

THE ERIE ECHO

"a voice for life"

Vol. LIV No. 2

Circulation 5,292

May 2026

Midterm Elections 2026

Primary Election Day in Pennsylvania is Tuesday, May 19. Here is what to know about the candidates who will be on the ballot in northwestern Pennsylvania.

Governor / Lt. Governor

In the race for governor, incumbent Josh Shapiro is unopposed in the Democratic primary. If Shapiro tells you he is for "reproductive rights," rest assured that he means it very sincerely. One of his first projects as governor was to spend tax dollars on a "You have the right to choose in Pennsylvania" website to steer Pennsylvania women to abortion facilities. Shapiro also ended funding for pregnancy support centers. A member of the Reproductive Freedom Alliance, a group of more than 20 pro-abortion governors, Shapiro advocates for Medicaid-funded abortions and pledges to veto any legislation that might impede unlimited "reproductive rights." Challenger Stacy Garrity is unopposed in the Republican primary. Garrity takes a strong pro-life position, a position she also held as state treasurer and a gubernatorial candidate in 2022.

In the race for lieutenant governor, incumbent Austin Davis is unopposed in the Democratic primary. Davis is a member of a coalition of pro-abortion lieutenant governors. He applauds Governor Shapiro's vow to veto any and all pro-life legislation.

He has been endorsed previously by Planned Parenthood, the nation's largest abortion provider and relentless promoter of abortion.

Two republicans are running for lieutenant governor in the primary election. Both Jason Richey and John Ventre take a pro-life position.

U.S. House of Representatives

In the 16th Congressional District, pro-life incumbent Mike Kelly is unopposed in the Republican primary and Jason Wagner is unopposed in the Democratic primary. Read more about this race on the following page.

PA General Assembly

In state Senate District 50, incumbent state Senator Michele Brooks is unchallenged and on the ballot in the Republican primary. She has a long and consistent pro-life record and is outspokenly pro-life. There are no candidates in the Democratic primary.

Democrats Pat Harkins and Robert Merski, the incumbent representatives in state House districts 1 and 2, respectively, are unchallenged. Harkins and Merski are pro-abortion. They recently voted for HB 1957, which would enshrine abortion-until-birth in the state constitution.

In state House District 3, pro-abortion Ryan Bizarro is unopposed in the Democratic primary. Bizarro voted for HB 1957 the pro-abortion constitutional

amendment. In 2024, Bizarro was endorsed by the pro-abortion Pennsylvania National Organization for Women and VotePro Choice.us. Donna Rae Reese is running unopposed in the Republican primary. She takes a pro-life position.

In state House District 4, pro-life Jake Banta is unopposed in the Republican primary. Kathryn Divittorio, a former Corry Area school director, is running unopposed in the Democratic primary. Her position on human life issues is unknown at this time.

In state House District 6, incumbent Brad Roae is unopposed in the Republican primary. Roae has a long and consistent pro-life record and is outspokenly pro-life. Michael Walker is running unopposed in the Democratic primary. He ran against Roae in 2024 and was identified as pro-abortion by the PA Pro-Life Federation PA at that time.

In state House District 7, pro-life Republican Parke Wentling is unchallenged.

In state House District 65, incumbent Kathy Rapp is unopposed in the Republican primary. She has a long and consistent pro-life record and has been a top pro-life leader in the PA House. Destiny Howard, 27, is running unopposed in the Democratic primary. She is presenting herself as a strong supporter of HB 1957. Her Facebook profile features an unfortunate collection of pro-abortion opinions and cliches.

Pro-Life Breakfast / DC March Review

Our 48th Annual Pro-Life Breakfast, held this past January 17, will be fondly remembered.

Approximately 550 defenders of life gathered at the Erie Bayfront Convention Center for the event. See the Pro-Life Breakfast photo album at: peopleforlife.org, facebook.com/prolifebreakfast, and/or instagram.com/peopleforlife1.

Lydia Taylor Davis, our very engaging special guest speaker, offered a young woman's perspective on abortion and the right to life. Her vocation and talent as a right to life advocate blossomed during her college years as she encountered and endeavored to help fellow students struggling with unplanned pregnancies and abortion. Hostility to her pro-life stand from fellow students only stiffened Lydia's resolve to

stand up for the truth and stand up for life.

Lydia now serves as the national spokesperson and social media director for Students for Life of America. Part of her job, not for the faint of heart, is taking the pro-life message directly to colleges across the country to challenge the pro-abortion ethos that is so pervasive on many campuses.

Also speaking that morning were: Congressman Mike Kelly, Catholic Bishop Lawrence Persico, state Representative Brad Roae, Slippery Rock Mayor JD Longo, and Gannon Students for Life President Clare Caulfield. Prayers to open and close the event were offered by Rev. Clifford Hamilton (East Erie Assembly of God) and Fr. Ian McElrath (St. Hedwig and Mercyhurst Prep), respectively. State Senator Scott Hutchinson

and state Representative Parke Wentling were also in attendance.

Wagner Award

People for Life Vice President Megan Bonk and her husband Jacob were honored with the 2026 Wagner Award, engraved with the words, "in deep appreciation for their shining example of parental love in response to the adverse fetal diagnosis and subsequent death of their child Theodore James and in honor of their steadfast faith in the goodness and trustworthiness of God's divine plan for each of our lives."

Thank you!

We deeply appreciate everyone who helped make the 2026 Pro-Life Breakfast another
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FROM PAGE 1 January Review

memorable event, including our wonderful guests, all the program participants, our pro-life business and professional sponsors, and our dedicated volunteers. We are thankful, as well, to Gris  Audio Visual and the staff and management of the Bayfront Convention Center. Many of our business and professional sponsors are listed on our website. We hope you will check them out. We also appreciate the news coverage provided by the local TV stations.

The 49th Annual Pro-Life Breakfast is scheduled for January 16, 2027.

FROM PAGE 4 PA March for Life

since the Covid pandemic. We are pricing the seats well below cost again this year to help fill the bus. Please consider a special donation to help us make up the difference. Sponsorship donations to help deserving individuals with their \$55 share of the cost are also needed.

Long-range planners may also register for our next Bus Trip to the national March for Life in Washington, DC on Friday, January 22, 2027 at TinyURL.com/MarchforLife2027 or by directing their payment to People for Life headquarters. DC Bus Trip reservations are once again \$70 per seat. A little extra will be needed for meals and an all-day Metro pass.

PA Banquet: Clay Travis

Clay Travis, cohost of the top-rated *Clay Travis & Buck Sexton* radio show, will be the featured speaker at the Pennsylvania Pro-Life Federation’s annual Celebrate Life Banquet, September 17 at the Hershey Lodge in Hershey, PA. Learn more at paprolife.org/banquet.

Congressional Race

The campaign for U.S. Representative in Pennsylvania’s 16th District will be a race between a pro-life, eight-term incumbent, Republican Mike Kelly, and challenger Justin Wagner, a Democrat. The two candidates are a study in contrasts.

Mr. Wagner is a zealous abortion advocate. His website has a lengthy “Defend the Right to Bodily Autonomy” section where Wagner pledges to be “a fierce defender of reproductive rights.” He wants to codify *Roe v. Wade* by enacting the *Women’s Health Protection Act*, which would make abortion legal throughout all nine months of pregnancy in all 50 states. He would fight to end the Hyde Amendment, which prevents taxpayer dollars from paying for Medicaid abortions and has saved at least 2.6 million lives since 1976. Wagner also wants to make sure the mifepristone

DC March for Life Bus Trip

Less than a week after the Pro-Life Breakfast, we hosted 50 people, including 15 members of Gannon University’s Students for Life, on a chartered bus to the national March for Life in Washington, DC. Once again, we earned some news coverage. Both TV stations did reports, one of them live, from our departure point at 11 p.m. Thursday evening.

The March on Friday was as exciting and encouraging as ever. January temperatures in the mid-40s were a blessing. The event began with a Rally at noon on the National Mall featuring a recorded message from President Trump and in-person speeches by: Vice

abortion pill can be mail-ordered even into states where abortion is restricted and babies are protected. In light of Congressman Kelly’s 100% pro-life record and Wagner’s flagrant pro-abortion zealotry, the contrast between the two candidates could not be more acute.

Life Run 2026

People for Life’s next Life Run 5K/10K & Fun Walk fundraiser, our 13th annual, will happen on October 10, 2026. You might not see the next *Erie Echo* newsletter before then, so keep an eye, over the summer, on our Email Updates and social media platforms, especially facebook.com/liferunerie. Register online at peopleforlife.org/liferun or download a form and direct your registration to People for Life headquarters. Life Run will be based as usual at Slade Park, 7840 Slade Rd., Harborcreek. Expect a free race t-shirt, refreshments, DJ, electronic timing, picturesque scenery, and lots of friendly, like-minded people. It will be a fun morning. We welcome everyone, from the most casual walkers to the most serious competitors.

Contact Race Director Karli Van Der Volgen at (814) 450-5049 with any questions about the races or the Fun Walk.

President JD Vance, House Speaker Mike Johnson, pro-life leader Representative Chris Smith and various other pro-life personalities.

