

2022 PENNSYLVANIA CATHOLIC CONFERENCE VOTER GUIDE // NOV. 8, 2022

"We need to participate for the common good. Sometimes we hear: a good Catholic is not interested in politics. This is not true: good Catholics immerse themselves in politics by offering the best of themselves so that the leader can govern."
- Pope Francis, 9/16/13

The Pennsylvania Catholic Conference is the public affairs arm of the Catholic Bishops across the Commonwealth. The Conference neither supports nor opposes any candidate or political party. The Pennsylvania Catholic Conference aims to educate and inform Catholics about issues that are addressed in Catholic social teaching and about issues that impact the Church and our practice of the faith.

As Catholics, we are called upon to form our consciences for faithful citizenship for the good of all. More information on conscience formation is on website of the US Conference of Catholic Bishops.

This voter guide was developed in order to help voters **start** to discern how to respond to elections this November. Our bishops teach us to "hear, receive, and act upon the Church's teaching in the lifelong task of forming his or her own conscience." Foremost amongst those teachings are the four basic principles of Catholic social doctrine: the dignity of the human person, the common good, subsidiarity, and solidarity (*Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, no. 160). With this foundation, Catholics are better able to evaluate policy positions, party platforms, and candidates' promises and actions in light of the Gospel and the moral and social teaching of the Church in order to help build a better world.

This voter guide is a platform from which we can learn about the major party candidates for our statewide races for Pennsylvania governor and U.S. senator. Voters should reflect and pray over their choices, considering all issues that affect human life and human dignity. Candidates and topics are listed in alphabetical order.

The topic areas listed are a sampling for those on which candidates have taken a written position. **Those positions are taken verbatim from their official campaign websites. What is shown is the entirety of the candidate's explanation of each topic. We neither trimmed down any of the entries nor did we make any corrections to grammar, spelling or punctuation.** We encourage everyone to visit those sites for more information and to discern other areas that candidates have or have not addressed in their official platforms. Likewise, we encourage Catholics to seek additional voter resources that are authorized by their own bishops.

Finally, we must remember that, despite the differing political beliefs that Catholics may hold, we are first and foremost followers of Christ, committed to offering everyone the love, mercy and compassion of Jesus.

GUBERNATORIAL RACE

PA State Senator Doug Mastriano (R)

CAMPAIGN WEBSITE: DOUG4GOV.COM

REPUBLICAN LT. GOVERNOR CANDIDATE: PA HOUSE REP. CARRIE DELROSSO (R), CAMPAIGN WEBSITE: CARRIEFORPA.COM



ABORTION

To protect the right to life, Mastriano will sign the Heartbeat bill into law, end funding to Planned Parenthood, and expand counseling for adoption services.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Doug Mastriano believes government's top job is to provide for the safety of its citizens. As governor, he'll hold elected officials accountable for enforcing the law and prosecuting crime. If they won't do their jobs, Mastriano will remove them.

Mastriano will support law enforcement by ensuring they have adequate funding. He'll keep violent criminals behind bars where they belong and he'll strengthen penalties for repeat offenders and those convicted of violent crime. He'll also support funding for additional prosecutors in high-crime areas.

Mastriano will clean up PA's worst neighborhoods and he won't hesitate to assist local law enforcement with State Police and National Guard to protect law-abiding citizens and businesses during periods of mass unrest and riots.

EDUCATION

Doug Mastriano believes every Pennsylvania child is entitled to a top-notch education and that, when schools compete, it promotes excellence. While he'll make sure public schools are well-funded, he'll also fight like hell to provide them the competition that will make them great. Mastriano will work with the legislature to finally bring school choice to Pennsylvania families, so that no child is trapped in a failing school ever again.

ELECTIONS

To keep our elections free and fair, Mastriano will appoint a Secretary of State who will secure our elections from fraud. He'll partner with the legislature to eliminate "no-excuse" mail-in voting, get rid of drop boxes, and pass universal voter ID.

LGBTQ

On day one, Mastriano will place an immediate ban on biological males in girls' locker rooms and restrooms. On the same day, Mastriano will ban biological males from competing in girls' sports.



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ABORTION

Abortion is health care. As Governor, Josh will defend access to reproductive health care — and continue to defend a woman’s right to choose in Pennsylvania.

Our Democratic Governor’s veto pen is the only thing standing in the way of Harrisburg Republicans’ attempts to ban abortion, pass dangerous Texas-style laws, and put women’s health at risk. In the face of unprecedented attacks against the right to choose, Josh will be the last line of defense for Pennsylvanians — he will veto any bill that would restrict abortion rights, and he will expand access to reproductive care.

