

## LWV Voters Guide to Fall '08 General Election

### Senator in the General Assembly

(Vote for one)

**Term:** 4 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. The Senate approves executive appointments while it is in session. Senators will be elected in odd-numbered districts in 2008.

**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.

### 37<sup>th</sup> State Senatorial District

#### Democratic

**Amy Jude Schmotzer**, 51, Whitehall

**Education:** B.S. in Nursing, Carlow University. Attended University of Pittsburgh

**Occupation:** Licensed registered nurse; Program Manager/ Oncology UPMC, Pittsburgh Cancer Institute

**Qualifications:** I am not a career politician. I have real job and life experiences to reform and change Harrisburg. Member, Pennsylvania State Democratic Committee and Allegheny County Democratic Committee; active in community, charitable and professional groups; member, St. Elizabeth's Parish

**Answers:** 1. There are 800,000 Pennsylvania residents without health care coverage. 108,000 live in Allegheny County. This is unacceptable. I would introduce a bill eliminating all health care benefits for all state elected officials. This would be a wake-up call to deal with the problem. I would work closely with Governor Ed Rendell who is committed to finding a solution. I would commit the 241 million dollar surplus that the state legislature has in their accounts. I would also commit the surplus from the M Care Fund. This is a public need we have to tackle and solve.

2. Things must be done before this question is debated. 1. Who bears responsibility for the City of Pittsburgh's long term debt. 2. Who bears responsibility for the City of Pittsburgh's unfunded pension liability. 3. The voters of Allegheny County must be given a chance to vote this proposal up or down.

#### Republican

**John Pippy**, 37, Moon Township

**Education:** 1992, United States Military Academy at West Point, NY, B.S.

**Occupation:** Pennsylvania Senator

**Qualifications:** U.S. Army; Pennsylvania House of Representatives; Pennsylvania Senate

**Answers:** 1. I support legislation that would help hospitals and physicians reduce medical errors, reward best practices, and provide increased opportunities for small business owners looking to offer health insurance to their employees. In addition, I support the continuation and expansion of Pennsylvania's AdultBasic and CHIP programs, which provide low cost insurance to adults and children. Finally, I support increasing the portability of health care insurance for employees and providing the opportunity for employer contributions.

2. No reply

### 43<sup>rd</sup> State Senatorial District

#### Democratic

**Jay Costa, Jr.**, 52, Forest Hills

**Education:** 1977, Community College of Allegheny County; 1979, Indiana University of PA, B.A.; 1985, Allegheny Police Training Academy; 1989, Duquesne Law, J.D.

**Occupation:** State Senator/Attorney

**Qualifications:** 12 years of service in the Senate; 19 years as a member of the Bar; 3 years as minority caucus chair in PA Senate; 4 years Allegheny County Register of Wills; numerous boards, commissions and committees.

**Answers:** 1. Senate Democrats have proposed a plan that provides health insurance coverage for Pennsylvania's uninsured. It includes an initiative to lower the cost of health insurance through small group reform, non-payment for medical errors and fighting hospital acquired infections. Senate Democrats have introduced Governor Rendell's PA-ABC that will provide insurance benefits that include prescription drug coverage. This coverage may be purchased individually or will be offered through small employers.

2. Before I would support a merger between the City of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County, I need to see financial savings to the citizens of the city and the county. The city and the county currently have the authority to implement functional consolidation in a variety of services. By doing this, both the city and county could save taxpayers money before we begin the complicated process of a formal consolidation of all government services. Until a greater emphasis is placed on expanding the consolidation of services under existing authority and a clear demonstration of savings to taxpayers, I am reluctant to support a greater, more formalized consolidation at this time.

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**Republican**

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**No Candidate Filed**

**45th State Senatorial District**

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**Democratic**

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**Sean Logan**, No reply

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**Republican**

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**No Candidate Filed**

**47<sup>th</sup> State Senatorial District**

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**Democratic**

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**Jason M. Petrella**, No reply

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**Republican**

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**Elder Vogel, Jr.**, 51, New Sewickly Twp [www.vogel08.com](http://www.vogel08.com)

**Education:** 1974, Freedom Area High School

**Occupation:** Self-employed dairy farmer

**Qualifications:** New Sewickly Township Supervisor, 11 years; President of the Beaver/Lawrence Farm Bureau, 14 years

**Answers:** 1. I believe we need to make healthcare more affordable to every Pennsylvanian. We should be encouraging small businesses to engage in polling to lower the cost of health care. I also think we need to remove government mandates which will reduce the cost to small businesses as well as the working men and women.

2. No reply