Some of us visited the offices of Senator Dave McCormick and Senator John Fetterman. Neither senator was present, but we enjoyed talking with members of their staffs. Our day in DC concluded with a reception hosted by Representative Mike Kelly in the historic Cannon Office Building. Everyone was back on the bus by 5:15 p.m. and back in Erie by 12:45 a.m. Saturday morning. We took dozens of pictures. See them at facebook.com/marchforlifebustrip, instagram.com/peopleforlife1, and/or peopleforlife.org.

Ways to Donate

People for Life depends on the generosity of pro-life people like you to continue and expand our pro-life projects in the Erie area. There are a number of ways to donate. No matter the method(s) you choose, we truly appreciate your faithful support.

Donations by mail should be addressed to People for Life, 1625 W. 26th St., Erie PA 16508. We are beginning to phase out our P.O. box, now that we have our own stable physical location and do not have to worry about moving because of a lease cancellation.

Donations directed to “People for Life, Inc.” or simply “People for Life” will support all facets of our work. Donations directed to “People for Life Education Fund” are applied only to pro-life educational activities and therefore qualify as tax-deductible under IRS rules. Donations to People for Life, Inc. are not deductible because, to advance the right to life, People for Life, Inc. advocates for and against various pieces of legislation.

One-time credit and debit card donations to People for Life, Inc, including membership dues, can be made in-person or over the phone. We can also set up periodic donations (weekly, monthly, bi-monthly, etc.).

PayPal users can donate to the People for Life Education Fund by selecting the *Donate* option from their home screen and entering “People for Life Education Fund” in the search field.

PayPal users can donate to People for Life, Inc. or submit their annual dues by selecting the *Send/Request* option from the home screen and simply entering “People for Life Inc” (no punctuation).

Donations to People for Life Education Fund are generally eligible for corporate matching gifts. Use EIN number 47-3379714.

Bequests: Please remember People for Life in your estate planning.

2026 PRO-LIFE CALENDAR 2026	
Online Calendar: peopleforlife.org/calendar	
April 27	Student Essay Contest submissions due
May 2	Erie March for Life – based at Perry Square, Erie
May 4	Last day to register to vote in Pennsylvania Primary Election
May 10	Mother’s Day
May 12	Last day to request a Pennsylvania mail-in or absentee ballot
May 19	Pennsylvania Primary Election – Polls open 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.
May 27-30	Educational Booth: Erie Wild Rib Cook Off
June 1	Election of Officers Mtg., 6:30 p.m. – 1625 W. 26th St., Erie
June 12-13	National Right to Life Conference – Arlington, VA
June 19-20	Educational Booth: Lake City Firemen’s Carnival
July 15-18	Educational Booth: North East Cherry Festival
7/30 to 8/1	Educational Booth: Dan Rice Days – Girard, PA
Aug. 11	Erie Gives Day
8/30 to 9/5	Educational Booth: Erie County Fair – Wattsburg, PA
Sept. 7-12	Educational Booth: Waterford Community Fair
Sept. 15-19	Educational Booth: Albion Area Fair
Sept. 17	PA Pro-Life Federation Celebrate Life Banquet – Hershey, PA
Sept. 21	PA March for Life / Bus Excursion
Sept. 25&26	Women’s Care Center Celebrate Life Banquets
Oct. 2	Crawford County Citizens for Life Banquet
Oct. 10	Life Run 5K/10K & Fun Walk
Oct. 23	People for Life Education Fund Fall Dinner
Nov. 3	Election Day: Mid-term Elections

**“Big or Small
Respect for All”**

Erie Gives Day

Please remember the People for Life Education Fund on Erie Gives Day. Online giving is scheduled for August 11, 2026. Information about other ways to participate in advance of August 11 will become available in the weeks ahead.

Election Meeting

The annual election meeting of People for Life is scheduled for 6:30 p.m. on Monday, June 1, 2026. It will be held at People for Life headquarters, 1625 W. 26th St., Erie. The nominees are: Tim Broderick, President; Carol Struchen, treasurer; Megan Bonk, secretary; Gretchen Lorei, first vice president; Dale Klobusnik, second vice president; and Karli Van Der Volgen, third vice president.

Additional nominations will be accepted from the floor with the permission of the nominee, who must be a current member and have been actively engaged in the organization for at least the previous 12 months. Only individuals whose dues are paid one month in advance of the meeting are eligible to vote.