Throughout his career, Josh has never wavered in defense of reproductive rights and a woman’s right to choose. From taking on the Trump Administration in federal court to protecting access to contraception and winning an injunction against the “gag rule,” to filing an amicus brief in support of the U.S. Department of Justice’s challenge to Texas’ early-term abortion ban — Josh has always stood up for and defended the right to choose.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Pennsylvanians deserve a criminal justice system that both keeps us safe and enforces the law fairly and impartially. Almost 180,000 Pennsylvanians are currently on probation and our Commonwealth has the second highest incarceration rate in the country. Furthermore, Pennsylvania is the only state in the entire country that doesn’t allocate state general funds for indigent defense.

As Attorney General, Josh has worked to make communities more safe while pushing for reform. Under Josh’s watch, the Office of the Attorney General has arrested an average of four drug dealers a day and has taken thousands of illegal guns off the streets. His office has also worked to curb gun violence by collaborating across state lines to crack down on illegal gun trafficking, and led the fight to close the ghost gun loophole. Josh has supported law enforcement across Pennsylvania, calling for increased funding for training and working collaboratively with local police departments. As communities across the Commonwealth face a historic shortage of police officers, Josh is calling to immediately hire officers to fill open roles, and invest in recruitment and training to ensure you can count on law enforcement to respond in an emergency.

To keep our communities safe, Pennsylvanians across the Commonwealth must have faith in our criminal justice system — so we must also address the reality that Pennsylvania’s justice system disproportionately impacts people of color. While Black Pennsylvanians constitute 12% of state residents, they account for 46% of people in prison. Josh believes we must invest in public safety while pursuing smart criminal justice reform that will address those inequities, restore trust, and make our communities safer.

At the same time, Josh enacted bail reform for non-violent and low-level offenses for cases handled by the Office of the Attorney General, announced the first-of-its-kind agreement with the largest firearms show promoter in Pennsylvania to stop their sales of ghost gun kits, and led the bipartisan coalition to create a statewide Police Misconduct Database in Pennsylvania. His office also started the Law Enforcement Treatment Initiative (LETI), which partners with local law enforcement to expand access to treatment for Pennsylvanians suffering from substance use disorder.

As Pennsylvania’s next Governor, Josh will continue to keep our communities safe by working with law enforcement and spearheading smart, data-driven criminal justice reform that will make our Commonwealth safer and more just. He will work to improve public safety and reduce recidivism by reforming probation and parole, funding indigent defense, and keeping guns out of the hands of dangerous individuals. He will also invest in addiction prevention programs and expand treatment options so that non-violent offenders can access the support they need. As Governor, Josh will reform the cash bail system for non-violent offenses while maintaining strict standards of accountability for violent crimes, continue to oppose mandatory minimum sentences and the death penalty, and reform Pennsylvania’s costly and broken probation and parole system.

EDUCATION

Every child in Pennsylvania — regardless of race, class, or zip code — deserves access to a quality education and the opportunity to shape their own future. A strong education system is foundational to a functioning democracy, and it’s critical to moving Pennsylvania forward. As Governor, Josh will ensure every student has access to the “thorough and efficient” education Pennsylvania’s constitution promises. He’s going to fully fund our schools—especially those that have been chronically underfunded— and make critical investments we need like attracting and retaining quality teachers, repairing old and dangerously unhealthy buildings, and keeping pace with changing technology so our students are prepared for the future.

Josh will make our children’s mental health a priority and ensure that every school building in the Commonwealth has at least one mental health counselor, and end our reliance on standardized testing so we can create more time for kids to learn and more flexibility for teachers to teach. Josh will empower students with the skills necessary to succeed in whatever path they choose, ensuring every high school student has access to vocational, technical, and computer training.

Josh believes parents deserve to be empowered to ensure their kids receive a good education and that every child has access to quality learning. That requires boosting funding for education and innovating to ensure children in our most challenged schools receive the education and care they deserve. Josh favors adding choices for parents and educational opportunity for students and funding lifeline scholarships like those approved in other states and introduced in Pennsylvania.

And, Josh will make sure parents have a seat at the table when decisions about education are made by appointing at least two parents to the State Board of Education.

We can keep Pennsylvania’s promise to our students by fully funding and fixing up our schools, prioritizing mental health, empowering students with vocational, technical, and computer training, and ensuring parents have a real voice in their children’s education. As Governor, Josh will tackle these challenges head on and ensure we build opportunity for Pennsylvania’s children.

ELECTIONS

The attacks on our democracy didn’t stop after January 6th, 2021. Josh would know. Because as the Attorney General who stopped Donald Trump’s attempts to undermine and overthrow Pennsylvania’s election, Josh went to court dozens of times to defend Pennsylvanians’ right to vote and ensure every legal vote was counted — and he won. More than a year after votes were cast in the 2020 election and two legal, bipartisan audits confirmed Pennsylvania’s results, Josh continues to defend our election as Pennsylvania Republicans bring a sham “audit” to the Commonwealth.

