

PA STATE HOUSE DISTRICT 34

Pennsylvania's 34th State House District includes Braddock Hills, Chalfant, Churchill, Edgewood, Forest Hills, Homestead, North Braddock, Rankin, Swissvale, Turtle Creek, West Homestead, Wilkins Township, and some Pittsburgh neighborhoods, like Swisshelm Park and parts of Squirrel Hill and Hazelwood. State Rep. Summer Lee is the incumbent in this race.

BY AMANDA WALTZ



SUMMER LEE



CHRIS ROLAND

BIOGRAPHY

Lee, Democrat, grew up in North Braddock and Rankin and currently resides in Swissvale. Graduate of Pennsylvania State University and Howard University School of Law. Became first Black woman from Southwestern Pa. elected to state legislature in 2018.

Has served as a North Braddock borough councilman since 2009. Roland, a Democrat, attended Community College of Allegheny County. Has worked for the Allegheny County Parks Department since 2012 and became a supervisor of Round Hill Park and Exhibit Farm in 2015.

EDUCATION

Seeks to create a more equitable education system by not relying on property tax revenue to fund public schools and expanding teacher-training programs to better serve the region's diverse student population. Wants stricter oversight of private charter schools. Supports free, public education from pre-K through college.

Supports universal pre-K education and wants increased funding for public schools. Also wants to rein in public funding going toward private charter schools. Seeks to make higher education more accessible to everyone by increasing funding for public colleges and universities.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Wants to end mass incarceration and the school-to-prison pipeline by eliminating mandatory-minimum sentencing laws and cash bail. Supports a moratorium on new prison construction. Member of the Legislative Black Caucus focused on ending police brutality by increasing oversight and training for law enforcement. Co-sponsored bill to legalize recreational marijuana and expunge marijuana-related offenses in Pa.

Wants to end cash bail for non-violent offenses and mandatory-minimum sentences, and to reform disciplinary action in schools to combat the school-to-prison pipeline. Supports legalization of marijuana and pardoning individuals jailed for non-violent marijuana convictions. Believes state should invest in treatment programs for drug offenders. Supports consulting with police-officer unions when suggesting policy changes.

ENVIRONMENT

Backs Green New Deal. Seeks to improve region's poor air quality by transitioning to 100% renewable-generated energy, strengthening limits on industrial polluters, and placing a moratorium on fracking by the natural gas industry. Wants complete replacement of all lead lines to prevent further contamination of water in Pittsburgh communities.

Supports replacing lead water lines, investing in renewable energy, and increasing funding for the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection to regulate industrial polluters. Unclear stance on fracking, but backed by Allegheny County Executive Rich Fitzgerald, who is pro-fracking. Also received contributions from Steamfitters Local 449, a local union supportive of fracking expansion.

FRIENDS AND SUPPORTERS

Endorsed by U.S. Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-Vermont), the Young Democrats of Allegheny County, Service Employees International Union, United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America, Conservation Voters of Pennsylvania, Sierra Club, Pittsburgh Federation of Teachers, UNITE PAC, Working Families Party.

Allegheny County Democratic Committee, Allegheny-Fayette Central Labor Council, Steamfitters Local 449, Allegheny County Executive Rich Fitzgerald, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW).