



SISTER DISTRICT
PROJECT

Melissa Shusterman

PENNSYLVANIA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DISTRICT 157

SISTER DISTRICT POLICY SCORECARD

This candidate has pledged commitment to the following statements:

- ✓ We must protect a **woman's right to choose** the health care and reproductive services she wants and needs.
- ✓ We need to protect and expand our **social safety net**, not dismantle it.
- ✓ We should pursue **common-sense gun safety** policies, consistent with the Second Amendment and local community standards and needs, which vary from community to community.
- ✓ Climate change is real and we need to **protect our environment**.

TIMELINE & VOTER INFO

Election Day: November 6, 2018

Last day to register:

30 days prior to Election Day. Pennsylvania has online voter registration: register.votespa.com

Vote by mail / absentee voting: Voters must [apply for absentee ballots](#).

Voter IDs: Not required.

Nested Congressional Districts: 4; 6

BACKGROUND

Melissa is a fourth generation Phoenixville resident, a Conestoga graduate and an entrepreneur who started her own digital video business as a single mother. She is running on 'common sense before politics' and believes it is more important than ever that regular citizens, not career politicians get involved in state politics



and champion the programs being reduced and eliminated by the federal government. Melissa believes in an immediate bipartisan collaboration to balance the state budget to reduce state debt. And, she promises to conserve our beautiful open space, eliminate the Keystone tests, and ensure that our senior citizens have healthcare that they deserve.

ON THE ISSUES (IN HER OWN WORDS)

Gerrymandering

Gerrymandering is a bipartisan issue that has hurt democracy and disproportionately targeted minorities. Political laziness and expediency has prevented the issue of gerrymandering from being solved. When a political party has the power to draw the lines that decide their own fate there is no longer a true democracy. These borders are tactically drawn in order to make state house races less competitive. In order to make as many districts safe or easy for a party to win, legislatures often pack as many voters from the opposing party into as few districts as possible. This limits the opposing party's power throughout the government. In the end, this can lead to a

one-party dominated legislature that does not reflect the will of the people.

Pennsylvania's Budget

It is paramount that we, as Pennsylvanians, take responsibility for our future by practicing fiscal management and common sense budgeting. In the last six years our credit rating has been downgraded five times and is threatened to be downgraded again. Due to reckless governing by our current politicians, Pennsylvania has one of the lowest ratings in the United States and, as a result, has to pay higher interest. We need to hold our current politicians accountable and bridge the budget gap to make sure we are not leaving our children to deal with our state's enormous deficit. When we are spending money on higher interest rates rather than local infrastructure, it's clear Harrisburg needs to be shaken up.

Economic Opportunity

When each and every person has a fair shot at success, we all win. In addition to providing top-notch education to our students and investing in local infrastructure, we need a system that empowers all of our fellow workers. Pennsylvania needs a strong minimum wage, to demand equal pay for equal work regardless of gender or race, and to ensure wages and benefits grow to keep up with profits. I proudly stand with those fighting for safe working conditions, to protect Pennsylvania's own little Davis Bacon law, and to protect the freedom of all people and workers to organize themselves. We must provide paths to prosperity for all of our citizens.

The Opioid Epidemic

A recent report by the Federal Drug Enforcement Administration on heroin and opioid related hospital admissions in Pennsylvania shows overdoses have quadrupled since 2010, and fatal overdoses rose 37% in 2016. (citing Philly.com goo.gl/XD5cd4) This crisis is having a devastating impact on our Pennsylvania families and communities. As a state we need to do everything we can to fight this disease. It's time to focus on prevention, treatment, recovery, as well as criminal justice reform.

Dignity For Our Seniors

As Americans it is our duty to protect the men and women who have shaped and built our

community and country. Currently, Pennsylvanian seniors are facing increasing cuts to Medicaid that will drastically reduce their standard of living. It is vital that we engage, support, and protect the senior citizen community in our district. They deserve to live with dignity.

Keystone Testing

Our children do not need to waste valuable instructional time preparing for and taking expensive tests that don't address how the child can specifically excel in the classroom. Students in grades 4-8 spend 6 days on standardized test prep and test taking. High schoolers spend ten days on the Keystone tests. High school juniors already take the PSAT, SAT, some take AP tests, the ACTs, PSSAs, and finally the Keystones. Some schools spend up to a month preparing students for the exam. We can do better for our children.

Severance Tax

Pennsylvania is the only major gas producing state that does not have a severance tax. A severance tax could bring in millions of dollars. Severance tax is putting common sense before politics.

ABOUT THE DISTRICT

67,000 residents of which 77% are voting age. The population is 92% white, 5% black, and 3.2% hispanic. The district has been GOP help continuous for the last 20 years with one exception: 2008-2010.

WHY IS THIS RACE IMPORTANT?

All 203 seats in the General Assembly (GA) are up for election in 2018. Republicans control 119 seats of 203 seats, and have controlled the GA since 2011. 18 seats in the GA voted for Clinton, but are represented by a GOP legislator.

Pennsylvania has been critical to the "Blue Wall," of Democratic Presidential candidates and up until 2016, had voted Democrat since 1988.

Pennsylvania is an important place to engage new voters and winback old Democratic voters who veered into Trump's camp due to his "support," for unions and trade protection. Pennsylvania has many legacy industries and strong unions in coal, steel, and energy extraction. Pennsylvania's legislature, due to its geographic location and

population size, has a lot of responsibility for environmental quality issues such as Great Lakes health and Chesapeake Bay Health. Pennsylvania also has very important Congressional, Senate, and Statewide elections in 2018 where they'll be choosing AGs, Governors (D-Incumbent), Senator (D-incumbent), and Congressional representatives.

Lastly, and most importantly, Trump won PA by a mere 70k votes out of over 6 million votes cast. Had Democrats been able to overcome this narrow margin—and even narrower margins in Michigan and Wisconsin—we may not have a Trump presidency. The path to 270 in 2020 starts with Democratic gains in our Blue Wall states in 2018.

REDISTRICTING IN PENNSYLVANIA

Pennsylvania's legislative and congressional districting is a masterclass in partisan gerrymandering. The Pennsylvania State Supreme Court struck down multiple GOP-led Congressional redistricting maps due to their gerrymander. The State Supreme Court finally approved a map for PA's congressional districts.

CANDIDATE LINKS

SDP ActBlue: <https://secure.actblue.com/donate/sdp-pa-shusterman>

Website: <https://www.melissashusterman.com>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/MelissaShustermanforStateRep>

Twitter: www.twitter.com/MelissaForPA