

General Election 2016: Pennsylvania's U.S. Senate Candidates

In our commitment to follow Jesus Christ we must do more than just show up for Mass on Sunday morning, we must bear Christian witness in all we do – in our homes, in our work and recreation, in our interaction with the world around us, and in the public square.

Any politics of human dignity must seriously address issues of racism, poverty, hunger, employment, education, housing, and health care. Therefore, Catholics should eagerly involve themselves as advocates for the weak and marginalized in all these areas. *But being 'right' in such matters can never excuse a wrong choice regarding direct attacks on innocent human life.* Indeed, the failure to protect and defend life in its most vulnerable stages renders suspect any claims to the 'rightness' of positions in other matters affecting the poorest and least powerful of the human community. If we understand the human person as the 'temple of the Holy Spirit' -- the living house of God -- then these latter issues fall logically into place as the crossbeams and walls of that house. *All direct attacks on innocent human life, such as abortion and euthanasia, strike at the house's foundation.* These directly and immediately violate the human person's most fundamental right – the right to life.

– From [Living the Gospel of Life, No. 22](#) with original emphasis (Pastoral Statement, U.S. Catholic Bishops, 1998)

The Pennsylvania Catholic Conference (PCC) neither supports nor opposes any candidate for public office. In an effort to educate voters, the PCC gave the statewide candidates the opportunity to make their positions known on key specific issues important to Catholics. Incumbent **Senator Pat Toomey (Republican)** completed a written questionnaire (complete responses available at www.pacatholic.org). Candidate **Katie McGinty (Democrat)** did not respond to the candidate questionnaire. Information about her views was therefore compiled from her campaign website and public statements.



Katie McGinty (D)



Pat Toomey (R)

On Life & Dignity of the Human Person

McGinty is endorsed by EMILY'S List, a political action committee with a mission to "elect pro-choice Democratic women to office." They describe McGinty as "pro-choice, and supports *Roe v. Wade*." (www.emilyslist.org)

Toomey opposes legalized abortion, except when the life of the mother is in danger or the pregnancy is a result of rape or incest. (PCC Survey) He is endorsed by the PA Pro-Life Federation. (www.paprolife.org)

Election Day is November 8!

Immigration

McGinty denounced federal legislation that would deny Community Development Block Grant funds to cities that in effect shelter or give sanctuary to illegal immigrants. At the same time, she wrote a letter to Philadelphia Mayor Jim Kenney requesting him to reconsider the city's immigration policy and open the dialogue with federal officials "so that those who pose a threat don't fall through any crack in local and federal jurisdiction." (katiemcginty.com)

Toomey describes our immigration system as "fundamentally broken." He has "supported efforts to strengthen border security, ensure that our immigration laws are enforced, and stop the outrageous practice of sanctuary cities that undermine our laws." (PCC Survey)

- See reverse side for more -

Published by the Pennsylvania Catholic Conference September 2016

www.pacatholic.org



General Election 2016: Pennsylvania Statewide Candidates

Tax Credits for School Choice

McGinty has not made public statements about funding tax credits for education at the federal level. She is endorsed by the Pennsylvania State Education Association (www.psea.org) as a “pro-public education candidate.” PSEA has traditionally been opposed to school choice.

Toomey believes “we should empower parents to choose the best school for their kids whether they are public or private, religious or non-religious.” He says he could support a federal education tax credit “as long as it was offset with a corresponding spending reduction.” (PCC Survey)

Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, & Religious Liberty

McGinty has not commented specifically about religious exemptions in non-discrimination legislation. However, she says she will fight to expand antidiscrimination protections, “No one should be denied access to housing, healthcare, or employment because of their gender identity or sexual orientation.” (katiemcginty.com)

Toomey supported the Employment Non-Discrimination Act that would prohibit discrimination based sexual orientation. However, he “introduced and forced a vote on an amendment to strengthen and broaden the bill’s underlying protections for faith-based organizations.” (PCC Survey)

Access to Health Care for the Poor

In a press release, McGinty said that she was “proud to work with Governor Wolf to expand Medicaid that provides health care to more than 600,000 Pennsylvanians” during her time as his chief-of-staff. (katiemcginty.com)

Toomey believes that Medicaid is a valuable program but that its “flawed financing structure encourages states to further expand their Medicaid programs while shifting growing costs to the federal government.” He supports giving states more flexibility to encourage efficiency. He does not support further federal mandates. (PCC Survey)

Learn more:

Katie McGinty – Democrat for Senate
katiemcginty.com

Toomey for U.S. Senate
www.toomeyforsenate.com

Pennsylvania Catholic Conference
www.pacatholic.org

For information about voter registration and polling place locations visit:



www.votespa.com