



League of Women Voters of Wisconsin Education Fund

# Wisconsin State Legislature VOTERS' GUIDE

## Senate District 28\*; Assembly Districts 79-84

2008 Fall General Election

Tuesday, Nov. 4, 2008

### ABOUT THIS GUIDE

In an effort to fulfill our mission of encouraging active and informed participation in government, the League of Women Voters of Wisconsin Education Fund (LWVWIEF) has surveyed the candidates certified for the 2008 Wisconsin Partisan Fall Elections. This *Voters' Guide* has been prepared in advance of the September Primary Election. This *Voters' Guide* contains verbatim responses from candidates in statewide elections. Candidates and their responses are listed according to order by the Wisconsin Government Accountability Board. Candidates were asked to adhere to word limits imposed by printing space requirements. Where these were exceeded, the response was ended with a reasonable length sentence and noted by [word limit]. "No Reply" is noted for candidates who did not respond to the League questionnaire, and "Refused to Answer" is noted for those candidates who state it is their policy not to respond to surveys.

Please share this *Voters' Guide*. Permission to copy and distribute this *Guide* is granted provided that no candidate's answers are altered in any way, that equal treatment in the duplication of the responses to any question is afforded all candidates in contest for a given office, and that the LWVWIEF is acknowledged. Please write to the LWVWIEF with any questions concerning this permission. **No portion of this *Voters' Guide* may be duplicated for any campaign purposes.**

While the League of Women Voters does not endorse individual candidates or political parties, we encourage the public to learn more about the candidates and issues by accessing print, broadcast, and cablecast media, libraries, websites, and by attending debates and forums throughout the election period. Visit our on-line voters' service information via the LWVWI website at [www.lwvwi.org](http://www.lwvwi.org).

\* Only the even-numbered Senate districts are up for election in 2008.

### VOTING IN WISCONSIN

#### Qualifications:

U.S. citizenship, 18 years of age by Election Day, and residence in your Wisconsin voting district for at least 10 days prior to Election Day are required to vote. Residence in a district for fewer than 10 days, but immediately preceded by residence elsewhere in Wisconsin, allows you to vote in the former district by absentee ballot ahead of time. Absentee ballots are available at your municipal clerk's office. For more information, please contact your local municipal clerk, the LWVWI website at <http://www.lwvwi.org/>, or the Government Accountability Board website at <http://elections.state.wi.us/>.

**Election Day Voter Registration: Election Day Voter Registration:** Registration is required for all Wisconsin voters. The websites above explain how to register before the election. Alternately, you may register at your polling place on election day and then vote. To register, proof of residence in the ward is required, such as an official Wisconsin driver's license or identification card with your address. If you do not have written proof, a qualified voter from your municipality can serve as your witness to verify your address.

The League of Women Voters of Wisconsin Education Fund collaborated with Wisconsin Democracy Campaign and Common Cause in Wisconsin to produce this Voters' Guide.



Common Cause  
In Wisconsin



The LWVWI Education Fund depends on public support for its work. Contributions to the LWVWIEF are tax deductible for charitable purposes. LWVWIEF is a member agency of Community Shares of Wisconsin, receiving contributions through annual employee payroll deduction campaigns at workplaces, the Combined Campaign for public sector employees, employer-matching gifts, and on-line at <http://www.communityshares.com/>.

122 State St, #201A, Madison WI 53703 608-256-0827 [lwvwisconsin@lwvwi.org](mailto:lwvwisconsin@lwvwi.org) [www.lwvwi.org](http://www.lwvwi.org)

## ***Candidate Questions:***

*The League collaborated this year with Common Cause in Wisconsin and Wisconsin Democracy Campaign to ask the following set of questions to candidates for state office.*

1. **YES OR NO:** Do you support and would you vote for bipartisan campaign finance reform legislation that would provide full, 100 percent public financing to candidates for the State Supreme Court who qualify for such funding and who agree to limit their spending, and would be eligible to receive additional matching funds if a non-complying opponent exceeds the spending limit, and/or if they are the target of outside spending in the form of independent expenditures or sham issue ads?"
2. **YES OR NO:** Do you support and would you vote for bipartisan, comprehensive campaign finance reform that would reduce special interest influence and the cost of campaigning by setting new voluntary campaign spending limits as a threshold condition for receiving public financing grants equal to at least 35 to 45 percent of the legally established spending limits for the offices they seek as well as:
  - Provide supplemental public grants to candidates who are the targets of outside interest group spending and/or are opposed by candidates who do not agree to limit their spending and exceed the spending limit;
  - Require increased disclosure and regulation of so-called "issue advocacy" by interest groups or individuals;
  - Prohibit campaign fundraising during the state budget process and ban contributions by anyone bidding for a state contract;
  - Eliminate leadership-controlled legislative campaign committees;
  - Limit out-of-state special interest money;
  - Ban the pooling of special interest political action committee money to create so-called "SuperPACs"?
3. **YES OR NO:** Do you support and would you vote for legislation mirroring the bipartisan 2007 Senate Bill 463 requiring the complete disclosure of the source of funding for so-called "issue ads" and requiring that the funds for such electioneering comply with campaign contribution limits in Wisconsin law?  
(This would limit individual donations and prohibit the use of money from the general treasuries of corporations, labor unions and Native American tribes to pay for such electioneering.)
4. **YES OR NO:** Do you support and would you vote for legislative measures making electoral competitiveness a legal or constitutional standard that must be applied by the Legislature and the courts in establishing state legislative and congressional district boundaries?
5. **YES OR NO:** Do you support and would you vote for legislative measures establishing an independent commission or authority to handle the task of redrawing legislative and congressional districts after each census beginning in 2011?
6. **YES OR NO:** Do you support and would you vote for legislation to tighten Wisconsin's "revolving door" policy by requiring at least a one-year "cooling off" period before former legislators, top legislative aides and key executive branch officials can become registered lobbyists and prohibiting persons convicted of a felony or a misdemeanor committed in their former capacity as a legislator, legislative aide or key executive branch official from becoming registered lobbyists?
7. In 100 words or less, please describe your particular priorities for your term in office and your specific qualifications to effectively address those issues.

