



## Legislator Spotlight

***Representative Lesia Liss (D-Warren)***  
***Co-Chair, House Bipartisan Caucus***



**Q. You co-chair the Bipartisan Caucus in the House, how does your caucus intend to promote compromise and bi-partisanship among the newly-elected members?**

A. The work from the Bipartisan Caucus in the House has been exciting and gaining momentum as we move into this new Legislature. Representative Rogers, my Republican co-chair, and I were invited to speak at numerous events; the House new member orientation, the MSU Legislative Leadership Program, and the Nuts & Bolts Under the Dome dinner. These were the events at which we met as freshman and as a result formed the Bipartisan Freshman Caucus early in our first term. We were surprised to hear that the freshman already knew who we were

and enthusiastically expressed a desire to join the Bipartisan Caucus. In fact, this new group already had a successful bipartisan event for freshman legislators at the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG) in early January, before they were even sworn in.

I am so encouraged by all of the movement and will continue working across the aisle. I believe that with Governor Snyder on board, our bipartisanship movement is going to be stronger. It is going to put Michigan on the map for bipartisan cooperation and, I can't wait to put Michigan on the map. It's about time we have something positive to say about Michigan.

This goes along with the No Labels Movement, of which I am a founder that says: "Not Left. Not Right. Forward." We may not necessarily agree on every issue, but we are willing to talk to one another about the issues to make progress for the people in Michigan.

**Q. Which issues do you believe the House will easily find common ground on? Why?**

A. The budget deadline. We all agree that we must complete the budget by June 1 and even though I believe its necessary, we may or may not have a 2-year budget complete by then. I think we all agree that cuts will have to be made—we need to find the waste within our largest budgets to make cuts and consolidate services without harming the public. It would be great if interest groups could come to us and suggest how we can make progress within their program.

The other major issue we all agree on is eliminating the MBT surcharge, which will add more to the budget shortfall making cuts and consolidation even more critical.

**Q. You're an emergency room nurse, what impact do you hope to have in shaping the health of Michigan? Children's health?**

A. As the Minority Vice Chair of the Health Policy Committee, I am very excited to be working with Representative Gail Haines, Chair of the committee. Together, a more dynamic team could not have been formed! I am looking forward to educating my colleagues in the House and Senate by bringing in health care professionals, forming small workgroups, and having experts present before the committee. I believe that there will be a mental health focus with autism and mental health parity arising.

Also, as one of the co-chairs on the Advisory Committee for the Michigan Children's Trust Fund Signature Auction Event working towards the prevention of child abuse and neglect, I will be putting much of my energy into looking at how we can ensure the health, safety, and wellbeing of children.



**Q. What are some of your goals and priorities related to school-age health and education?**

A. Keeping school-based health centers in place and the resources that have been given to them is a priority. SBHCs not only take care of the students, but of the community and parents. I cannot imagine what would happen to our kids and communities without SBHCs.

**Q. You also have a relationship with your school-based health center. In fact, you have been a champion of the model while in the legislature. How would you respond to colleagues who just don't get the relationship between health and education?**

A. They will get a personal visit from me to take them on a tour of their local school-based health center to see the model in action! I will not take "no" for an answer! Everything will be about educating my colleagues.

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