



2022 Legislative Interview Questions

To submit the responses, fill out the Google Form here: tinyurl.com/LWVPA OR email the form as a Word document to samantha.anthony@palwv.org.

Background Questions

Background Information

1. Name and email address of person submitting question responses
Terri Purdy
2. Local League name
LWV of Lehigh County
3. Interviewer(s) name
Terri Purdy, Rochelle Kaplan, Cydney Wilson
4. Interview date
2/25/2022
5. Interview method (public virtual forum, private virtual interview with one or more League members, written responses from legislator, other)
Private virtual interview

Legislator Information

1. Name: Jeanne McNeill
2. Party and Office (Democrat/Republican, Senator or Representative): Democrat, Representative
3. District #: 133
4. Legislative Staff Contact Info (if any)
5. Notes on relationship to LWVPA (optional)

Legislative Questions:

Environmental Policy

1. What do you see as the path forward to combating climate change in Pennsylvania?

Representative McNeill supports expanding the use of renewable energy, encouraging homeowners to stop using coal and to switch to heaters and air conditioners with smaller carbon footprints. She stressed that she does not want to see coal miners lose jobs, but as heaters start to go, homeowners should transition to more efficient heaters. She also suggested that, given the rivers in the area, water turbines could be a good source of energy.

2. What are your plans to ensure cleaner water for all Pennsylvanians?

Representative McNeill expressed concern about the financial impacts the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) requirements are having on local townships and boroughs. She suggested that legislation should be directed at companies polluting water and that stricter fines should be imposed on the companies who are contributing to water pollution.

Social Policy

3. What are your plans to address escalating gun violence across the state? The League is watching several pieces of gun safety legislation: [HB 235](#) (SB 88) calling for comprehensive background checks, [HB 1903](#) (SB 134) to allow for families to petition for temporary removal of guns from a person who is in imminent danger of harming themselves or others, and [HB 1846](#) (SB 855) calling for firearm safety training for first-time purchasers. Each of these bills are stuck in the judiciary committee. Do you have plans to push along these gun safety measures in the coming year?

Representative McNeill stated that the bills identified in the question are great bills. She is frustrated that the Democrats are in support of the bills, but that the majority party will not allow committee votes on the bills. She also wants to work on gun buyback programs to aid in getting guns off the street. Representative McNeill shared her frustration that good bills, even non-partisan bills, are not going anywhere. She has been told that any bill that is sponsored by a Democratic representative will not get a vote. She said that it was not this way 2 or 3 years ago.

4. Currently in Pennsylvania, most schools are not receiving adequate funding, and most students do not have the resources they need to succeed. According to the state's

benchmark, 277 Pennsylvania districts need more than \$2,000 more per student to adequately support their education. And the poorest districts in Pennsylvania need even more, creating vast inequities in education across the state. What will you do to make sure every student in PA has access to a high-quality public education, as granted by the State Constitution?

Representative McNeill stated that charter school reform is needed. She is concerned that too much money is coming out of the public school coffers and going into charter schools. She is not opposed to charter schools, but she believes that reforms are needed. Representative McNeill is opposed to school choice vouchers because of the hardship they impose on public schools. Again, as with the gun bills, good bills have been proposed but they are not moving through the legislature. She recommends expanding the Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) program to allow students to go to private schools and to take some of the burden off the tax paying public. The EITC program provides tax credits to eligible businesses who contribute to scholarships

Government / Election Policy

5. Do you believe our voting process is secure? Do you believe that there are widespread problems, and if so what are they?

Representative McNeill believes the voting process is secure.

6. Do you support voting by mail?

Representative McNeill supports voting by mail. She is concerned that mail-in voting is being taken away from Pennsylvanians. She also expressed concern about the undated ballot issue in Lehigh County. Her suggestion is, if the ability to vote by mail is retained in Pennsylvania, to clarify requirements on the ballots to make it easier for voters to correctly fill out the ballots.

7. How would you make it easier for more qualified electors to vote? For example, lengthening the timeframe for early voting, or expanding voting hours at the polls.

Representative McNeill would like to allow more than one day for voting, as many other states do. She would like to expand the use of drop boxes. She would also like to close schools on election day and make election day a holiday. She suggested replacing Columbus Day with an Election Day holiday.