**Candidate Party Key:**

(C) = Constitution; (D) = Democratic; (IND) = Independent; (L) = Libertarian;  
(R) = Republican; (WG) = Wisconsin Green;  
(I) Incumbent

*State Offices in Wisconsin*

**About the Wisconsin Legislature**

The Wisconsin Legislature is made up of a 33-member Senate and the 99-member Assembly. Senators serve staggered 4-year terms and Assembly members serve 2-year terms. The Legislature's main responsibility is to make policy by enacting state laws. They can also override a governor's veto of any legislation by a two-thirds vote in both houses of the legislature. All members earn a salary of \$47,413 per year.

*Wisconsin Senate*

Senate District 28

**Mary Lazich (R) (I)** 4405 South 129<sup>th</sup> Street, New Berlin, WI 53151

No Reply

*Wisconsin Assembly*

Assembly District 79

**Sondy Pope-Roberts (D), (I)**

4793 Delmara Road, Middleton, WI 53562; 608-266-3520; [famrob3@aol.com](mailto:famrob3@aol.com)

1. Yes
2. Yes
3. Yes
4. Yes
5. Yes
6. Yes

7. The priorities I have set for my term in office will focus on education - especially a new funding formula that will provide districts the necessary support to meet the standards and mandates set by the state and federal governments. That formula will necessarily include a lessening of the burden on property tax payers. I will also be addressing the healthcare crisis which is seriously impacting many of our citizens. I will continue to protect our natural resources and environment, fight for meaningful campaign finance reform and work to protect the rights of those whose voices are small.

**Carl Skalitzky (R)**

3614 Lynn Court, Middleton, WI 53562; [foronevoice@hotmail.com](mailto:foronevoice@hotmail.com)

1. No. Please reread your question. There is no solid position here, and it would be our tax payer money. I only request that the state sponsor a website where candidates are not only listed or registered, but may post their own page for voters and citizens to view online. Citizens privately paid for a recent campaign using free speech, and then they / we voted.
2. No. There are no dollar amounts listed. A government sponsored website featuring candidates and their positions in their own words could be very inexpensive. First time candidates would be able to have a voice, without selective publishing. I do not see how limiting free speech and spending can be constitutional.
3. No. Did Obama change his mind about campaign funding options?
4. No. The current boundaries are legal, I believe by population. I do not see substance applied within this question.
5. No. Why do we need a new commission? This is asking for more taxpayer money to expand government.

The process that has been legal in the past is likely to still be a relevant process. Would redistricting be okay every twenty years?

6. No. There is only one answer space here, for two questions.

7. I will make it my priority to work for a process of receipts and spending that enables a balanced state budget, as I would manage my own household expenses. I would give tax credits to minors and students to enhance our economy, and so that all of our children can choose what their spending needs are without applying for grants, etc.

Assembly District 80

**John Waelti (D)**

1800 21<sup>st</sup> Avenue, Monroe, WI 53566; 608-214-5480; [jjwaelti@charter.net](mailto:jjwaelti@charter.net); [www.waeltiforassembly.org](http://www.waeltiforassembly.org)

1. Yes. Reform is a "must" for the next legislative session. I prefer a merit system along the lines of Missouri's. But public financing is far superior to the existing system. (See my op-ed piece in the Monroe Times, Sept. 11, 2007, "Politicians, Corruption, and the System," available on my website

[www.waeltiforassembly.org](http://www.waeltiforassembly.org)

2. Yes. Again, see my op-ed piece referenced above, "Politicians, Corruption, and the System."

3. Yes. Such reform is desperately needed.

4. Yes. There are far too many uncompetitive "safe" seats in the congress and state legislatures.

Uncompetitive seats contribute to partisan rancor, marginalize minority party voters, and diminish incentive to talk across party lines and solve problems.