As Governor, Josh will defend our democracy, ensure access to the ballot box, and keep our elections secure. He’ll veto any efforts to restrict mail-in voting, expand early voting, and set up automatic voter registration — making it easier than ever for legal voters to participate in our democracy. He’ll appoint a pro-democracy Secretary of State to run our elections, expand pre-registration opportunities for young people, and implement same-day voter registration through Election Day.

Josh knows that to grow our economy, improve our schools, and make our communities safer, we must have a stable foundation of our democracy. As Attorney General, he spoke truth to lies and went to court to protect Pennsylvanians’ rights. As Governor, he’ll continue to protect every citizen’s right to vote — and make sure every legal vote is counted. *(ISSUES CONTINUE ON NEXT PAGE)*

LGBTQ

Josh will continue to advocate for LGBTQ+ Pennsylvanians and fight for equality as Governor — just like he has for his entire career. Josh has stood with LGBTQ+ communities throughout his career — he defended LGBTQ+ rights from the Trump Administration's attacks as Attorney General, helped the first LGBTQ+ couples in Pennsylvania marry as a Montgomery County Commissioner, and pushed to expand protections for our Commonwealth's LGBTQ+ communities as a State Representative.

Pennsylvania is the only state in the Northeast without comprehensive nondiscrimination protections for sexual orientation and/or gender identity. This means that LGBTQ+ individuals can be discriminated against across the Commonwealth in many sectors, including employment, housing, credit issuance, education, and various public accommodations.

As Governor, Josh will put his full capital behind the effort to finally ban discrimination against LGBTQ+ individuals in Pennsylvania so that LGBTQ+ community can work, attend school, and seek housing under the same rights as everyone else in the Commonwealth. He'll expand our hate crime laws to cover our LGBTQ+ communities, invest in mental health resources to support LGBTQ+ youth, and finally ban conversion therapy for minors. For too long, members of the LGBTQ+ community in Pennsylvania — and all across America — have not been afforded the protections they deserve. Josh will work tirelessly to ensure and expand the rights of the Commonwealth's LGBTQ+ residents.

U.S. SENATE RACE

PA LT. GOVERNOR JOHN FETTERMAN (D)

CAMPAIGN WEBSITE: JOHNFETTERMAN.COM



ABORTION

A woman's right to make her own health care decisions is sacred and non-negotiable. Period.

Right-wing extremists have been hellbent on rolling back abortion access since the ink was barely dry on the Roe v. Wade decision. And in the decades since, the GOP has worked to do away with this fundamental right with extreme laws aimed at banning abortions without exceptions for rape or incest and even putting women who seek abortions and doctors who perform them behind bars. As your senator, I will vote to enshrine access to safe and legal abortion into federal law by passing the Women's Health Protection Act, because deciding how and when to become a mother is a decision that should always be made by a woman and her doctor — not politicians. I will also stand up to attacks on Planned Parenthood, and fight to repeal the Hyde Amendment.

Democrats must do everything we can to protect this fundamental right. I believe that if you are not willing to do whatever it takes to protect abortion rights when they are on the line, then you cannot call yourself pro-choice. It's that simple.

EDUCATION

I was fortunate to get a solid education that helped set me on a solid path. Far too many families struggle to find good public schools for their kids, and the price of college has become outrageous. And there are too few opportunities for the many young people who don't think college is the right option for them. If we want to prepare the next generation for a highly competitive world, we need to get serious about what education in the 21st century looks like.

In Washington, I'll fight for universal pre-k and childcare, and I'll make sure our public schools have the funding they need so our teachers aren't shouldering so much of a burden. I will also work to increase investments in career and technical programs to prepare young adults for successful and in-demand careers in critical industries. And for students who do opt to attend college, to make sure the cost isn't a barrier I'll support efforts to make community colleges tuition-free and reduce the burden of student loan debt that too many borrowers are experiencing right now.

ENERGY

Across the Commonwealth, Pennsylvanians are paying astronomical prices at the pump. But the truth is, prices wouldn't be this high if it weren't for the greed of oil companies. While we are getting squeezed, companies like Shell, Chevron, BP and ExxonMobil are raking in record-breaking profits. It's gross and it's hurting Pennsylvania families.

We must do everything we can to bring down gas prices, including suspending the federal gas tax to provide immediate relief for people at the pump. We should also continue to use American oil, produce and invest in more American energy, and invest in programs that help low-income Pennsylvanians pay their energy bills.

I believe that climate change is an existential threat, and we need to transition to clean energy as quickly as possible. But we must do it in a way that preserves the union way of life for the thousands of workers currently employed or supported by the natural gas industry in Pennsylvania and the communities where they live. We need to make sure that as we transition we honor and uphold the union way of life for workers across Pennsylvania, and create thousands of good-paying union jobs in clean energy in the process.

