

2024 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

Association for Public Justice

2024 VOTER GUIDE



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BE HEARD. **BE COUNTED.**

In today's fast-paced, click-bait culture, thoughtful consideration of complex issues through a biblical lens is increasingly rare. This voter guide elevates critical issues that impact our neighbors, friends, and family through real conversations with candidates and voters.

Along the way, we will model a Christian approach to politics that replaces fear-mongering with hope, division with collaboration, and hostility with compassion.

[LEARN MORE AT APJUSTICE.ORG](https://www.apjustice.org)

Family Supportive Policies

APJ supports policies that honor the institution of family and the dignity of work. We support reforms that strengthen state and federal paid family leave programs while protecting the role of small businesses and non-profit institutions, including faith-based organizations. We advocate for reforms that not only support parents of newborns or newly-adopted children but also families caring for vulnerable family members who are sick or elderly.

We see family supportive policies as an extension of a whole-life ethic that includes protections for the unborn. We have thus included candidates' stances on abortion under Family Supportive Policies.

Scan here for our Paid Family Leave Advocacy Toolkit.



Institutional Religious Freedom

APJ advocates for policies that preserve and promote the freedom of faith-based organizations to serve and contribute to the common good:

- the freedom to hire staff on a religious basis
- the freedom to partner with the federal government to deliver vital social services consistent with religious convictions.

Scan here for APJ's Fairness for All Advocacy Toolkit.



Ranked Choice Voting

APJ advocates for electoral reform that includes ranked choice voting, also called instant runoff voting. Ranked choice voting is a process that allows broad participation from a wide range of perspectives, enabling third-party and independent candidates to have a genuine voice in the political process.

Scan here to learn more about the need for ranked choice voting.



Juvenile Justice

APJ advocates for justice reforms at the local, state, and federal levels that reduce inequities in the criminal justice system and encourage a more restorative approach to justice, particularly for young offenders.

Scan here for our Juvenile Justice Advocacy Toolkit.



Predatory Payday Lending

When small, short-term loans are extended to vulnerable individuals at exorbitant interest rates, borrowers are often trapped in an endless cycle of debt. This practice violates fundamental biblical principles of human dignity and biblical prohibitions on usury. APJ advocates for laws such as the Veterans and Consumers Fair Credit Act ([S. 2833](#) and [H.R. 5050](#)) which cap the interest rate lenders are allowed to charge borrowers at 36% APR or lower.

Scan here to learn more about principles for just lending.



US Presidential Candidates

Kamala Harris (D)

Overview:

Before becoming Vice President, Kamala Harris served as the district attorney and attorney general in her home state of California. She then served in the United States Senate. Harris' presidential campaign emphasizes American freedoms, democracy, and opportunity. Some of Harris' key issues include protecting abortion access, cutting taxes for the middle class and decreasing costs, and banning assault weapons and high-capacity magazines. She has promised to sign the bipartisan border security bill and pass the Equality Act to ensure anti-discrimination protections for LGBTQI+ Americans. She is running alongside Tim Walz, governor of Minnesota.

Family Supportive Policies:

Harris' campaign emphasizes ensuring affordable, high-quality child care and preschool for all children. As Vice President, Harris has led efforts to combat maternal mortality in the U.S. She has also consistently emphasized the importance of paid leave and promises to establish paid family and medical leave in the United States. As a senator, Kamala Harris co-sponsored and supported the Family and Medical Insurance Leave (FAMILY) Act, which sought to create a national paid family and medical leave program. She also seeks to support working families by raising the minimum wage, expanding high-quality home-care services, and expanding the Child Tax Credit to provide a \$6,000 tax cut to families with newborn children. At the same time, expanding abortion access and codifying Roe v. Wade into federal law have been central issues in her campaign.

Institutional Religious Freedom:

Harris emphasizes the Equality Act, which she voted for in the Senate, to "enshrine anti-discrimination protections for LGBTQ+ Americans." As Attorney General, Harris opposed arguments of organizations seeking religious exemptions that would allow them to deny services or rights to same-sex couples. As Senator, she introduced the Do No Harm Act (S. 1889), which aims to limit the scope of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act and ensure that religious freedom cannot be used as a justification for discrimination. Many argue that the Do No Harm Act goes too far and threatens religious liberty.

Ranked Choice Voting:

Harris has not directly addressed ranked choice voting, though she has advocated for broad electoral reforms like voting rights protection and expanding voting access. Her campaign states that she will “fight to ensure that Americans have the opportunity to participate in our democracy by passing the John Lewis Voting Rights and the Freedom to Vote Acts — laws that will enshrine voting rights protections, expand vote-by-mail and early voting, and more.”

Juvenile Justice:

Harris has consistently advocated for reforms that prioritize rehabilitation over incarceration for juveniles, emphasizing the importance of addressing the root causes of youth crime. She supports alternatives to detention for young offenders, such as diversion programs, mental health treatment, and educational support. She has also opposed harsh sentencing, like life sentences without parole, for juvenile offenders. Overall, Harris advocates for restorative justice practices for youth, allowing for the possibility of growth and change as well as addressing systemic inequalities in the juvenile justice system.

Predatory Payday Lending:

Throughout her career, Harris has strongly opposed predatory payday lending and advocated for regulations on payday lenders that exploit vulnerable communities. As California Attorney General, Harris filed a lawsuit against MoneyMutual, a payday lending company, accusing the company of exploiting low-income workers and violating lending laws. Though this has not been a primary issue in her campaign, she stated in 2018 that “consumers deserve a government that fights to protect them from predatory industries like payday lenders.”

