

LEG REG REVIEW

2024, 9th Issue April 26, 2024

LEG REG REVIEW is a periodic newsletter produced by Vince Phillips who retired from active lobbying after 31 years of advocacy in Harrisburg. It contains news on the legislative and regulatory scene in Pennsylvania that may be of interest to the Insurance and Business Communities. Annual subscriptions are \$100 and information may be obtained by contacting PHILLIPS ASSOCIATES at 717/728-1217 or e-mail to xenobun@aol.com.

PRIMARY RECAP

April 23 marked the date of the 2024 Primary. This included the presidential contest (Were you surprised at the outcome?), congressional, PA State Senate (1/2 of the seats were up), PA House of Representatives, and row offices of Attorney General, Auditor General, and State Treasurer. Current and former House legislators figured prominently in some of the other contests.

Attorney General: Former Rep. Eugene DePasquale bested four other Democratic candidates to win with 35.6% of the vote. DePasquale also served as PA's Auditor General. A point of interest in this race is that both DePasquale and his general election opponent District Attorney David Sunday hail from York County. Current Rep. Jared Solomon (D-Phila.) also ran for the Democratic nomination but garnered only 13.1% of the vote. In the Republican primary, David Sunday defeated Rep. Craig Williams (R-Delaware/Chester) by 70.4% to 29.6%.

Auditor General: Current Rep. Malcolm Kenyatta (D-Phila.) won the Democratic primary with 64.25% of the vote. He is running against incumbent Republican Tim DeFoor in the general election. DeFoor was unopposed in his primary.

State Treasurer: Erin McClellan bested current Rep. Ryan Bizzarro (D-Erie) 54.3% to 45.7% in the Democratic primary. She will oppose incumbent Republican Stacy Garrity in the general election. Garrity was unopposed in her primary.

NOTE: *A provision in PA law is that legislators may file for another office while also filing in his or her respective primary for re-election as lawmaker. These include Rep. Kenyatta whose win would mean a special election for the 2025-26 session of the General Assembly. Democrat Representatives Solomon and Bizzarro did not win the nomination for higher office but they did win their primary for State Representative and will appear on the fall ballot. Ditto for Rep. Craig Williams who was defeated in his quest for the Attorney General GOP nomination but won the nomination for his House seat.*

Other state representatives seeking nominations for Congress won their primaries but did not file for re-election to the PA House: Rep. Ryan Mackenzie (R-Lehigh) will face incumbent Democratic U. S. Rep. Susan Wild in November. Rep. Robert Mehuri (R-Allegheny) is running against incumbent Democratic U.S. Rep. Chris DeLuzio this fall.

All incumbent U.S. Members of Congress either won their primary or were unopposed.

PA Senate 2024 Primary

<u>District</u>	<u>Incumbent</u>	<u>Unopposed from Own Party</u>	<u>No Fall Opponent Yet</u>
1	Nick Saval (D-Phila.)	x	x
3	Sharif Street (D-Phila.)	x	x
5	James Dillon (D-Phila.)	x	
7	Vincent Hughes (D-Phila.)	x	x

9	John Kane (D-Chester/Delaware)	x	
11	Judy Schwank (D-Berks)	x	
13	Scott Martin (R-Lanc.)	x	x
15	OPEN (DiSanto's seat)	NA	
17	Amanda Cappelletti (D-Del./Montco)	x	x
19	Carolyn Comitta (D-Chester)	x	
21	Scott Hutchinson (R-Venango)	x	x
23	Gene Yaw (R-Lycoming)	x	x
25	Cris Dush (R-Elk/Jeff./etc.)	x	x
27	Lynda Schlegel Culver (R- Col.)	x	
29	Dave Argall (Schuylkill)	x	
31	OPEN (Regan seat)	NA	
33	Doug Mastriano (R-Franklin)	x	
35	Wayne Langerholc (R-Cambria)	x	x
37	Devlin Robinson (R-Allegheny)	x	
39	Kim Ward (R-Westmoreland)	x	x
41	Joe Pittman (R-Indiana)	x	x
43	Jay Costa (D-Allegheny)	x	x
45	OPEN (Brewster seat)	NA	
47	Elder Vogel (R-Beaver)	x	x
49	Dan Laughlin (R-Erie)	x	

Takeaways from Senate Primary

- **13 of the 25 seats have no opposition from the primary. That is, 8 Republicans and 5 Democrats are right now unopposed for the general election in November.**
- **Open Senate Seats**
 - **15th District's** core is Dauphin County with a 2023 party registration of 85,589 Democrats, 73,756 Republicans, and 30,819 others. Redistricting gave it some Republican areas in the West Shore in Cumberland County but the district lost Republican Perry County. Current Democratic Rep. Patty Kim is facing off against Dauphin County Treasurer Republican Nick DiFrancesco. Current Senator Republican John DiSanto did not seek re-election.
 - **31st District** includes York and Cumberland Counties. The two counties have Republican voter registration majorities. Nominees are current Republican Rep. Dawn Keefer, Chair of the House Freedom Caucus. Her opponent is Democrat Mark Temons. He is a carpenter. The current Senator is Republican Mike Regan who did not seek re-election.
 - **45th District** is centered in Allegheny County. It was redistricted to remove more-GOP-leaning Westmoreland County giving Democrats a voter registration advantage. Over all, Allegheny County has 509,736 registered Democrats versus 254,416 Republicans in 2023. Other affiliations totaled 131,890. This margin may be offset by Democrats voting 'Red' as they have in the last two presidential elections. Democratic candidate is current Rep. Nickolas Pisciotano. Republicans nominated Jennifer Dintini. as their standard-bearer. She is the founder of a woman-owned security firm. Incumbent Democratic Senator Jim Brewster did not seek re-election.

