

# 178 Legislative District

## Description:

The Pennsylvania House of Representatives is the lower house of our bicameral (two house) legislature. There are 203 members who sit for two-year terms in single member districts. Representatives must be 21 years old, have been citizens and lived in their respective districts one year next before their election and must live in their districts during their terms of service. Members of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives are, along with the Senate, responsible for passing legislation that affects all aspects of our lives.

## Candidates (choose 1):

**Helen Tai**

**Party:** Dem



### Biographical Info:

**Mailing Address:** 2827 River Road New Hope, PA 18938

**Campaign Phone:** 2152623371

**Campaign Email:** [staterrep@helentai.com](mailto:staterrep@helentai.com)

**Date of Birth:** October 9, 1964

**Municipality:** SOLEBURY

**County:** BUCKS

**Website:** <http://www.helentai.com>

**Twitter:** [twitter.com/giveemhelentai](https://twitter.com/giveemhelentai)

**Facebook:** <http://www.facebook.com/giveemhelentai/>

**Education:** M.A. Statistics - Penn State University B.S. Statistics - University of Michigan

**Qualifications:** Chair, Solebury Township Board of Supervisors Small business owner and process improvement consultant

### Questions:

#### **Q: What are your top three priorities in office?**

**A:** I want to ensure ALL Pennsylvanians have an equal opportunity to succeed. My top priorities are all related to this goal. 1. Reform Harrisburg - our legislators are protecting the special interests instead of focusing on the very real problems that need fixing. As a small business owner, every day I help organizations and people work together more effectively to find common sense solutions to problems. That's why I have taken a pledge not to accept corporate PAC money and I will introduce a bill that requires the legislature to pass a balanced budget on time or they won't get paid. 2. Ensuring funding for public education - a good education is the basic foundation for everyone to have an equal opportunity to succeed. We must find a fair funding formula to ensure that all Pennsylvanians have access to good quality public education. 3. Ensuring quality, affordable healthcare - Everyone deserves access to health care, and no one should lose their homes because they get sick.

#### **Q: Do you support reforming our congressional and legislative redistricting process to implement an independent citizen's redistricting commission? Why or why not?**

**A:** Gerrymandering of legislative and congressional districts is detrimental to our democracy by allowing politicians to choose their voters instead of voters choosing their representatives. It pushes politicians to be more and more extreme and reduces bi-partisan cooperation. I strongly support redistricting reform with an independent citizen's commission. As a Solebury Township Supervisor, I drove the passage of a resolution urging state lawmakers to pass SB22 and HB722, which calls for the creation of a truly independent citizens redistricting commission devoid of political motivation or partisanship. I also met with my state senator to urge him to cosponsor SB22. This is the only way to ensure a fair and accurate legislative and congressional redistricting process that respects political subdivisions and communities of interest and prohibits districts from being drawn to favor or discriminate against a political party or candidate.

#### **Q: Which voting modernization reforms (such as no-excuse absentee voting, early voting, same day voter registration, additional funding for voting technology upgrades) would you support to ensure that our elections are accessible, efficient, and secure?**

**A:** Voting integrity is critically important. In 2016, we saw the consequences of Russian hacking. This not only undermines our democracy but causes voters to be distrustful of the voting process, which may cause them to become disengaged from voting. We must implement technology upgrades with a paper trail. We also need to do everything we can to make voting more accessible and efficient - we should make Election Day a holiday, provide for early voting, no-excuse absentee voting, and same day voter registration.

## Wendi Thomas

**Party:** Rep



**Biographical Info:**

**Mailing Address:** 107 Gleniffer Hill Road Richboro, PA 18954

**Campaign Email:** wendithomas178@gmail.com

**Date of Birth:** 8/16/1961

**Municipality:** NORTHAMPTON TOWNSHIP

**County:** BUCKS

**Website:** <http://votewendi.com>

**Facebook:** <http://www.facebook.com/VoteWendiThomas/>

**Education:** Hatboro-Horsham High School graduate Gettysburg College, BA

**Qualifications:** Work for 9 years on Council Rock School Board; over that time served as President, Vice President, Finance Chair, Academic Standard Chair. Successful business professional building a team and business that helps people navigate healthcare.

**Questions:**

**Q: *What are your top three priorities in office?***

**A:** 1. Making education the top priority in the budget process by supporting more funding for school and fostering innovation in education to deliver the best outcomes for students. 2. Control spending and protect property taxpayers as I did while on Council Rock School Board, where we cut costs by millions of dollars and kept property taxes the third lowest in Bucks County. In Harrisburg, I will focus the budget on priorities, cut out waste, and push for reforms that help school districts and local government control property taxes. 3. Keep our families safe by supporting a comprehensive approach to preventing gun violence, and working with law enforcement, drug addiction experts, and residents to address the opioid epidemic.

**Q: *Do you support reforming our congressional and legislative redistricting process to implement an independent citizen's redistricting commission? Why or why not?***

**A:** I believe the recent fight over redistricting illustrates the need for change and, as Representative, I would support an independent redistricting commission that takes partisanship out of the process; we must ensure that how we establish this prevents special interests and partisan interests from influencing or corrupting the commission or process.

**Q: *Which voting modernization reforms (such as no-excuse absentee voting, early voting, same day voter registration, additional funding for voting technology upgrades) would you support to ensure that our elections are accessible, efficient, and secure?***

**A:** I believe the League of Women Voters and all citizens share my view that when examining any election reforms, our top priority must be ensuring the sanctity of the ballot and the election system. Reforms must be carefully examined to prevent unintended consequences, ballot insecurity, or fraud; for example, recent reports in the Inquirer prove how the Motor Voter Law has inadvertently allowed those who are not allowed to vote to register to do so. As a legislator, I will support numerous proposals to improve voter access, voter participation, and ballot security. These include things such as allowing 17-year-olds who will be 18 by Election Day to pre-register; early voting; ensuring paper trails for all electronic voting systems; increased ability to vote by absentee ballot and more.