

**POLITICS**

# Insider: State warns employees against prediction market bets with state intel

**[Beth LeBlanc](#), [Melissa Nann Burke](#), [Richard Burr](#) and [Craig Mauger](#)** The Detroit News

May 10, 2026, 12:02 a.m. ET



*Lansing* — The state of Michigan warned its employees in a recent email against using insider information to make bets in online prediction markets.

The April 29 letter, first reported by [Gongwer News Service](#), was addressed to state employees and contractors by Office of the State Employer Director **Liza Estlund Olson**, shortly after a [U.S. Army soldier was charged](#) with trading on Polymarket with classified information regarding the capture of Venezuelan President **Nicolas Maduro**.

The national reports on the “misuse of nonpublic information” on prediction markets highlighted the “importance of maintaining the public’s trust in government,” Estlund Olson wrote.

State law and civil service rules prevent the use of confidential or nonpublic information gained through a state employee’s position for financial gain, she wrote.

“This includes using such information to seek a financial benefit or avoid a financial loss for yourself or others, including on prediction markets or similar online platforms that allow for wagering on the outcome of events,” Estlund Olson wrote. “It also includes providing or sharing such information with others for these purposes.”

Violations, she continued, could result in disciplinary action, including dismissal, or a referral for further legal review. She encouraged employees to report any such activity to their supervisors.

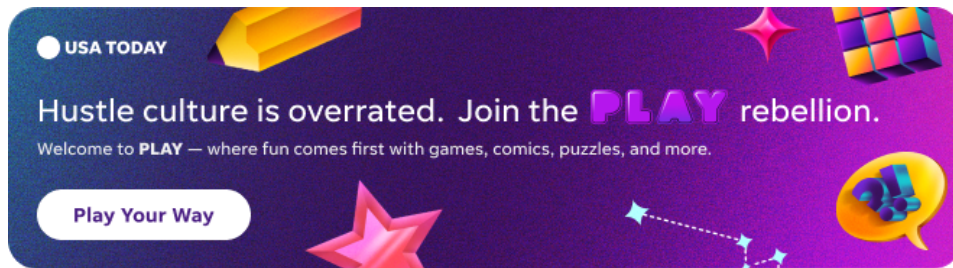
“These requirements are not new, but as new technologies and platforms emerge, it is important that we continue to reaffirm how longstanding

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rules apply in new contexts,” Estlund Olson said.

you think.

In March, Attorney General **Dana Nessel** filed a lawsuit [against nationwide prediction market KalshiEX](#), arguing the market amounts to an online sports betting platform without being licensed through the Michigan Gaming Control Board.



**More:** Michigan's internet gaming market blows past expectations

## MEDC board member recusing herself from Global Link matters

An executive committee member of the Michigan Economic Development Corp. will recuse herself from proceedings related to a \$20 million Global Link International grant because her husband is a managing partner at the law firm suing the agency over its termination of the controversial Global Link grant.

The lawsuit, [filed Wednesday against the MEDC](#) after [Nessel charged](#) Global Link CEO **Fay Beydoun**, was brought by two attorneys at Hammoud, Dakhllallah & Associates PLLC. The lawsuit alleges that the [MEDC's March 2025 cancellation of the grant](#) was outside its authority and erroneous.

**Ali Hammoud** is not listed as an attorney bringing the suit, but is a managing partner at Hammoud, Dakhllallah & Associates. He is married to **Fadwa Hammoud**, the state's former solicitor general and an appointee of Gov. **Gretchen Whitmer** to the MEDC executive committee.

Upon learning of the lawsuit, Fadwa Hammoud contacted the executive committee chairperson to disclose the information and "address her duties in line with the policies of the MEDC and the Executive Committee," said **Danielle Emerson**, a spokeswoman for the MEDC.

"Ms. Hammoud will be voluntarily excluding herself from any and all proceedings in which this litigation and the investigation of the Global Link grant is mentioned and will be maintaining that exclusion for the duration of these matters," Emerson said.

Fadwa Hammoud, who previously led Nessel's unsuccessful Flint water crisis prosecutions, was [appointed to the executive committee](#) on April 25,

2024.

## No Pentagon inspector general probe of Kid Rock flyover

The inspector general of the U.S. Department of Defense is refusing a request from a watchdog group to investigate the use of a military helicopter for a flyover at musician **Kid Rock**'s house in Nashville in late March.

The nonprofit group Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington released a [letter](#) last week that it got from Inspector General **Platte B. Moring III**, saying that "Secretary Hegseth indicated that he had decided not to pursue this matter. My office will not investigate the Secretary's decision."

The fly-by made news earlier this spring, leading to the suspension of the aircrew from two U.S. Army Apache attack helicopters that flew near the Michigan native's house. Shortly after, Hegseth lifted the suspension and said there'd be no punishment and no investigation.

