

LWV Voters Guide to Fall '08 General Election

Representative in the General Assembly

(Vote for one)

Term: 2 years

Salary: \$76,163

Duties: The General Assembly is the legislative branch of the state government. It is composed of two houses, the Senate and the House of Representatives. A majority vote of both houses is necessary to pass a law. Every law concerned with taxation must originate in the House of Representatives.

Questions: 1. What should state government do to ensure that every Pennsylvanian has health insurance coverage?
2. What must be accomplished before you could support legislation to enable a merger between the City of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County.

16th State Legislative District

Democratic

Robert F. Matzie, 39, Ambridge

www.robmatzie.com

Education: 1989, Community College of Beaver County, A.S. High Technology Communications; 1992, Point Park University, B.S. Journalism & Communications.

Occupation: Administrative Assistant, PA State Senate

Qualifications: 13 years as staff member assigned to Senator Gerald LaValle. 10 years member Ambridge Planning Commission. Past member Ambridge Revitalization Development Corporation. Former Mayor of Ambridge. Former member PA Democratic State Committee.

Answers: 1. Governor Rendell's proposal entitled "Prescription for Pennsylvania" would in my view be a good model to work from in moving toward such a goal. The manner and sources of funding for this bold initiative must be carefully analyzed, weighed to ensure continuity and growth for the program as well as fairness on the part of those we eventually call upon to contribute whether it be businesses or individual stakeholders.

2. No reply

Republican

No Candidate Filed

19th State Legislative District

Democratic

Jake Wheatley, No reply

Republican

No Candidate Filed

20th State Legislative District

Democratic

Don Walko, 55, 26th Ward, Pittsburgh

Education: 1975, Penn State, B.S.; 1978, Dickinson School of Law, J.D.

Occupation: State Representative; Attorney

Qualifications: Since graduating from law school I have served in leadership roles on numerous neighborhood revitalization organizations. I have over a decade of experience in the General Assembly.

Answers: 1. Lower the cost of health care by reducing the risk of hospital-acquired infections, reforming small group health insurance, and modernizing scope of practice rules for health care professionals. At the same time, all uninsured adults should be given affordable health coverage financed by an increase of 10 cents in the cigarette tax, taxing smokeless tobacco and cigars, and using \$400 million of the state's Health Care Provider Retention Account. In the long-term, our nation must adopt a universal single-payer health care system.

2. The citizens of Pittsburgh must not be forced to pay a higher rate of taxes as part of an "urban district." That would add another incentive to families to move from neighborhoods in the former city of Pittsburgh to nearby suburbs. Every effort must first be made to consolidate services for more efficiency and cost savings.

Constitution

Jim Barr, 55, West View

Education: 1970, North Hills High School, 1988, CCAC, A.S.

Occupation: Direct care provider for mentally challenged adults

Qualifications: Student of Constitutional Studies, National Center for Constitutional Studies.

Answers: 1. Reduce salaries of state legislators thus with the reduced cost to operate state government taxes can be lowered. Pennsylvanians will have more of their own money to purchase health care.

2. The General Assembly shall designate an agency of the Commonwealth to study consolidation, merger and boundary changes...The electors of any municipality shall have the right, by initiative and referendum, to consolidate, merge and change boundaries by a majority vote of those voting in each municipality...

21st State Legislative District

Democratic

Dom Costa, 56, 10th Ward, Pittsburgh s72890@verizon.net

Education: Penn Hills H.S. 1969, Trade School-5yrs, Allegheny County Master Plumber, Police Academy, Penn State Leadership Course

Occupation: Retired Police Chief

Qualifications: I have worked 29 yrs in public safety and have worked with numerous officials in various levels of government. Within the divisions of the Pgh. Police Dept., I have worked in patrol, detectives, arson, narcotics, S.W.A.T., bomb squad, traffic and have held rank as a Sgt., Lt., Commander and Chief. I have been directly involved with many community organizations and many matters of concern.

Answers: 1. Pennsylvania, alone, cannot absorb the total cost of coverage for every Pennsylvanian. State government should work aggressively with the federal government, health care providers, non-profit organizations, and industry to develop and implement a viable program that addresses health care coverage to all Pennsylvanians.

2. No reply

Green

Jonah Yon McAllister-Erickson,

No reply

Independent

Dan Mahon, 47, 8th Ward, Pittsburgh www.mahon08.com

Education: Connelly Trade School

Occupation: Electrician

Qualifications: No reply

Answers: 1. Work diligently with health care providers and insurers to provide a more competitive health care market in the region and create a more affordable environment for small businesses to offer health care to their

employees! Also make behemoth UPMC pay their fair share of taxes or provide cheaper healthcare! No nonprofit should be allowed to show profits in excess of \$500,000,000 a year!!

2. The city must become more fiscally responsible. The outlying communities must show a desire to merge.

Republican

No Candidate Filed

22nd State Legislative District

Democratic

Chelsa Wagner, 31, 19th Ward, Pittsburgh www.chelsawagner.com

Education: B.A. Public Policy, University of Chicago, 1999; J.D., University of Pittsburgh Law School 2005

Occupation: Legislator/Attorney

Qualifications: Academic and professional experience in policy and community development. Current Legislator; former work as an attorney advocating for individuals; formerly a policy analyst for large state and city governments with focus on human services, tax reform and job creation.

Answers: 1. In the immediate future, the state should enact legislation that contains healthcare costs and provides a mechanism for small businesses to purchase affordable health insurance for their employees. The vast majority of Pennsylvanians who are uninsured adults are employed full-time and many are employed by small businesses. Nearly half of Pennsylvanians' small businesses don't offer health insurance to their employees because they cannot afford it. This reform is realistic and can be implemented immediately within the state's budgetary constraints.

2. I do not support the merger as currently proposed which was formed without public input and gives few specifics. The creation of an urban services district, without adequate and direct representation, may further threaten city services and cripple our urban core. A viable proposal needs specifics on how City services will not be adversely affected and how the City's unfunded pension problem will be addressed, in a way that is fair to both City and Suburban taxpayers.

Republican

No Candidate Filed

23rd State Legislative District

Democratic

Dan B. Frankel, No reply

Green

Mary E. Hughes, 76, Squirrel Hill

Education: 1953 U. of Pittsburgh, B.S. in Education Post Graduate credits in Library Science and Communications.

Occupation: Activist for peace and justice.

Qualifications: In 1980 I organized campaign for safe, clean affordable, community run energy systems, and an end to military, industrial and petrochemicals.

Answers: 1. Single payer health care is the answer. I support Penna. HB 1660 and SB-300, the family and business health bills.

2. I support a thorough analysis of how a merger would benefit the citizens of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County. We need to share resources, control corporate greed, protect our environment, our children's future.

24th State Legislative District

Democratic

Joseph Preston, Jr., 61, 12th Ward, Pittsburgh www.reppreston.com

Education: University of Pittsburgh, B.A., Psychology & Political Science

Occupation: Legislator

Qualifications: Have served with integrity & dedication. My legislation made it possible for district elections in Pittsburgh; created the state Dropout Program; worked vigorously for economic development projects in all areas of legislative district. I usually attend community meetings in person when possible.

Answers: 1. First, pass the Cover All Kids legislation. Next, support legislation to provide affordable health care, then cover those who are not able to afford it. This can be done by the state cutting operating cost and other funding sources. By having Universal Health Care for everyone the budget for unnecessary incidents would eventually be reduced and providing better care would reduce infections and preventable illnesses is what this legislation will do for all Pennsylvanians.

2. No reply

Republican

No Candidate Filed