton** (D- Huntington Woods); and **Gabe Leland** (D- Detroit);
- *Lutheran* (5)*: **Jennifer Haase** (D- Richmond); **Mike Lahti** (D- Hancock); **Steve Lindberg** (D- Marquette); **Andy Neumann** (D- Alpena); and **Jim Stamas** (R- Midland).
- *(United) Methodist (9)*: **Hugh Crawford** (R- Novi); **Cindy Denby** (R- Fowlerville); **Vince Gregory** (D- Southfield); **Gail Haines** (R- Lake Angelus); **Rick Jones** (R- Grand Ledge); **Mark Meadows** (D- E. Lansing); **Fred Miller** (D- Mt. Clemens); **Bill Rogers** (R- Brighton); and **Kate Segal** (D- Battle Creek).
- *Muslim (1)*: **Rashida Tlaib** (D- Detroit).
- *Pentecostal Apostolic (1)*: **Tim Melton** (D- Auburn Hills)
- *Presbyterian (7)*: **Joan Bauer** (D- Lansing); **Gary McDowell** (D- Rudyard); **Dudley Spade** (D- Tipton); **Dian Slavens** (D- Canton); **Deb Kennedy** (D- Brownstown); **Dan Scripps** (D- Northport), and **Sharon Tyler** (R- Niles)
- *Reformed Baptist (1)*: **Tom McMillan** (R- Rochester Hills).
- *Roman Catholic (38)*: **Kathy Angerer** (D- Dundee); **Jase Bolger** (R- Marshall); **Bill Caul** (R- Mt. Pleasant); **Ed Clemente** (D- Lincoln Park); **Bob Constan** (D- Dearborn Heights); **Mark Corriveau** (D- Northville); **Kevin Daley** (R- Attica); **Larry DeShazor** (R- Portage); **Andy Dillon** (D- Redford); **Kate Ebli** (D- Monroe); **Kevin**

LONGEST-SERVING CONGRESSMEN IN U.S. HISTORY

On Feb. 11, U.S. Rep. **John Dingell** (D-MI 15) surpassed the late **Jamie Whitten** of Mississippi, also a Democrat, as the longest-serving member of the U.S. House of Representatives ever, with 19,420 days on the job. Here are the top 10 record-holders* in order of length of service as of today:

Dingell: 1955-?
Whitten: 1941-94
Carl Vinson (D-GA): 1914-65
Emanuel Celler (D-NY): 1923-72
Sam Rayburn (D-TX): 1913-61
Joseph Cannon (R-IL): 1873-92; 1895-1913; 1915-22
Sidney Yates (D-IL): 1949-62; 1965-98
Wright Patman (D-TX): 1929-76
Adolph Sabath (D-IL): 1907-52
John Conyers** (D-MI): 1965-?

* *All-time leaders covering both chambers: the late **Carl Hayden** (D-AZ) piled up nearly 57 years of service (20,773 days) spread out over the House and Senate. The still-serving West Virginia Sen. **Robert Byrd** (20,490 days) was elected first to the House in 1953 and then to the Senate in 1959. Byrd could surpass Hayden's record this coming November. Dingell, 82, will have to serve more than three years and eight months longer to reach Hayden's bicameral standard. Byrd, who is now 91 years old and in failing health, can never be surpassed by Dingell as long as he remains a senator. When Byrd dies, resigns, or chooses not to run again (his current term runs through 2012), Dingell could surpass him in longevity if the Michigan Congressman continues to be re-elected indefinitely.*

** *Besides Dingell, only Conyers, who will turn 80 on May 16, remains in office, giving Michigan the two top seniority spots in the U.S. House*