Pro-Abortion Amendment

HB 1957 is the first step toward enshrining unlimited abortion throughout pregnancy in the Pennsylvania constitution. You may recall that the state House passed the bill by a vote of 102-101, with all but two Democrats voting pro-abortion and all but two Republicans voting pro-life. Please also remember that the following three Erie-area state representatives voted for HB 1957 —

for unlimited abortion killing, even in the ninth month of pregnancy.

- ✗ Patrick Harkins (District 1)
- ✗ Robert Merski (District 2)
- ✗ Ryan Bizzarro (District 3)

HB 1957 is now before the state Senate. It is one of seven bills written by House Democrats to destroy every last vestige of protection for unborn children and their mothers in the Commonwealth. The other six bills were reported out of committee on straight party-line votes but are still awaiting floor action in the state House.

Crawford County Pro-Life Banquet

Crawford County Citizens for Life will hold their annual Banquet on October 2, 2026. Call (814) 967-3436 for more information.

Memorials & Tributes

Given by	In Memory of	Given by	In Memory of
Mrs. Maureen Anthony	Judge Fred Anthony	John Brozewicz	Marilyn Roeback
Cathy S. Truden	Tara Jean Bisbee	Kim Collarile	Marilyn Roeback
Chris & Peg Schoming	Theodore James Bonk	Sue & Jerry Verga	Marilyn Roeback
Lois Borowy	Mark Borowy	Cynthia Weber	Marilyn Roeback
Roberta A. Cooney	Breanna J. Cooney	Kathy & Joe Daniels & Family	John & Roberta Seep
Kathy & Joe Daniels & Family	Joe & Angie Daniels	Richard & Sandra D'Andrea	Jack Warmbrod
Carol A. Doyle	Tom Doyle	Roger & Joan Giles	Jack Warmbrod
Joseph Duscisko	Betty Duscisko	Martha Kaveney	Jack Warmbrod
Margaret Dutkowski	John Dutkowski	Rose Konsel	Jack Warmbrod
Nancy Giebfried	John G. Giebfried	Bob & Linda Schendler	Jack Warmbrod
Byron & Abby Gurnee	Mary Lou Gurnee	Susan M. Wilson	Jack Warmbrod
Dale & Lynn Klobusnik	Albert Klobusnik	Rob & Gina Lintelman	Stanley Widomski
Allen Erickson	Comelius Legters		
Penny Warmbrod	Carol Peasley	Given by	In Honor of
Anonymous	Ruth Pertl	Ronald Dombkowski	Chuck & Mary Drumm
Fr. Jerry S. Priscaro	Agnes R. Priscaro	Lori Krasnesky	Chuck & Mary Drumm
Alice Randall	Scott Randall	Ronald Dombkowski	Fr. Jerry Priscaro

JOIN PEOPLE FOR LIFE OR DONATE

NAME _____ DATE _____

ADDRESS _____ E-MAIL _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

Best Phone _____ Mobile? Yes | No Other Phone _____ Mobile? Yes | No Do not text

AFFILIATED WITH (church, club, organization, business, etc.) _____ WORK/PROFESSION _____

1. DONATION: \$1,000 \$500 \$250 \$100 \$50 \$25 \$10 Other Amount _____

2. MEMBERSHIP DUES (one year): Individual \$10 Family \$20 Senior Citizen /Student \$5 New Renewal

3. TRIBUTE DONATION AMOUNT _____ In Memory of or In Honor of _____

4. TOTAL ENCLOSED _____

Donations may also be made using the DONATE button on peopleforlife.org or by calling-in your credit card information.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES	<input type="checkbox"/> Educational Booths	<input type="checkbox"/> Liaison to Another Organization	<input type="checkbox"/> March for Life Bus Trip Help
	<input type="checkbox"/> Phone Calling	<input type="checkbox"/> Public Demonstrations	<input type="checkbox"/> Erie March for Life Help
	<input type="checkbox"/> Office Staff	<input type="checkbox"/> Pro-Life Breakfast Help	<input type="checkbox"/> Call me when you need a hand.
	<input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter Mailing	<input type="checkbox"/> Life Run Help	<input type="checkbox"/> Special skill? Tell us!

Please make your check payable to: **PEOPLE FOR LIFE, INC.**
1625 W. 26th St.
Erie, PA 16508

Contributions or gifts to People for Life, Inc. are not tax deductible.
The official registration and financial information of People for Life, Inc. may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll-free within Pennsylvania, 1-800-732-0999.
Registration does not imply endorsement.

PEOPLE FOR LIFE
www.PeopleforLife.org

mobile voice / text (814) 882-1333
phone / fax (814) 459-1333
hq@peopleforlife.org
Facebook.com/PeopleforLife

New Mailing Address
1625 W. 26th St.
Erie, PA 16508

— **Headquarters Location** —
1625 W. 26th St.; Erie, PA
Normally open 10 to 5 weekdays.
Call for evening and weekend hours.

