



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS  
OF COLLIN COUNTY  
[www.lwvcollin.org](http://www.lwvcollin.org)

Nonpartisan

# VOTERS GUIDE

November 8, 2016

General Election

Texas Representative District 70

Early voting: October 24 – November 4

Election Day Polls: November 8 – 7 am to 7 pm

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## About this *Voters Guide*

This *Voters Guide* is published by the League of Women Voters of Collin County to help citizens prepare to cast an informed vote. The League of Women Voters encourages informed and active participation in government. The League does not support or oppose any political party or candidate.

This guide is available online at [www.lwvcollin.org](http://www.lwvcollin.org), along with guides for other offices that include all or part of Collin County.

Candidate responses for all races are also available at [www.VOTE411.org](http://www.VOTE411.org), where you

can enter an address and view a personalized ballot with races specific to that address.

Questionnaires were sent to all candidates for each office, whether or not the race is contested. Candidate replies were subject to a character limit and are printed without editing or verification. If a candidate did not respond by the deadline, "No response received" is printed. Candidates were asked to avoid references to their opponents. Photos are included for candidates who provided them.

This *Voters Guide* is organized by office sought, with candidates listed in alphabetical order, regardless of their political party.

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## Texas Representative District 70

*2-year term. Must be 21 years or older, a U.S. citizen, a resident of Texas, and a resident of the district represented. Responsible for representing the citizens of the district in which he/she is elected in the Texas House of Representatives.*

### QUESTIONS

**Education:** What changes, if any, should be made to the ways public education is financed in Texas?

**Water:** What should be done, if anything, to ensure sufficient capacity and safety of water in Texas?

**Energy/Environment:** How would you balance the development of energy sources with environmental concerns?

**Economy:** What policies do you support to help Texas residents improve their economic positions?

**Health Care:** What changes, if any, are needed for affordable health care for Texas residents?

**Safety:** What legislation is needed, if any, to reduce violence and crime?

**Other Issues:** What other issues do you believe will be most pressing in the next session of the Texas Legislature, and what is your position on these issues?

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## John Bryant (Democratic Party)

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**Education:** A lifelong resident of North Texas who attended Dallas Hillcrest High School, John has a Master's Degree in Architecture from the University of Texas at Arlington and a Bachelor's Degree from Austin College.

**Experience:** Associated with hospitality and retail for more than 40 years from small business owner to employee of a multinational corporation, John's been active in political, civic, and humanitarian organizations including the Red Cross and the Boy Scouts.

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**Education:** Texas' future depends on providing the best education possible, and that takes money. However, Texas's school finance system has failed to provide sufficient revenue to our schools for years. When the Lottery was established Texans were told it would fund Texas schools, but only about a quarter of the lottery proceeds go to the schools. That needs to be changed to more than 50%. Also businesses who benefit from having a well educated workforce need to pay their fair share. There needs to be an ad valorem tax on property development transactions and a raise in commercial property tax rates.

**Water:** Texas has lots of seawater and undrinkable ground water, but most of our water comes from rainfall accumulated in our lakes and rivers. Sometimes there's too much and sometimes too little, but it's almost completely used by people, or business, or agriculture already, and some is needed for wildlife. Water Plans can't provide more rainwater when it doesn't rain. We've got to take better care of our water resources, and get much more serious about efficiency and conservation. There are developed countries that use a tenth of the water that we do. We have to look at what they're doing.

**Energy/Environment:** The most efficient solar panel ever mass produced is being manufactured in the US, and it is affordable. Green industries like this are producing jobs for Americans and helping to reduce our impact on the planet. Texas has an abundance of wind and sun so it seems reasonable that we should be leading the nation in renewable energy sources. I support more jobs for Texans in green energy industries like the production of wind turbines, batteries and solar panels. We don't want to be left at the mercy of price fluctuations in the fossil fuel industries and we must reduce our carbon footprint.

**Economy:** Right now there are Texans who while working full time rely on public assistance to make ends meet. Too me that is entirely wrong. Anyone who is working full

time should be making a livable wage. These businesses need to be responsible to their workers and not forcing taxpayers to subsidize their businesses. They way you improve the economy as a whole is to provide a living wage as a minimum to all workers. Then you have to support education for a new generation of emerging workers instead of stealing their future with debt. These young workers and entrepreneurs will grow a new economy.

