



Senator Debbie Stabenow (D-MI)

Born and raised in Michigan, United States Senator Debbie Stabenow knows what matters to Michigan. She made history in 2000 when she became the first woman from the State of Michigan elected to the United States Senate.

From the County Commission to the State Legislature to the halls of Congress, she is a respected national leader on health care and manufacturing issues and champion for Michigan. She has risen in Senate leadership as Senate Conference Secretary and now Chair of the Democratic Steering and Outreach Committee.

A nationally recognized leader, Senator Stabenow is respected for her ability to build coalitions to get things done for Michigan and our nation. Her recent appointment to the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, and membership on the Senate Finance, Agriculture and Budget Committees, has given her a powerful and unique role to play in shaping our nation's health care, manufacturing and energy policies, so critical to our future.

Senator Stabenow is fighting for new laws to crack down on countries violating our trade laws and to reduce health care costs. She is a recognized leader in the fight to make prescription drugs more affordable and to bring innovative technology to the health care system. Her proposed Green Collar Jobs Initiative would retool older manufacturing facilities and invest in the newest energy technologies, including advanced batteries, to reduce our dependence on foreign oil and create jobs here at home.

She is also delivering for Michigan as a member of the Senate Agriculture Committee. Her leadership in rewriting our nation's farm bill has brought about an historic new focus on Michigan's specialty crops and victories for Michigan in alternative energy production, Great Lakes preservation, land conservation, research, food safety, nutrition, and rural development.

Senator Stabenow also wrote a new law to assist families facing foreclosure by eliminating the IRS rule that unfairly taxed homeowners who had a portion of their original mortgage loan forgiven by the bank. She is a strong advocate for higher education – working to pass recent increases in college financial aid and securing millions in cutting-edge research dollars for Michigan’s colleges and universities. She is a champion for Michigan’s Great Lakes and waterways, and author of the Michigan Lighthouse and Maritime Heritage Act to promote tourism and help preserve some of Michigan’s greatest historical treasures. She is also the author of the first ever federal ban on drilling for oil and gas in our Great Lakes.

Senator Stabenow’s leadership was recognized by the Michigan Association of Chiefs of Police and the Michigan Association of Fire Chiefs who both awarded her their 2005 Legislator of the Year award. The Great Lakes Maritime Task Force named her their 2005 “Great Lakes Legislator of the Year.” The Michigan Primary Care Association honored Senator Stabenow with its 2005 “Champion for the Medically Underserved” award and the National Association of Community Health Centers recognized her with its 2008 “Distinguished Community Health Champion” award.

As a State Legislator, Stabenow was acclaimed one of Michigan’s most passionate advocates for children and an expert in family law and small business issues. Her influence as a State Legislator is evident throughout Michigan law – from Michigan’s historic property tax cut and small business reforms, to nationally acclaimed legislation to protect children and families.

Born in Gladwin, Michigan, Senator Stabenow grew up in the nearby town of Clare. She attended Michigan State University, where she received her Bachelor's (1972) and Masters (1975) degrees. She worked with youth in the public schools before running for public office.

As the first woman from the State of Michigan elected to the United States Senate, Senator Stabenow was inspired to first run for office by the threatened closure of a local nursing home. She was elected to the Ingham County Board of Commissioners in 1974 and was the youngest person and first woman to chair the Board (1977-78). She was elected to the Michigan House of Representatives where she served for twelve years (1979-90) and rose in leadership, becoming the first woman to preside over the House. She served in the State Senate for four years (1991-94). Elected to Congress in 1996 representing Michigan’s Eighth Congressional District, she won election to the U.S. Senate four years later.

Senator Stabenow’s home is in Lansing, Michigan. She has two grown children, Todd and Michelle; a daughter-in-law, Sara; and two grandchildren. She is a member of Grace United Methodist Church.