

Manistee County Democrats:

I slept in this morning but got to the breakfast room in time to take part in the moving tributes to retiring US Rep Dan Kildee and US Senator Debbie Stabenow. The stars of USA politics came out this morning to honor these public servants. US House Speaker Emerita Nancy Pelosi spoke so eloquently about the work both Dan and Debbie had done for the benefit of so many of their constituents. Senator Amy Klobuchar coined a new acronym, *MAMA (Make America Michigan/Minnesota Again)* praising our state legislature and leadership as well as paying tribute to Kildee and Stabenow. Secretary of Energy and former Michigan Governor Jennifer Granholm still has the skills to electrify a crowd. Senator Gary Peters was emotional in his tributes to Senator Stabenow and Representative Kildee. Elissa Slotkin, Stabenow's heir apparent was fine tuning her important convention speech to be delivered Thursday night. Throughout the tributes delivered by these speakers we continued to hear the focus on the bright future and the importance of this election.



I cruised over to McCormick Place around noon to attend the Environment/Climate Caucus. Alexandria Ocasio Cortez was the featured speaker, and she did a great job breaking down the misinformation being distributed by the MAGA cult in reference to the Green New Deal (GND). The GND is nothing but a common sense approach to the work we have to do to mitigate the effects of high levels of carbon dioxide in our atmosphere that are causing climate change and increasing catastrophic weather events. All the GND is asking of our government is to provide the funding to “prime the pump” in converting from fossil fuels to clean energy. The GND is NOT some sort of communistic plot to force clean energy options down our throats. The combination of government funding and carefully crafted and faithfully executed

environmental legislation will help the USA do our part to save the planet for future generations. Sorry for no picture of AOC, but the lighting in the room was terrible and she escaped out the back door immediately after her talk. I then attended the Senior caucus where we heard from a dedicated cadre of US Representatives who are working on legislation they have named "Social Security 2100" that is focused on preserving the trust fund without having to change the retirement age or reduce benefits. They outlined how the simple act of eliminating the annual social security income cap would not only extend the fund lifetime but enable increased benefits to surviving spouses whose benefits are currently cut when their primary wage earner dies. People who earn more than \$168,600/year should not have a problem continuing to pay the 6.2% tax on their earnings. These same advocates in Washington DC are also working on a slight increase to the current 1.45% Medicare tax rate to be able to include vision, dental, and hearing benefits to Medicare.

The energy in the arena tonight was relatively subdued as many of the delegates were worn out after two late nights/early mornings, but as the evening went on everyone came alive as joy and hope overcame weariness. Stevie Wonder lit the fuse with his speech and the crowd exploded when he played "Higher Ground"! Michigan's Dana Nessel showed her strength and grit from the main stage reminding voters just how tough and persistent state Attorneys General like Kamala Harris and her can be when they prosecute criminals. The parade of Never-Trump Republicans continued sharing their up-close experiences with the cult leader as well as a brutal video reminder of the January 6th insurrection. Amanda Gorman's poetry was once again filled with a dream of joy and hope for the future. We all enjoyed Bill Clinton's folksy delivery and especially his admission that he knows he is too old to be President and the fact that he is actually younger than Trump! When Oprah surprised us all we were waiting for her to tell us we all to check under our seat to see if we had won a car (LOL), but instead she delivered a fiery speech denouncing racism, sexism, fear, and hate. "I'm Pete Buttigieg and you may recognize me from Fox News!" is all I need to say about his speech! You probably heard the roar from the Michigan delegation when he mentioned our state! John Legend and Sheila E lit us up with a song by Minnesota native Prince before Coach Walz took the stage. Tim Walz demonstrated once again that he is genuinely a good person, a great storyteller, and a bringer of infectious joy. Coach Tim gave a great locker-room talk telling us all to get in the trenches and do the blocking and tackling necessary to win this election. I can tell you that he certainly has THIS old O-lineman fired up!

Day 4 is here already, but we still have meetings and caucuses to attend and learn from today. This convention is not all cheering and celebration. Delegates are expected to bring skills home and lead from the front for the benefit of all Democrat candidates during the remaining 75 days! I hope you will all join with me in the huddle and on the field!