

POLITICS

Michigan Democrat says she broke rules, voted in convention from home



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Lansing — A Michigan Democrat said Monday that she voted in [the April 19 state party convention](#) from her home in Antrim County, raising questions about whether party rules requiring in-person voting were followed.

The Detroit convention, where Democrats [endorsed candidates](#) for attorney general, secretary of state and university board positions, was hotly contested and drew about 6,600 voting members. It's been unclear in the nine days since the event whether some candidates who lost races would publicly contest their defeats, citing potential policy missteps.

Amid that uncertainty, Cathy Albro, a Democratic former U.S. House candidate from Antrim County, told The Detroit News on Monday that she left Detroit, after getting her credential for the convention, on the morning of April 19. When she arrived home in Bellaire, she voted to test whether it was possible to cast her ballot through the electronic voting system, Albro said.

A copy of the initial unofficial results reviewed by The News showed Albro's vote counted in the races. For instance, she cast a vote for Lt. Gov. Garlin Gilchrist II in the race for the secretary of state nomination, according to the unofficial records.

"Yeah, it did concern me," Albro said about being able to vote remotely. "If it's easy to breach something like that, what else is possible?"

For the convention, Michigan Democrats had to become party members by March 20 to be eligible to vote. Then they had to get credentialed in person at the convention.

After that, Michigan Democrats were supposed to receive a link to the voting system and were supposed to be able to cast their votes through their personal phones. However, the convention's rules required them to be present in person at the Huntington Place convention center to participate.

Albro, who posted on Facebook about leaving the convention, acknowledged that she checked a box, saying she was in person at the convention before casting her vote. Albro said the party's leaders can take away her vote if they so choose.

Candidates who participated in the convention have the right to challenge votes through an appeals process, said Derrick Honeyman, a spokesman for the Michigan Democratic Party. The deadline for any appeals is May 4.

"Members were required to be in person at Huntington Place to credential and vote," Honeyman said Monday.

Secretary of State candidate raised concerns about electronic voting

There were concerns about the electronic voting process before the April 19 convention. [Suzanna Shkreli](#), a candidate for secretary of state, asked the party in the days before the gathering to outline its plans to ensure the in-person voting requirements were enforced and to detail its verification processes.

Liano Sharon, a progressive activist from Lansing, had also questioned the enforcement of the party's rules.

On Monday, Sharon said he asked Albro to vote in the convention from her house to see whether it was possible and determine whether the party's system included a virtual perimeter to prevent votes from being submitted outside of the convention hall. It apparently didn't.

"I've had reports from many other people who were also able to vote from home," Sharon said, adding that he's heard of one person who voted in the Democratic convention from outside of the country.

However, Sharon contended that progressive members of the party showed up so strongly for the convention that the voting questions wouldn't affect the results in the main races.

Sharon wasn't the only Democrat who claimed to have heard about people voting outside of the convention hall. Michelle Price-Miletic of Oakland County said she had heard of four or five people who voted from their homes through the electronic system.

Voting started two hours late at the convention. The gathering featured "vile" comments [against some Democrats](#), like U.S. Rep. Haley Stevens of Birmingham, who's running for the U.S. Senate, and no one in leadership went on stage to stop the anger, Price-Miletic said.

"I grew up in New York," she added. "I've seen crap. This was ... I've never seen anything like this before."

More: [Michigan rep rips fellow Democrats for 'troubling' convention behavior](#)

More: [Insider: Tlaib responds to KMR on Democratic convention behavior](#)

What were the unofficial results of the Michigan Democratic Party's endorsement convention?

The Michigan Democratic Party hasn't released official results. However, according to unofficial numbers obtained by The News on Monday, Washtenaw County Prosecutor Eli Savit got about 59% of the vote [in the attorney general race](#), while Oakland County Prosecutor Karen McDonald received about 41%.

Olivia Bradish, campaign spokeswoman for McDonald, said Monday night that her team had received voting data from the Michigan Democratic Party and was still

reviewing it.

“We continue to work closely with MDP Chair Curtis Hertel and his team to identify and address all voting issues,” Bradish said.

In the race for [secretary of state](#), Gilchrist got about 58% of the vote, while Ingham County Clerk Barb Byrum received about 22% and Shkreli, a former state lottery commissioner, got about 20%, according to the unofficial numbers.

The race for the nomination for two seats on the Michigan State University Board of Trustees was much closer. According to the unofficial numbers, incumbent Trusee Brianna Scott of Muskegon got about 38% of the vote, locking up one of the spots.

Fellow incumbent Kelly Tebay received about 30.9% for the other nomination. Tebay beat state Sen. Sylvia Santana, who received about 30.8% of votes cast, losing by a margin of about 15 votes, according to the unofficial numbers reviewed by The News.

For two seats on the University of Michigan Board of Regents, Regent Paul Brown got about 44% of the vote, while challenger and Dearborn lawyer Amir Makled got about 40%. Regent Jordan Acker of Huntington Woods [finished in third place](#) with about 15%, according to the unofficial numbers.

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