Note: This issue is primarily regulated at the state level. Scan here to see the statutes in your state!



US Presidential Candidates

Donald Trump (R)

Overview:

Before serving as President from 2017-2021, Donald Trump worked as a businessman, real estate developer, and reality TV host. He is running alongside JD Vance, a United States Senator from Ohio. Some of Trump's key issues include sealing the border and carrying out what he calls "the largest deportation operation in American history," decreasing costs and increasing affordability, increasing tax cuts and imposing tariffs on foreign goods, cutting climate regulations, and undoing gun regulations put in place by the Biden administration.

Family Supportive Policies:

As President, Trump expanded the Child Tax Credit from \$1,000 to \$2,000 per child as part of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (TCJA). He also signed legislation in 2019 that provided 12 weeks of paid parental leave for federal employees. Trump does not support a nationwide abortion ban, and believes that abortion laws should be determined by states. Though his campaign has mentioned little about Trump's current plan for families, he said in one interview that his plans to increase taxes on imports could take care of rising costs like child care. JD Vance has voiced support for paid family leave, expanding the Child Tax Credit, and expanding access to affordable childcare.

Institutional Religious Freedom:

Trump has consistently advocated for institutional religious freedom. As President, he signed an executive order (Executive Order 13925) designed to protect the free speech of religious organizations and make it easier for religious leaders to publicly express political opinions. Trump's administration also continued the standard practice in both Democratic and Republican administrations of creating an Office of Faith and Opportunity Initiatives to ensure that religious organizations had equal access to government funding. He consistently supported religious institutions that sought exemptions from anti-discrimination laws based on religious beliefs, especially when it came to debates over LGBTQ+ rights. Trump opposes the Equality Act.

Ranked Choice Voting:

Trump has vocally opposed ranked choice voting, calling Alaska's election system "ranked choice crap voting" in 2022, when Sarah Palin, who was endorsed by Trump, lost the special election. He claimed that the system is "a total rigged deal." After his loss to Biden in 2020, Trump made many unsubstantiated claims of widespread voter fraud. He has called for election reforms to combat this voter fraud, including stricter voter ID laws, restrictions on mail-in and early voting, and more frequent audits. Many argue that these measures would undermine voter accessibility, especially for minority and low-income voters.

Juvenile Justice:

Trump's administration generally took a "tough-on-crime" approach to criminal justice, and Trump's rhetoric often highlights crime prevention, with less focus on rehabilitation. For example, in a recent campaign event, he said that "you'll never solve the problem [of drugs] without the death penalty," and praised China's "quick trials" in capital punishment cases involving drug dealers. Though he did sign the First Step Act, which seeks to expand rehabilitation programs, into law, Trump's administration later criticized it as being too lenient. He also signed the Juvenile Justice Reform Act of 2018 as part of a broader bipartisan push to update juvenile justice policy in the U.S.

Predatory Payday Lending:

Although payday lending is regulated at the state level, Trump's administration favored payday lenders by weakening federal oversight through the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) and rolling back Obama-era regulations that curbed predatory lending practices. Under Trump, the CFPB removed many provisions designed to protect consumers, especially low-income consumers, from high-interest rates and debt traps of predatory payday loans.

Note: This issue is primarily regulated at the state level. Scan here to see the statutes in your state!



WHAT'S YOUR VOTE WORTH?

Madeline Pannell is the Shared Justice Fellow at the Center for Public Justice. She is part of the Capital Fellows Program in McLean, VA, and recently graduated from the University of Virginia with a B.A. in East Asian Studies. In April, Madeline wrote an article for the Center for Public Justice addressing the disillusionment that young people are experiencing when deciding whether or not to vote. She writes to Gen Z, but her words apply to Americans of all ages. How many of us, in the midst of so much political tension and division, wonder, “Does my vote even make a difference?” In response, here is an excerpt from Madeline’s article.

If we see voting primarily as a right to be exercised, then we can opt in or out of the process as our feelings about the political system ebb and flow...Voting, however, does not just impact my identity and my life. When we vote, it shapes the lives of our families, our neighbors and our communities. Voting has consequences for those in our cities who are hungry, unhoused, unable to pay medical bills, or unemployed. It impacts the education children get. It affects the cost of living in your city. It influences interest rates on home, auto and student loans, too.

Jesus instructed his disciples: “Love your neighbor as yourself” (Mark 12:31). We, as disciples of Jesus, care about voting because we care about how voting impacts our neighbors... Caring for and serving others is a core tenet of the Christian life. When we view voting as an act of responsibility in caring for our neighbors and community, we bring the beauty and justice our faith offers as a hopeful light to our political square.

Christian faith sees political action (in this case, voting) as service for our neighbors’ good, as opposed to seeking personal fulfillment and validation through the vote. As Christians, we are free to serve our neighbors with our vote precisely because our need for identity and security is met in Christ alone. Furthermore, the more we view voting through the lens of humble Christian service, the more we might see that voting is just the beginning of our civic engagement.

Scan here for the full article.



ABOUT APJ

APJ provides meaningful pathways for cross-partisan political engagement to enable Christian citizens to pursue the flourishing of their communities at the local, state, and federal level.

Want to get involved?

Email contact@apjustice.org or visit apjustice.org to learn how you can support our cause.

LEARN MORE AT APJUSTICE.ORG