



## **2022 Legislative Interview Questions**

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

### **Background Questions**

#### **Background Information**

1. Name and email address of person submitting question responses

**Mary Erdman** [maryc.erdman@gmail.com](mailto:maryc.erdman@gmail.com)

2. Local League name **LWV Lehigh County**

3. Interviewer(s) name: **Mary Erdman, Barbara Williams, Cydney Wilson,**  
**Muhlenberg College Student**

4. Interview date: **March 4th, 2:00 PM**

5. Interview method (public virtual forum, private virtual interview with one or more League members, written responses from legislator, other): **In person, at the legislator's Allentown Office**

#### **Legislator Information**

1. Name: **Peter Schweyer**
2. Party and Office **Democrat, House Member**
3. District # **22**
4. Legislative Staff Contact Info (if any). **COS, Nancy Wilt 610-791-6270**
5. Notes on relationship to LWVPA (optional): **Excellent**

## 6. Legislative Questions:

### *Environmental Policy*

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

**I see the path forward as “not one bullet,” but a number of things to be done in the Legislature. Does not expect RGGI to survive a court review, since it may cause the premature closing of the coal plants which remain in western counties. Feels that the Alternative Energy Portfolio Standards Act (AEPS), needs to be enhanced and promoted. The AEPS requires that a certain percentage of the electricity sold comes from a variety of sources like: solar, wind, hydropower, methane gas, etc. These standards should be reviewed and increased for the renewable sources. Although AEPS does not take nuclear into consideration because it is not renewable; it is however, carbon free. Investment in nuclear should not be overlooked as we need time to create and increase more renewables.**

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

**Considering that most clean water issues are man-made, we need to take a good look at how we can make better decisions about what we put on the land and in our water, and more money needs to be invested in clean-up projects. One of the worst offenders is coal mining waste which has actually turned many of our creeks and stream beds a rust color, especially in our western counties still mining coal. (Standards were relaxed during the Trump Administration and need to be changed). We also need to increase funding of land reclamation projects which results, also, in water reclamation. We need to look at the problem being created by the long-time use of PFAS, which is a foam used by firefighters. In Emmaus, the residue from firefighters using PFAS for training purposes for years, filtered down into one of the town aquifers, and required Emmaus to spend \$400,000 on a filtration system to remove these toxic chemicals (which last forever) from the water sources. Are there other areas of the state where this needs to be examined? We have to take into consideration that Pennsylvania is a large part of the Chesapeake Watershed and the waters which flow into this protected water basin, begin in our state and we have a huge responsibility to send clean and safe water into this basin.**

**At this point, student Cydney Wilson asked Rep. Schweyer his views on womens’ reproductive rights and his response was that he supports reproductive rights 100%. He believes that women have a fundamental right to make decisions about carrying pregnancy, as well as having complete and total access to birth control and family planning. And that access should be given regardless of ability to pay.**

### *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?

**Regarding these bills; Rep. Schweyer feels that as long as the majority party remains in power that none of these bills will likely make it out of committee. HE supports: red flag laws, no assault rifles under 21, supports gun buybacks, and is very concerned about unregulated purchases from dealers, gun show loopholes and passing guns through families - the Florida loophole.**

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?

**Rep. Schweyer believes that Level-Up is a good start to bringing the bottom 100 school districts up to a better level and believes that more has to be done to make sure that the "equation" is fair to all school districts. However, again, while this majority party is in control of final budget decisions; that adequate funding will be an issue for these 100 urban and rural schools that are in desperate need of better buildings, materials, better pay for teachers and administrators, etc. By not making the salaries more fair across the board, schools like the Allentown School District will continue to see a teacher and administrative shortages as surrounding school districts pay more. We have a systemic and structural problem with the way we fund education in our state and this is important work that needs to be addressed.**

**Regarding Federal Funding Relief and the Federal monies that have not been completely spent - he agrees that we should not spend every dollar from the Federal Government, especially on programs that have revolving needs, because they are yearly programs. However, a happy medium has to be reached as the money will be returned to Washington, if it is not spent by a certain date this year.**

### *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?

**Yes, our voting systems are secure and problems arise only if people are not vigilant and make human mistakes. Our voting systems right now, are very secure (only 4 people attempted to vote more than once for Trump), with free access and fairly well-managed voting procedures. Of course, more help should be considered for the 67 counties charged with organizing and counting the votes cast.**

6. Do you support voting by mail?

**Rep. Schweyer believes that mail-in voting is secure and supports it completely. He is confident that the SCOPA will decide to keep mail-in voting.**

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.

**Rep. Schweyer believes that any steps we can take to make voting easier to access, and cast your vote is a valid policy. After some retrospection, he has come to believe in open primaries. He also believes in: same day registration, automatic voter registration, pre-registration before turning 18 so on can vote in a primary and general election, is anti-Voter ID since the purpose is to limit access to voting, and is fine with the idea of voting in any district within your county.**