The head of CREW, **Don Sherman**, said he'd never seen a response like this before from an IG, calling it "incredibly alarming."

"This incident raises serious questions about the potential misuse of military aircraft, abuse of taxpayer funds and public safety. Even President Trump said the crew should have been investigated and likely should not have been 'playing games,'" Sherman said in a statement.

"If Secretary Hegseth gets to choose what gets investigated and what doesn't, then independent oversight is functionally over at the Defense Department."

## AFP Action drops \$750K on more Rogers ads

The conservative group AFP Action says it's putting \$750,000 behind [two more ads](#) to boost the campaign of Republican **Mike Rogers**, who is running for the state's open U.S. Senate seat, bringing the group's total spend to date in Michigan to a little over \$2.25 million.

One of the 30-second spots emphasizes the pain of rising costs for Americans, and says, "Mike Rogers is a statesman, not a partisan politician."

The ads will run through the end of May across connected TV, YouTube, YouTube TV and some displays on Meta, with a total audience size is around 2.3 million individuals, according to AFP's **Meghan Winston**. AFP also ran pro-Rogers ads in February, March and April.

The ads follow a memo from AFP Action senior adviser **Emily Seidel** and Executive Director **Nathan Nascimento**, urging Republican candidates to focus on cost-of-living issues or risk losing the Senate, saying that "every campaign event should answer one question — what are you doing to lower the cost of living for working families?"

## Huizenga district shifts in Democrats' favor

The political handicappers at Sabato's Crystal Ball shifted their ratings for two U.S. House races in Michigan last week, moving the 4th District in west Michigan from "likely" to "leans" Republican and the 8th District in the Tri-Cities area from "leans" Democratic to "likely."

**Kyle Kondik** at the Crystal Ball contends that the 4th District held by long-time GOP U.S. Rep. **Bill Huizenga** of Holland is becoming more competitive relative to Michigan as a whole, though Huizenga won reelection by double digits in 2022 and 2024. And Huizenga has attracted a "well-funded" opponent in state Sen. **Sean McCann**, a Kalamazoo Democrat.

"If 2018 showed us anything, it's that historically Republican places that nonetheless seemed to prefer the pre-Trump version of the GOP may be open to a Democrat under the right midterm circumstances," Kondik wrote.



U.S. Rep. Bill Huizenga (left), R-Holland, faces a reelection challenge from state Sen. Sean McCann (right), D-Kalamazoo. *The Detroit News, File*

Cook Political Report still rates Huizenga's district as "likely" Republican.

For Michigan's 8th Congressional District, Kondik pointed to the results in Tuesday's special election with Democrats holding the seat by nearly 20

percentage points in Michigan's [35th Senate District](#) that was previously held by first-term U.S. Rep. **Kristen McDonald Rivet**, D-Bay City.

Kondik reasoned that this kind of result in a state legislative district covering part of McDonald Rivet's congressional district "is another suggestion that she does not appear to be really vulnerable" in 2026 despite representing a district that President **Donald Trump** carried by 2 percentage points in 2024.

Kondik added that it's "helpful" to McDonald Rivet that her top GOP challenger, Navy veteran **Amir Hassan** of Flint hasn't shown much fundraising strength to date. Cook Political Report also rates the 8th as "leans" Democratic.

## Sheffield plays LCA peekaboo

Detroit Mayor **Mary Sheffield** hasn't been shy about attending Detroit Pistons games to cheer on the home team, but she played hide and seek with Little Caesars Arena cameras during last Sunday's Game 7 playoff contest against the Orlando Magic.

At one point, a camera panned into an arena suite, where Sheffield could be seen. When the mayor looked and realized she was on camera, she quickly hid behind a man in the suite as other Pistons fans in the suite laughed.

The LCA suite belongs to Detroit's Downtown Development Authority, which owns the arena, city spokesman **John Roach** said in an email. During Detroit's bankruptcy in 2013, Emergency Manager **Kevyn Orr** negotiated the city of Detroit's and DDA's use of the suite as part of the Little Caesars Arena agreement, Roach said, and former Mayor **Mike Duggan** used the suite for 12 years.

Sheffield initially ducked down in the suite last Sunday because the Jumbotron camera cut to the mayor "sooner than she expected," Roach said.

"The plan was for her to be in her seat when they cut to her so she could wave to fans," Roach said.

"When the camera first cut to her unexpectedly, she was engaged with people she was attending with and unable to have that more personal moment, engaging with fans."



Sheffield ended up smiling and waving to the crowd while seated in the suite during the fourth quarter when the Pistons led Orlando 83-64, according to a city-provided video.