In the Senate, I will support legislation that combats high gas prices, invests in upgrading infrastructure, and responsibly transitions us to cleaner energy sources. We must make proper investments in greener, cleaner technology in America — and make more of that technology right here at home. I have never taken a dime from the fossil fuel industry, and I never will. So you can be assured that any vote I take when it comes to energy production and climate will be what I believe is right — not what fossil fuel executives tell me to do.

This is what I've been saying for nearly 15 years: I believe that clean energy can revitalize former steel towns all across Pennsylvania, including Braddock, the town I call home. It's a total false choice that we have to choose between creating jobs and working towards a cleaner environment — we can and must do both.

(ISSUES CONTINUES ON NEXT PAGE)

HEALTHCARE

I believe that health care is a basic, fundamental human right, not a privilege. But health care in America is far too expensive and convoluted. In the richest nation on earth, I believe we have a moral duty to guarantee quality health care coverage for every American, and end the disgusting practice of corporations profiting from people's health and well-being.

In the Senate, I will support any legislation that gets us closer to the goal of universal health care coverage. I'm less fixated on what you call it, and more focused on the result: ensuring access to health care for every American. I will also support efforts to lower the Medicare eligibility age to 60 while expanding its benefits to include vision, hearing, and dental care.

Under our current system, many people are forced to pay thousands of dollars for medicine that they need to survive. It's inhumane and inexcusable. If we are going to bring down the prices of prescription drugs, we need to go after the pharmaceutical companies that jack up the prices. We have finally passed a law to allow Medicare to negotiate certain drug prices and cap annual prescription drug costs, but we cannot stop there—we must allow for the importation of lower priced prescription drugs from other countries and limit drug costs for all Americans.

IMMIGRATION

I fundamentally believe immigration is what makes America, America. This issue is personal to me. My wife, Gisele, was a Dreamer who came to America when she was 7, fleeing violence in Brazil with her family. I would not have my family if it weren't for immigration.

It is no secret our immigration system is broken. We need a system that is strong, secure, and humane. In the Senate, I would support investments that go towards keeping our borders strong and preventing the flow of illegal drugs into our country. We also must work to ensure that our immigration system is humane. I support commonsense immigration reforms that will restore our country's legacy as a nation built by immigrants. In the Senate, I will work to modernize our visa system and asylum programs so that they can't be exploited by bad actors. I will also fight for a pathway to citizenship for frontline workers, small business owners, and young people who have only known this country as their home.

We have to reject the false choice pitting laws and strong borders against those coming to America to seek a better life for themselves and their families.

DR. MEHMET OZ (R)

CAMPAIGN WEBSITE: DOCTOROZ.COM



ABORTION

Dr. Oz is a successful heart surgeon – he has literally held a beating heart in his hands. He knows how precious life is and is 100% Pro-Life.

EDUCATION

Dr. Oz believes that a good education is fundamental to a better future. But he believes we need to fundamentally change the way we approach education in this country – by incorporating financial literacy from an early age, focusing on empowering students to make their own career choices, and stopping wealthy universities from raising tuition every year while sitting on millions of dollars in tax-protected endowments. Dr. Oz also believes that the extreme left wants to use our schools to indoctrinate our children with an anti-American ideology –and as Senator he'll fight to block that from happening.

ENERGY

Pennsylvania is a leader in the production of natural gas and coal. The Biden Administration has launched an attack on the energy industry stifling domestic energy production and weakening the U.S. position in energy production. These attacks have resulted in skyrocketing gas and energy prices and made our current energy options less reliable. Dr. Oz will work to overturn these heavy-handed regulations that are hurting Pennsylvania jobs and our local communities.

HEALTHCARE

As a doctor, Oz has seen the inside of the massive health-care industrial complex and knows how they work with lobbyists and powerful special interests to protect it. He's bravely argued against costly drugs, even as it made him a target of drug companies. As a U.S. Senator, he'll work to dismantle policies that lead to more expensive prescription drugs for our seniors, and he'll expand access to private sector plans expanded by President Trump and beloved by seniors for their low costs and high quality that could be available to all Americans who want them.

IMMIGRATION

Dr. Oz believes that one of the core responsibilities of the federal government is to protect you. In order to do that, we need to have a secure border with a barrier – whether that is a physical wall or one patrolled by technological advances.



ON ELECTION DAY, WE ARE REMINDED OF OUR CALL TO PROMOTE CIVILITY, LOVE OUR NEIGHBORS AND BUILD COMMUNITY

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON FORMING CONSCIENCES FOR FAITHFUL CITIZENSHIP, VISIT:
USCCB.ORG/ISSUES-AND-ACTION/FAITHFUL-CITIZENSHIP/FORMING-CONSCIENCES-FOR-FAITHFUL-CITIZENSHIP-TITLE



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