

Vote411 Voters' Mini-Guide

Primary Election May 17, 2022

Pennsylvania State Representative District 23 Democratic Primary

This Voters' Mini-Guide is an excerpt of the Vote411.org online Voters' Guide -- a project of the League of Women Voters. All information in Vote411 Voters' Guides is submitted by the candidates and has not been edited or altered in any way.



You must be registered as a Democrat to vote in this Democratic Primary contest. The winner of this election will be the Democratic nominee on the November ballot.

The 23rd Legislative district contains several neighborhoods in the City of Pittsburgh, including Squirrel Hill, East and North Oakland, Bellefield, Shadyside, Greenfield, Swisshelm Park, and Summerset.

To vote in this election, you must register by May 2, 2022. You must be registered as a Democrat to vote in the Democratic Primary or as a Republican to vote in the Republican Primary. Candidates of other parties are not included in Pennsylvania's Closed Primary.

Description of office: The General Assembly is the legislative branch of government in Pennsylvania. It is composed of two houses: the Senate is the upper house, and the House of Representatives is the lower house. A majority vote in both houses is necessary to pass a law. The PA House of Representatives consists of 203 members representing one district each, with an equal number of constituents. Representatives must be at least 21 years old, have been a citizen and a resident of the state four years and a resident of their respective districts one year before their election, and shall reside in their respective districts during their terms of service.

Dan Frankel

Party: Democratic

Biographical Info:

Occupation: Legislator

Education: The Pennington School (1974), Kenyon College (1978), and Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government's Senior Executives in State and Local Government program (2000)

Qualifications: Representative of Pennsylvania's 23rd Legislative District for 23 years, Democratic Chair of the House Health Committee, and Co-Chair of PA SAFE Caucus and LGBTQ+ Equality Caucus.

Campaign Website: electdanfrankel.com



Questions:

Q: What issue(s) would you prioritize, and how would you work with others in government to get legislation passed and signed into law?

A: Equality, the environment, firearm policy reform, government reform, and reproductive rights will be my priorities in my next term. I have been fighting for these progressive values for two decades and have worked to build coalitions of lawmakers to advocate with me. For example, I founded the Women's Health Caucus and the LGBTQ+ Equality Caucus. These caucuses have become passionate groups of leaders fighting for policies there were often disregarded just 20 years ago.

Q: What changes, if any, would you support making to Pennsylvania's voting laws?

A: Everyone should be able to vote easily, whether they have a disability, are incarcerated, have an unstable address, or have an inflexible work schedule. Therefore, I support expanding access to ballot drop boxes, same-day registration, and guaranteeing the ability to vote early.

In addition, updating Pennsylvania's voting laws shouldn't stop at improving voting access. It's time we let our election officials canvass mail-in and absentee ballots before Election Day, allowing for a faster and more accurate ballot count.

Q: Article 1, Section 27 of the PA constitution guarantees the rights to clean air, pure water, and the preservation of the environment. What actions would you take to protect these rights?

A: Relying on oil, coal, and natural gas for Pennsylvania's energy needs is an unsustainable path for our people and planet. The role of the General Assembly should be to invest in green energy solutions while we effectively tax and regulate polluters. I always have and always will oppose giveaways and incentives that exclusively benefit the fossil fuel industry and will continue to work to close the Methane Loophole, which allows too many fracking wells to go unregulated in Pennsylvania. Lastly, I will continue to lead the fight in the PA House against the medical "gag rule" that prevents doctors from speaking with their patients about the chemicals in fracking and its potential impact on their health.

Q: There are several pieces of gun legislation being considered on comprehensive background checks, red flag laws, and firearm safety training. What is your position on these measures?

A: As co-chair of the PA Safe Caucus, I have fought for two decades to pass common-sense gun regulations. I support legislation for comprehensive background checks, red flag laws, and mandatory firearm safety training for gun owners. Any rational person can see that deadly weapons should be regulated at least as much as, say, swimming pools or lawnmowers.

In the face of the Republican-led legislature's refusal to take up meaningful reform measures, I introduced two bills to allow municipal and county governments to create local laws that reflect residents' desire to have reasonable limits on gun use and ownership. I also drafted legislation to require prospective gun purchasers to obtain liability insurance first.