

August 5, 2026

TO: MABA Committees

FROM: Chuck Lippstreu, MABA President

RE: 2026 Michigan Primary Election Results

The purpose of this memo is to give you, Michigan Agri-Business Association (MABA) members, a sense of what your association is doing now to prepare for 2027 and beyond.

From a MABA perspective our main goal is to stop anti-agriculture proposals and advance agricultural policy that helps our members. We have had good success with this in recent years. The effort starts during election season and is already well underway.

Main takeaways from Tuesday's Primary Election:

- The Governor's race has shaped up as many anticipated with Congressman John James and Secretary Jocelyn Benson as the nominees. This will be a gubernatorial election between two highly-seasoned candidates who have already won big elections.
- With just a couple of exceptions, state legislators serving on our committees of jurisdiction (for example, the Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee, etc.) who were running for reelection, or for a new office were successful on primary day.
- As we get closer to election day, we are reminded that several of the farmers and ag professionals serving in the state Legislature are termed out and will be departing in January. This amplifies the need for education and engagement of both candidates, and elected officials as we move through the coming months.

MABA has already been engaged with various candidates. Throughout the year we have met with both nominees for governor, as have several of you. The candidates for governor are very different but both provided time and attention to agriculture during their primary campaigns. In conversations with Secretary Benson and Congressman James, MABA has emphasized the need for predictability, certainty and partnership from your state government. We can provide examples of policies that have worked, policies that have not worked, and how our next governor can help the state's second-largest industry. We will continue these efforts during the general election cycle and during the gubernatorial transition.

We also regularly interact with state legislative candidates. Control of the Michigan State House and Senate will remain unpredictable until Election Day. Polling can be tough and sparse in these races, and control in both chambers will likely have close margins no matter how it shakes out. There are three potential outcomes at the state level: Unified Democratic control (which occurred from 2023-2024); Unified Republican control (seen most recently in 2017-18); or divided government, which is what we have now. Each brings several unique factors and each outcome is

possible given the close legislative margins. Our job is to be successful in any of these three environments.

Some things we are doing now:

- MABA is once again sending background information to nominated candidates and we will welcome endorsement requests in state legislative races. MABA will make a limited number of general election endorsements.
- We conduct Zoom briefings that are open to all candidates, providing an opportunity for Q/A and to build relationships.
- MABA is once again organizing opportunities for our members to stay up to date on potential outcomes and issues. This includes a briefing from our lobby team at the Outlook conference, and Zoom briefings hosted by the PAC in the fall.
- State affairs staff in our membership can expect a post-election policy meeting similar to the ones we have scheduled for you the past two cycles, once we know Election Day outcomes.
- As we move into 2027, Lansing Ag Club Breakfast events will provide direct opportunities to meet and engage with elected officials. [I encourage MABA members to review the schedule of upcoming Ag Clubs](#) and consider stepping up to cover the cost of one. Contact MABA staff for more information.

Much of our focus is on state government given that more and more is happening at state capitals around the country. We have also been engaged with a wide range of federal candidates.

Michigan currently has a Congressional delegation that values the contributions of the agricultural industry. Viable candidates for Congress must be able to provide a clear vision for the agricultural sector and rural Michigan. Many of the topics we emphasize with state-level candidates hold true for federal candidates as well.

Questions about the 2026 Election Cycle can be directed to MABA President Chuck Lippstreu, chuck@miagbiz.org.

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