Detroit Mayor Mary Sheffield smiles at the Jumbotron camera at Little Caesars Arena in Detroit on Sunday, May 3, 2026, during the fourth quarter of the Detroit Pistons-Orlando Magic playoff game.  
*Administration Of Mayor Mary Sheffield*



#### **Detroit Mayor shown on Jumbotron during Pistons-Magic playoff game**

Detroit Mayor Mary Sheffield smiles at the Jumbotron camera at Little Caesars Arena during the Detroit Pistons-Orlando Magic playoff game.

## **Endorsement watch**

U.S. Senate hopeful and Democrat **Abdul El-Sayed** of Ann Arbor was endorsed by the Black Slate, a group with members of the Shrine of the Black Madonna, a historic Detroit church whose organization and advocacy helped to elect **Coleman Young** as the city's first Black mayor in 1973.

Sen. **Elissa Slotkin**, D-Holly, endorsed state Sen. **Sean McCann** of Kalamazoo in his bid to win the Democratic nomination in the 4th District and challenge GOP U.S. Rep. **Bill Huizenga**, R-Holland.

## **Tweet of the Week**

The Insider report's "Tweet of the Week," recognizing a social media post that was worthy of attention or, possibly, just a laugh, from the previous week goes to Michigan party chairs **Curtis Hertel**, a former state senator, and state Sen. **Jim Runestad**, for a witty exchange Wednesday.

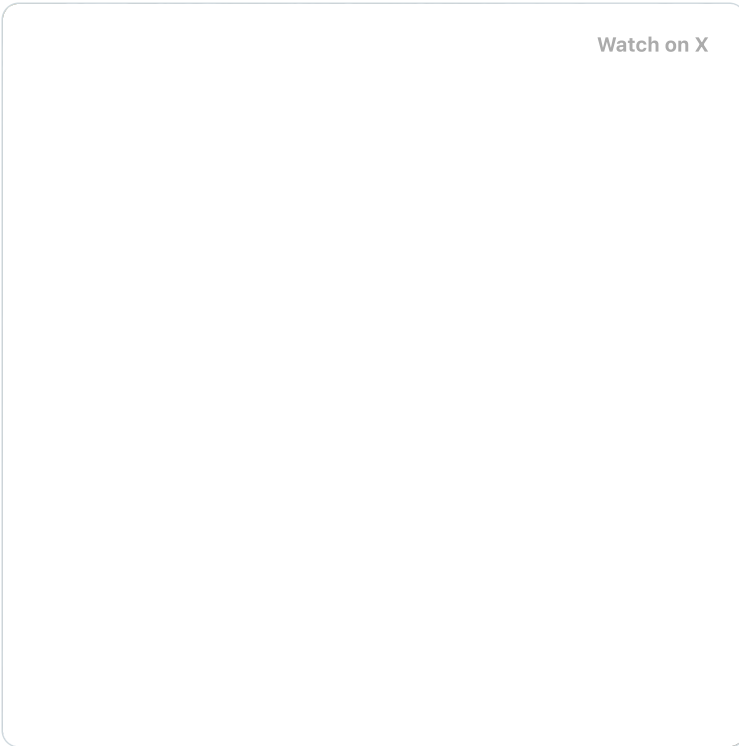
On Wednesday, Runestad, who is chairman of the Michigan Republican Party, posted a video of himself dropping off flowers at the Michigan Democratic Party headquarters in Lansing after [The News reported](#) on problems at the Democratic endorsement convention and [leaked voting results](#).

Michigan GOP   
@MIGOP · [Follow](#)



Oh, Democrat Chairman Curtis Hertel.

Convention Chaos + Brutal Audit demands of his catastrophic convention by Nessel + Santana + McDonald ... So we brought flowers 🌸



12:40 AM · May 8, 2026



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Hertel, chairman of the Michigan Democratic Party, fired back minutes later, boasting about Democrats' victory in the 35th Senate District race that day.

"So nice of Jim Runestad to drop off congratulations flowers for us after Chedrick Greene won by 19 points," Hertel wrote. "Would've stopped by his office, but [@MIGOP](#) had to sell it."

Curtis Hertel 

@CurtisHertelJr · [Follow](#)



So nice of Jim Runestad to drop off congratulations flowers for us after Chedrick Greene won by 19 points.

Would've stopped by his office, but [@MIGOP](#) had to sell it.

 Last edited 12:42 AM · May 8, 2026



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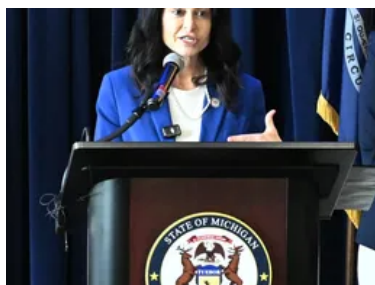
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- New claims of invalid signatures leveled in Michigan GOP governor race
- GOP hopeful faces ballot challenge in suburban Detroit U.S. House race
- Barrett bill greenlights, limits military operations in Iran to 90 days
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