



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
OF COLLIN COUNTY
www.lwvcollin.org

Nonpartisan

VOTERS GUIDE

March 6, 2018

Primary Election

TX Representative District 66

Early voting: February 20 – March 2

Election Day Polls: March 6 – 7 am to 7 pm

About this Voters Guide

This Voters Guide is published by the League of Women Voters of Collin County to help citizens prepare to cast an informed vote. The League of Women Voters encourages informed and active participation in government. The League does not support or oppose any political party or candidate.

This guide is available online at www.lwvcollin.org, along with guides for other offices that include all or part of Collin County. Candidate responses for all races are also available at www.VOTE411.org, where you can enter an address and view a personalized ballot with races specific to that address.

Questionnaires were sent to all candidates for each office, whether or not the race is contested. Candidate replies were subject to a character limit and are printed without editing or verification. If a candidate did not respond by the deadline, "No response received" is printed. Candidates were asked to avoid references to their opponents. Photos are included for candidates who provided them.

This Voters Guide is organized by office sought, with candidates listed in alphabetical order, regardless of their political party.

League of Women Voters is a Nonpartisan Organization

The LWV never supports or opposes candidates for office or political parties, and any use of the League of Women Voters name in campaign advertising or literature has not been authorized by the League.

Texas Representative District 66

2-year term. Must be 21 years or older, a U.S. citizen, a resident of Texas, and a resident of the district represented. Responsible for representing the citizens of the district in which he/she is elected in the Texas House of Representatives.

Questions

Taxes: Should school property taxes and/or franchise taxes be reduced? If so, what sources should be used to make up the resulting public school funding shortfall? Do you support transparency for school taxes that are sent to the state under Robin Hood?

Transportation: What are the main transportation needs in Texas, and how should they be funded?

Education: What changes, if any, should be made to public education in Texas?

Healthcare: What legislation would you support, if any, to ensure comprehensive, affordable healthcare for all Texans?

Emergency Preparedness: What does the state need to do to be prepared for and provide emergency services and funding after natural disasters?

Other Issues: What other issues do you believe will be most pressing in the next session of the Texas Legislature, and what is your position on these issues?

Sharon Hirsch, Democratic Party

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Education: Bachelor of Applied Arts and Sciences, University of North Texas

Experience: I am a current board member of Leadership Plano, two-term member of the Plano Cultural Affairs Commission, two-time Texas PTA life membership awardee, and worked twelve years as part of the administrative support staff for Plano ISD.

Taxes: Reducing school property taxes depends on meaningful reform to the school funding formula. Individual property owners shoulder a disproportionate share of school funding while the state's share has dropped to 38%. It is incumbent upon the state to reappropriate existing funds or secure new revenue to fulfill its constitutional mandate. Repeal of the franchise tax would result in a large hole in revenue, which would ultimately result in cuts to programs and services that impact children and families. I support full transparency for school taxes that are sent to the state under Robin Hood.

Transportation: I support a comprehensive approach to infrastructure needs. We cannot simply pave our way out of gridlock. Combining new lanes, improvements to existing infrastructure, ride-sharing opportunities, alternative worksite arrangements, public transportation, and new technology like driverless cars will serve to make mobility more efficient. The fuel tax was intended to be the primary source of revenue to pay for our roads. Our state fuel tax is currently 20 cents per gallon and has remained the same since 1991. Raising the fuel tax would supply much needed revenue for desired improvements.

Education: My goal is to make Texas public schools premier learning organizations that become examples for the rest of the nation. We can do this by reducing the emphasis on standardized testing, allowing districts more local control over programming and staff, addressing the needs of an increasingly diverse population, expanding access to quality pre-K programs, and closing the achievement gap for students with limited learning experiences. All of this is incumbent upon school districts having the resources to ensure student success.

Healthcare: Embracing the Affordable Care Act and expanding Medicaid would provide access to healthcare for many vulnerable Texans and reduce the amount of uncompensated care burdening Texas hospitals. In addition, providing students with an excellent education is a proven strategy for improving health outcomes in

the future. In areas of critical need, I support a community school approach which partners local schools with community organizations to help provide health and social services in addition to academic services.

Emergency Preparedness: The state could enact policies that discourage individuals and businesses from building in potential flood plains; encourage environmental efforts to preserve wetlands and eroding shorelines; help critical care institutions harden their infrastructure; provide models for organizational emergency planning; dedicate state funds to disaster relief. It's estimated that Hurricane Harvey alone caused \$125 billion in damages. With increasingly powerful natural disasters causing devastating loss of life and property, relying on the federal government to foot the bill is unsustainable.

Other Issues: During the next legislative session, I anticipate renewed efforts to subsidize private school tuition through vouchers, which I oppose. I will strongly advocate for a long overdue update and modernization of our school funding formula to reflect the changing needs of our student population. I also expect to see proposed legislation that limits the ability of local governments to raise revenue for programs and services deemed important by their communities. I will support respecting local control which allows school districts, city councils, and other governing bodies to more effectively lead.

Matt Shaheen, Republican Party

No response received

<p>You may bring this <i>Voters Guide</i> into the voting booth! In 1995, the Texas law prohibiting use of printed materials, such as this <i>Voters Guide</i>, in the polling place was ruled unconstitutional (<i>Texas Election Code, Section 61.011</i>)</p>
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Your vote is your voice. Be heard.