

Vote411 Voters' Mini-Guide

Primary Election May 17, 2022

Pennsylvania State Senator District 42 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 42nd State Senate district contains Kennedy Township, Mount Lebanon, Neville Township, Reserve, Scott Township, Stowe, Avalon, Bellevue, Ben Avon, Carnegie, Crafton, Dormont, Emsworth, Green Tree, Ingram, McKees Rocks, Millvale, and several neighborhoods in the City of Pittsburgh including Perry North, Northside, Manchester, Perry Hilltop, Allegheny Center, Allegheny West, Sheridan, Corliss, Elliot, Duquesne Heights, Mt. Washington, Beechview, Banksville, West Liberty, Brookline, Summer Hill, City View, Northview Heights, Spring Garden, Spring Hill, Troy Hill, Lawrenceville, Downtown, the Strip District, the Lower Hill, and the Bluff.

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.

Wayne D. Fontana

Party: Democratic

Biographical Info:

Occupation: Realtor

County: Allegheny

Education: Associate Degree in Business from Community College of Allegheny County

Qualifications: State Senator, 2005-present; Senate Democratic Caucus Leadership, 2011-present, Allegheny County Council, 2000-2005; Council Vice-President, 2004-2005; PHEAA Board Member, 2008-present; PHEAA Vice-Chairman, 2011-present; Sports & Exhibition Authority of Pittsburgh & Allegheny County, 2006-present;

Campaign Website: votefontana.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: Gun violence continues to plague our communities. One solution that has worked in other states is enacting extreme risk protection order legislation like my Senate Bill 134. ERPOs authorize a procedure for loved ones and/or law enforcement to protect persons who are a threat to themselves or to others by temporarily removing their access to firearms. The public is on our side on this issue. "Red flag" laws enjoy broad support across the ideological spectrum. I will continue to work with advocates like CeaseFirePA to put pressure on legislative leaders to allow a vote on my SB 134.

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

A: I have been a long-time advocate for mail-in ballots. My SB 128 would conduct our elections by mail. Eight other states conduct their elections primarily by mail, including Colorado that has been voting by mail for over 20 years. Voting by mail is safe, secure, convenient, cost efficient for counties, and popular across party lines.

I would change is to give counties the ability to pre-canvass ballots they've received prior to Election Day. Because county election offices cannot begin counting mail-in ballots until the polls have closed, this often leads to the final tally being delayed several days. PA is the outlier nationally in this respect. My Senate Bill 128 would give counties the ability to pre-canvass 7 days prior to Election Day.

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: Smart investment in electric vehicle infrastructure by the commonwealth will fuel consumers' transition from internal combustion engines--about 40% of our greenhouse gas emission. It is also important that Pennsylvania ensures that our public transportation systems are adequately funded, as buses and commuter rail removes millions of trips in

low-occupancy vehicles from our roads. And as chairman of the Sports and Exhibition Authority, I was pleased to advocate for solar panels to be installed at Heinz Field in Pittsburgh and for PPG Paints Arena to be the first facility in the league to be certified LEED Gold.

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: We must take action to combat the gun violence in our communities. No other country suffers from gun violence as much as we do. As I stated earlier, my SB 134 is the Extreme Risk Protection Order Act. This would put a process into place for family members or law enforcement to petition a court to temporarily remove firearms from an individual who is threatening to harm themselves or others. ERPO is modeled after Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Protection Orders and provides for due process and standards for evidence. This concept enjoys support across the political spectrum and among gun owners and suicide prevention advocates.