**Health Care:** Texas State leaders refused to accept our own tax dollars being returned from Washington in order to extend Medicaid to uninsured children and the most economically disadvantaged. They have refused to support the Affordable Care Act and have done everything in their power to stymie it in Texas leaving the State with a rate of uninsured more than double the national average. Healthcare costs are not higher in Texas, but it is generally expensive today to get sick and when you strip away support for people who can't afford it the only outcome you can imagine is people dying unnecessarily.

**Safety:** Demagoguery about violence and crime aside, crime rates in Texas are the lowest in decades. The more guns that the NRA wants us to buy are not going to improve on that. Improving education, getting people jobs with a living wage, and providing better mental healthcare will do more to improve our safety and welfare.

**Other Issues:** Last year California, the state with the strictest environmental regulations, produced 459,400 non-farm jobs. Last year Texas produced only 166,900 jobs including those that moved from California. The bigger problem is that while growing a smaller number of jobs, the State of Texas has failed to adequately protect the people and the environment. When I promise to work to provide clean air and safe water for Texas' future it isn't just about protecting the health of the people and the planet, it's also about providing a healthy economic environment for the future

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**Emmett Merwin (Green Party) – No response received**

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**Scott Sanford (Republican Party) – No response received**

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**Rachel Wester (Libertarian Party)**

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**Education:** Masters of Arts in Teaching,  
Austin College

**Experience:** Secretary for Collin County  
Libertarian Party, Delegate to State  
Convention

**Education:** "The Libertarian Party of Texas (LPTexas) seeks to eliminate truancy laws and other barriers to school choice, and supports competition in education, in accordance with community standards. We believe that parents/guardians should have the authority to decide where and how their children are educated. We support measures to restore decision-making regarding education to parents, guardians, teachers, and/or local education boards."

**Water:** "Competitive free markets and property rights stimulate innovations and behavioral changes required to protect our environment. Private landowners and conservation groups have a vested interest in maintaining resources. Governments are unaccountable for damage done to our environment and have a terrible track record. Protecting the environment requires a clear definition and enforcement of individual rights and responsibilities regarding resources like water. Where damages can be proven and quantified in a court, restitution to the injured parties must be made."

**Energy/Environment:** From LPTexas platform: "While energy is needed to fuel a modern society, government should not be subsidizing any particular form of energy. We oppose all government control of energy pricing, allocation, and production." Since deregulation of the energy market, Texans have reaped the benefits of competition, with 10% of energy now produced by wind, making Texas the largest producer of wind energy in the country. Green energy is actually more affordable than conventional dirty sources and its use will continue to grow.

**Economy:** "As the Libertarian Party of Texas we believe that all persons are entitled to the fruits of their labor. As such, we view taxation as the forced taking of property. At most we regard it as a necessary evil, so that the vital functions of government can continue independent of undue outside influence. We advocate the reduction of taxation to the lowest feasible level, and the replacement of taxation with voluntary subscription where possible." Additionally, we support the repeal of occupational licensing requirements that turn a right into a governmental privilege.

**Health Care:** "Government should neither provide, control, nor require health care. The Libertarian Party of Texas (LPTexas) supports free market based healthcare systems and health insurance."

**Safety:** "The Libertarian Party of Texas (LPTexas) supports the repeal of all Vice and Morality based laws that are against consenting adults and that do no harm to others. The State has no right to either criminalize or legalize the morality of adult individuals and their interaction with other consenting adults." Any crime that violates the Non-Agression Principle and causes damage to another individual or an individual's property should be prosecuted to the full extent of the law. Freeing law enforcement from Vice and Morality based policing will enable effective prosecuting of real crime.

**Other Issues:** "The Libertarian Party of Texas (LPTexas) seeks to encourage immigration of students, workers, and business owners willing to invest in Texas. We believe in and encourage free and fair trade among individuals from all nations which allows the easy exchange of currency, goods, labor, and

services. The Libertarian Party of Texas (LPTexas) supports the spirit of the American Dream, where even the poorest immigrant can

start anew, and through hard work, responsibility, and free market principles, may prosper and thrive."

You may bring this *Voters Guide* into the voting booth! In 1995, the Texas law prohibiting use of printed materials, such as this *Voters Guide*, in the polling place was ruled unconstitutional (*Texas Election Code, Section 61.011*)

**Your vote is your voice. Be heard.**