5. Yes. I have published an op-ed piece in the Monroe Times on this very topic. It's not available on my website, but I will be pleased to furnish a copy upon request. Experts on this matter point to Iowa as having the best system.

6. Yes. Even a one-year "cooling off" period is too short. We cannot afford to make cynics of yet more voters. It is not politicians per se, but the system that has been corrupted. We desperately need to reform the system.

7. Priorities are K-12 education reform, tax reform including closing corporate tax loopholes, affordable health care, campaign finance reform with emphasis on State Supreme Court, and decennial redistricting with a non-partisan commission. Experience includes being raised on a dairy farm, three years enlisted Marine Corps, and career as an academic economist including two years in Kenya and four years in the Middle East. Governmental experience ranges from local township, school board, and a year as Economic Advisor to Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works).

**Brett Davis (R), (I)**

1420 Raven Oaks Trail, Oregon, WI 53375

No Reply



**Kelda Helen Roys (D)**

2215 N. Sherman Ave., Madison, WI 53704

608-513-7697; [kelda@keldaforassembly.com](mailto:kelda@keldaforassembly.com); [www.keldaforassembly.com](http://www.keldaforassembly.com)

1. Yes. The last two elections showed how much we need public financing especially for judicial races. The ads, particularly those run against Justice Butler, were shameful. They did nothing to enlighten voters about the Court or the candidates. As an attorney, I believe we must preserve judicial impartiality – people deserve a fair shake when they enter a courtroom. When private interests finance our judicial elections, it creates an appearance of bias that undermines our judicial system.
2. Yes. I support public financing of campaigns because it increases the ability of ordinary citizens to participate in the process. Public financing makes elections more competitive and encourages legislators to legislate based on the public good rather than the desires of wealthy special interests. It also frees legislators’ time to develop more policy expertise rather than fundraising prowess. We all have a stake in our democracy, and public financing is a sound investment in protecting our constitutional right to democratic representation.
3. Yes, provided it is carefully crafted. Electioneering ads should comply with the Wisconsin’s campaign finance laws, and we should close loopholes that allow deep-pocketed interests to unfairly influence elections. Grassroots issue advocacy organizations, however, play an important role in our political process and should be allowed to express themselves and educate voters about candidates’ positions. I would support a law that protects the free speech rights of organizations like the League of Women Voters, but stops the deceptive, anonymous ads that front groups use to distort the electoral process and escape regulation under campaign finance laws.
4. Yes - competitive elections are important and have been shown to increase political participation. Voters deserve a meaningful choice among candidates. I support making electoral competitiveness one of several considerations used to determine electoral boundaries. Other factors might include respecting traditional local municipal districts, following existing geographic or natural boundaries, and ensuring representation for communities of interest. I do not believe that the Constitution requires electoral competitiveness and do not support amending it to add it.
5. Yes. Iowa has done this with great success. Competitive elections are good for our democracy and help citizens feel more engaged in the political process. It also ensures that legislators continue to be responsive to constituents because it acts to limit the tremendous power of incumbency.
6. No and yes. Many talented people pursue government careers to make a difference, frequently working longer hours and earning less than their private sector counterparts. We should encourage civic participation by those with diverse backgrounds and enable ordinary working people to pursue public service – not restrict their employment options after they’ve served. Many government officials develop valuable knowledge in policy areas, and we should not prevent them from contributing to the political process or using their expertise, provided they follow the law. I support prohibiting those convicted of violating ethics laws from holding positions of public trust.
7. I am a proven leader with deep roots in our community. As executive director of NARAL Pro-Choice Wisconsin for four years, I helped improve women’s access to healthcare. I’ve made real change, like the *Compassionate Care for Rape Victims* bill, by collaborating successfully with people across the ideological spectrum. My priorities are ensuring universal health care, supporting high-quality public education, building a strong, forward-looking economy, protecting our environment, creating accountable, ethical government, and securing our rights. I’ve been endorsed by Kathleen Falk, Wisconsin NOW, and many others because I will bring energetic, effective leadership to the Assembly.

Assembly District 82

**Jeff Stone (R), (I)**

5535 Grandview Drive, Greendale, WI 53129

No Reply

Assembly District 83

**Aaron Robertson (D)**

P.O. Box 151, Muskego, WI 53150

414-529-4265; [robertsonfor83@yahoo.com](mailto:robertsonfor83@yahoo.com)

1. Yes

2. Yes

3. Yes

4. Yes

5. Yes

6. Yes

7. I would like to see topics such as financial literacy, entrepreneurship, leadership, and networking built into the mandatory high school curriculum of each school district. I would also like to see colleges and universities throughout the state work these subjects into the general core curriculum that all students, regardless of major/area of concentration, must complete in order to graduate. My passion for this particular cause stems from my book, Beyond Majors and G.P.A., which I originally authored while still in college. It is currently in its second edition.

**Scott L. Gunderson (R), (I)**

123 North 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, Waterford, WI 53185

No Reply

Assembly District 84

**Mark Gundrum (R), (I)**

5239 South Guerin Pass, New Berlin, WI 53151

No Reply