

**Background Questions**

Background Information

a. Name and email address of person submitting question responses

*Anne Simmons, President Email: lwvindianacounty@gmail.com*

b. Local League name

*League of Women Voters of Indiana County*

c. Interviewers names – 16 participants; The LWVIC interviewers provided detailed background information about each question as well as the position of LWVIC and LWVPA on each policy question.

*Susan Boser  
Ellen Chinn  
Cindy Rogers  
Anne Simmons  
Kay Smith  
Deanne Snavely  
Susan Welsh*

d. Interview date

*March 7, 2022*

e. Interview method (public virtual forum, private virtual interview with one or more League members, written responses from legislator, other)

*Public virtual forum*

Legislator Information

f. Name

*Pennsylvania Representative James B. Struzzi II*

g. Party and Office (Democrat/Republican, Senator or Representative)

*Republican Party – Representative*

h. District #

*62<sup>nd</sup> District*

i. Legislative Staff Contact Info (if any)

*Adriene Smochek Email: [asmochek@pahousegop.com](mailto:asmochek@pahousegop.com)*

j. Notes on relationship to LWVPA (optional) - *none*

## Legislative Questions:

### *Environmental Policy*

1. What do you see as the path forward to combating climate change in Pennsylvania?

- *Representative Struzzi expressed that he is concerned with the economic impact of RGGI.*
- *Vocal in his opposition to RGGI, not the environmental impact, but the economic impact*
- *Interest in electric generation and climate change at the same time*

2. What are your plans to ensure cleaner water for all Pennsylvanians?

- *“Clean water is huge”*
- *Need to get money to our local communities because of acid mine drainage*
- *Supports ‘Growing Greener’*

### *Social Policy*

3. What are your plans to address escalating gun violence across the state? The League is watching several pieces of gun safety legislation: [HB 235](#) (SB 88) calling for comprehensive background checks, [HB 1903](#) (SB 134) to allow for families to petition for temporary removal of guns from a person who is in imminent danger of harming themselves or others, and [HB 1846](#) (SB 855) calling for firearm safety training for first-time purchasers. Each of these bills are stuck in the judiciary committee. Do you have plans to push along these gun safety measures in the coming year?

- *Representative Struzzi looks at the wider view, the impact on society*
- *Attributes the increase in violent crime to drug use and mental health issues*
- *Stated that people turn to violent crime for economic and educational reasons*
- *Stress is a factor; More people are buying guns because they are afraid; He is trying to address these issues; Our own children are under pressure*
- *Need to help people in cities, broken families and drug abuse; Then, discussed how problems are compounded over time; Also, mentioned lead remediation and crime*
- *Affirmed that people should be prosecuted to the extent of the law*
- *Another concern is with the pandemic and the increased need to address mental health; Funding is an issue*

4. Currently in Pennsylvania, most schools are not receiving adequate funding, and most students do not have the resources they need to succeed. According to the state’s benchmark, 277 Pennsylvania districts need more than \$2,000 more per student to adequately support their education. And the poorest districts in Pennsylvania need even more, creating vast inequities in education across the state. What will you do to make sure every student in PA has access to a high quality public education, as granted by the State Constitution?

- *In reference to the Fair Funding Formula, stated that there is lots of disparity – failed schools, vary administratively, different curriculum offering*
- *Aware of need of Charter School reform*
- *Stated that an increase in money doesn’t mean a better outcome or an increased graduation rate*
- *The schools in Indiana County are great; Pennsylvania is a diverse state*

## *Government / Election Policy*

5. Do you believe our voting process is secure? Do you believe that there are widespread problems, and if so what are they?

- *Elections can be more secure*
- *Indiana County Election Officials are doing a great job; This is not so in other 66 counties*

6. Do you support voting by mail?

- *Stated, "I did vote for Act 77"*
- *Also stated that, "Ballots need to be counted on Election Day"*
- *(Interview participants discussed the need for pre-canvassing and that it is not possible with the current system to count all of the ballots on Election Day.)*

7. How would you make it easier for more qualified electors to vote? For example, lengthening the timeframe for early voting, or expanding voting hours at the polls.

- *Indicated that November 2020 was his first time going through an election process*
- *In reference to the need to make voting more convenient and accessible, stated, "I think access is important."*

*Representative Struzzi was asked if he had any additional comments to share with the LWVIC:*

*"No one is an expert on everything."*

*We – Representative Struzzi and the LWVIC - will continue to discuss pending legislation.*

*Representative Struzzi will keep on to talking to school district superintendents.*

*"Dialogue and perspective are important."*