3rd Annual Fall Dinner

People for Life's Fall Educational Dinner will be held on Friday, October 23 at a new location, the Colony Banquet Hall, 3014 W. 12th St., Erie. We will have a buffet meal featuring three entrées, music, and a cash bar. Special Guest Speaker Katie McMahon, will address a difficult topic that is often misunderstood and the ramifications of which are not always fully considered.

As someone who struggled with infertility for 20 years and has two children conceived through IVF, Katie understands the necessity for sensitivity and compassion when these important topics are discussed.

Having given birth to two wonderful children with the help of IVF, Katie nevertheless began to have second thoughts

about the procedure. What to do with her and her husband's four remaining embryos in cryogenic preservation became a troubling question. They struggled with the idea of embryo adoption, where the embryonic children would be donated to one or more women who would proceed with implantation and gestation and, if successful, raise the embryo, or embryos, as their own children.

Ultimately, two of Katie's four remaining embryos were implanted in her own womb but miscarried. Her other two embryos did not survive the thawing process.

As co-founder of the Shiloh IVF Ministry, Katie has a wealth of experience counseling women about infertility, IVF, and alternative infertility treatments.

Make your Dinner reservations online at

[TinyURL.com/FallDinner2026](https://www.peopleforlife.org/FallDinner2026). You can also mail or deliver your payment to People for Life Education Fund, 1625 W. 26th St., Erie, PA 16508. Reservations are \$35. We will need your name, address and phone number, and a name for each person in your party, if possible.

PA March for Life 2026

People for Life has reserved a bus for the Pennsylvania March for Life in Harrisburg on Monday, September 21. Register online at [peopleforlife.org/pamarch](https://www.peopleforlife.org/pamarch) or by mailing or delivering your payment to People for Life headquarters. The cost is \$55 per seat.

Bus charters are expensive these days. The good news is that prices have almost leveled off after rising precipitously every year continued on page 2

Respect for All, Big or Small

The 49th Erie March for Life is only days away. Please clear your schedule for the late morning and early afternoon of Saturday, May 2. Many people enjoy getting out to rally for Life with their family, friends, and neighbors. But even if "protesting" is not your idea of a good time, preborn babies need you. Their mothers need you. Your country needs you. We need you. We need every person of good will to march with us and say enough is enough. Too many hearts have been hardened. Our nation's collective conscience is on life support. Now is the time for urgent caring and urgent action. Shining light into the darkness is not just a job for a handful of activists. It is the job of everyone who cares about the kind of world we want our children and grandchildren to live in. Please spread the word about the Erie March for Life. We need you and all of your friends and neighbors, too.

A big, new banner will shout the theme of this year's March, "Respect for All, Big or Small." We hope people all across northwestern Pennsylvania will see it on TV and social media news sites. Every person has inalienable dignity. Substantiating that dignity depends on each of us and, by the way, each of our elected government officials.

**Erie March for Life
May 2 ✦ 10:45 a.m.**

Marchers should arrive at Perry Square in downtown Erie by 10:45 a.m. to get organized. The Erie March for Life will step off at 11 a.m., traveling west on 6th Street, south on Sassafras, east on 10th Street, and north on State back to Perry Square. The route is just over a mile long. Supervision and security will be provided by the City of Erie Police Department. The marchers will reassemble in Perry Square to hear a number local and regional pro-life leaders, including: U.S. Representative Mike Kelly, 6th District state Representative Brad Roae, Slippery Rock Mayor J.D. Longo, Doctor Jeffrey McGovern, and Gannon Students for Life President Clare Caulfield. A message from U.S. Senator Dave McCormick will be conveyed by his Regional Director Sheila Sterrett. Reverend Al Detter, a former Senior Pastor of Grace Church in McKean, has kindly agreed to open the program

with a prayer. The event is expected to conclude by 12:30 p.m.

Signs with thoughtful, constructive messages, the kind that might touch a few minds and hearts, are always welcome. Signs will be available to borrow, also.

The Erie March for Life was traditionally held in January. It was moved to May in 2024. The May temperatures are a big improvement, but Erie weather can be full of surprises. Do not be deterred by a wet weather forecast. Just come prepared. We will march, rain or shine, unless a severe thunder storm or other dangerous weather is imminent. For any new or last-minute news about the Erie March, refer to [peopleforlife.org](https://www.peopleforlife.org) and [facebook.com/eriemarchforlife](https://www.facebook.com/eriemarchforlife).