PA House 2024 Primary

Because all House 203 seats are up for election in 2024, please refer to the PA Department of State for vote totals. (Go to <https://www.electionreturns.pa.gov/> and click on Offices at the top of that page.)

NOTE It is not formatted to show which counties are included in a district or what municipalities or counties are the candidates' homes. A reference showing incumbent legislators by district can be found at https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/legis/home/member_information/mbrList.cfm?body=H&sort=district.

Clicking on the incumbent legislator's name will give you the counties in his or her district.

Some general information:

- House candidates (both incumbents and candidates for open seats) who were unopposed in their own party's primary include 136 Democrats and 122 Republicans.
- There were numerous races where there was no opponent in the opposing primary. Although right now, there is no November opponent, these numbers will change after political party appointments are made to fill those vacancies.
- 109 House candidates are currently unopposed for the general election. They include 60 Democrats and 49 Republicans. That is over one-half of the 203 legislative seats in the House.
- There are currently 15 open seats, 5 currently held by Democrats and 10 by Republicans with one uncertain district (117th).
- Two incumbents failed to win the primary election. They are Rep. Kevin Boyle (D-Phila.) and Rep. Jim Gregory (R-Blair).
- The 117th district (Luzerne County) shows incumbent Mike Cabell (R) losing to challenger James Walsh in the GOP primary by eight votes, 4,723 to 4,715.
- Other close vote races:
 - 10th District (Dem.) Amen Brown defeated Cassandra Green by 50 votes (2,959 to 2,909).
 - 38th District (Dem.) John Inglis defeated Victoria Schmotzer by 48 votes (3,180 to 3,132).

For the open seats, here are the match-ups. Campaign websites can provide candidate information.

NOTE: Since campaign committees have various names, Google by (name) for PA State Representative.

District/Incumbent	Democrat	Occupation	Republican	Occupation
5 Jozwiak (R)	Heather Hanna	<i>homemaker/ teacher</i>	Eric Weaknecht	<i>Berks County Sheriff</i>
14 Marshall (R)	Kenya Johns	<i>Mayor</i>	Roman Kozak	<i>trucking logistics/ former legis aide</i>
28 Mecuri (R)	William Petulla	<i>prosecutor</i>	Jeremy Shaffer	<i>highway/bridge construction IT</i>
38 Pisciotano (D)	John Inglis III	<i>teacher/ boro council</i>	Stone Sobieralski	<i>stone mason</i>
56 Dunbar (R)	NA	NA	Brian Rasel	<i>legis Chief of staff</i>
63 Oberlander (R)	Pat Ritchie	<i>grad student/ food delivery co.</i>	Joshua Bashline	<i>legis aide</i>
80 Gregory (R)	NA	NA	Scott Barger	<i>radio station/ former pastor</i>
90 Schemel (R)	NA	NA	Chad Reichard	<i>state legis aide</i>

				<i>Congress aide</i>
92 Keefer (R)	Daniel Almoney	<i>broadcast communications</i>	Marc Anderson	<i>teacher/ administrator</i>
103 Kim (D)	Nathan Davidson	<i>legis aide</i>	Cynthis Ward	<i>sci-fi and fantasy professional writer</i>
120 Kaufer (R)	Fern Leard	<i>nurse aide</i>	Brenda Pugh	<i>Chamber Chair/ CEO, tech. co</i>
126 Rozzi (D)	Jaclyn Rusmock	<i>school board/ dental instructor</i>	NA	NA
172 Boyle (D)	Sean Dougherty	<i>attorney/ former prosecutor</i>	Aizaz Gill	<i>policy director/ former local official</i>
187 Mackenzie (R)	Stefanie Rafes	<i>dental asst</i>	Gary Day	<i>former state rep 2009-2023</i>
201 Kinsey (D)	Andre Carroll	<i>teacher former legis aide</i>	NA	NA

REPUBLICAN WINS SPECIAL HOUSE ELECTION

As anticipated in this Republican district, GOP candidate Jeff Olsommer sailed to victory over Democrat Robin Skibber by 60% to 40% (7,146 to 4,702 votes). He will not be sworn in or assigned to committees until after the House reconvenes on April 29. The Representative-elect replaced fellow Republican former Rep. Joe Adams in this northeastern district who resigned due to a family situation. The special election winner fills out Adams' term until November 30, 2024. Olsommer must stand for re-election in November.

Olsommer is a licensed insurance producer.

Once again, Republicans are one vote away from regaining House control, at least until another special election would be called if Rep. Kevin Boyle (D-Phila.) is forced to resign due to a range of personal issues. There was one partisan matter that boiled over independent of Rep. Boyle's legal woes. Democratic leaders allowed Boyle to vote absentee even as an police arrest warrant was in effect. Most recently, the police warrant was cancelled. Republicans cried foul and said that allowing his remote vote was an improper use of power.

NOTES

- May 2 is the date of an in-person public informational hearing convened by the PA Insurance Department. Its subject is Highmark's request to amend PID's Approving Determination and Order dated April 29, 2013 (Order No. ID-RC-13-06 also known as the 2013 Order). Details: Kimberly Sheaffer at kimsheaffe@pa.gov.
- May 21 is the date for the Philly I-Day sponsored by the Insurance Society of Philadelphia and the CPCU Philadelphia Chapter. Information: <https://www.insurancesociety.org/page/phillyiday>. Following is a link for registration: <https://www.edgereg.net/er/Registration/StepRegInfo.jsp?ActivityID=42386&StepNumber=1&v=NjY3YjliMDAtYTBmZS00NDNhLWI4NmMtMWIwMjk1ZTdhMjkw>.