Elsenheimer (R-Kewadin); **John Espinoza** (D-Crosswell); **Doug Geiss** (D-Taylor); **Bob Genetski** (R-Saugatuck); **Lee Gonzales** (D-Flint Twp); **Martin Griffin** (D-Jackson); **Harold L. Haugh** (D-Roseville); **David Hildenbrand** (R-Lowell); **Kenneth Horn** (R-Frankenmuth); **Marty Knollenberg** (R-Troy); **Eileen Kowall** (R-White Lake); **Richard LeBlanc** (D-Westland); **Pete Lund** (R-Shelby Twp); **Jim Marleau** (R-Lake Orion); **Jeff Mayes** (D-Bay City); **Tim Moore** (R-Farwell); **Chuck Moss** (R-Birmingham); **Judy Nerat** (D-Wallace); **Paul Opsommer** (R-DeWitt); **Phil Pavlov** (R-St. Clair); **Gino Polidori** (D-DeWitt); **John Proos** (R-St. Joseph); **Tory Rocca** (R-Sterling Heights); **Roy Schmidt** (D-Grand Rapids); **Jim Slezak** (D-Davison); **Alma Wheeler Smith** (D-Salem Twp); **Jon Switalski** (D-Warren); and **John J. Walsh** (R-Livonia)

● *Seventh Day Adventist (1): **Matt Lori** (R-Constantine).*

● *Ukrainian Orthodox Christian (1): **Lesia Liss** (D-Warren).*

● *United Brethren (1): **Ken Kurtz** (R-Coldwater).*

● *Word of Faith (1): **Shanelle Jackson** (D-Detroit).*

Among all 147 legislators in the combined House and Senate, members of various Protestant denominations

would seem to total nearly 100, including an increasing number of fundamentalist churches that have constituted the biggest growth industry in organized religion nationally during the past couple of decades.

If Roman Catholics are added together with Protestant sects that are "pro-life" on a variety of social issues, it's safe to conclude that well over half the 95th's membership is composed of legislators whose churches are aligned with most of the Catholic Conference's and Right to Life of Michigan's agenda (regardless of the professed beliefs of individual members). That accounts for the conservative tilt of lawmakers on most social/cultural issues compared with the general population.

But do the CC and RtL have a two-thirds majority in each chamber? No — they're actually a little weaker in the House (by about half a dozen members) than they were in the 94th. It would take 74 votes in the House and 26 in the Senate to override a veto by Gov. **Jennifer Granholm**, a Roman Catholic whose views on abortion, stem cell research, and other issues of importance to RtL and the CC are at variance with those of her church.

Could pro-life Democrats be induced by Granholm and her lobbyists to "take a bullet" for their leader by voting to sustain a gubernatorial veto that would conflict with their own views? In 2004, nearly a dozen could **not** be after she vetoed a bill banning so-called 'partial-birth' abortions — but that still wasn't enough to override her.

Here are **IMP's** composite findings:

Religious Affiliations	Senate	House	Total
Roman Catholics	5	38	43
Christian/Protestant (unaffiliated)	3	11	14
Baptist	4	7	11
United Methodist	2	9	11
Episcopalian	4	6	10
Lutheran*	3	5	8
Presbyterian	0	7	7
Jewish	3	4	7
Christian Reformed	3	1	4
Congregational	2	2	4
(United) Church of Christ	2	1	3
Assembly of God	2	0	2
African Methodist Episcopal	0	2	2
Church of God in Christ	0	2	2
Church of the Nazarene	0	2	2
Greek (Eastern) Orthodox	1	1	2
Antiochian Orthodox	1	1	2
Abundant Life Ministries	0	1	1
Agnostic	0	1	1
Bible Church	1	0	1
Carpenter's House Outreach	0	1	1
Community of Christ	0	1	1
Muslim	0	1	1
Pentecostal Apostolic	0	1	1
Reformed Baptist	0	1	1
Seventh Day Adventist	0	1	1
Ukrainian Orthodox Christian	0	1	1
United Brethren	0	1	1
Wesleyan	1	0	1
Word of Faith	0	1	1
Total	37	110	147

* *The designation "Lutheran" includes the Evangelical, Wisconsin, Missouri, and Apostolic synods*