



Know Before You Go: PA-07 District Primer

May 2018 • Researched, summarized, and edited by Swing Left's all-volunteer research team!

It's a new day and a new district with new demographics that make it much more blue!

With your help, we're going to win this seat for the Democrats in 2018.

About the Republican Candidate

Introduction: Republican **Charlie Dent** is the current Congressman for PA-15 (the old district), and he is not running for re-election. The Republican candidate for this seat is Lehigh County Commissioner **Marty Nothstein**, an Olympic gold medalist who opposes abortion, sanctuary cities, and an assault weapons ban.

Committees: Dent is Chairman of the Subcommittee on Military Construction, and serves on the Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies, Subcommittee on State and Foreign Operations, Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development.

Potential Weaknesses: The district has been compressed around Allentown which is an up and coming city with a younger demographic, where more than 50% of the people are registered Democrats. Plus, portions of District 15 that Dent won big are no longer in the district.

Recent Elections: 49-48 Clinton in 2016, 48-47 McGinty over Toomey in the 2016 Senate election, and 53-42 Dent over Daugherty in the 2016 Congressional election.

About The Democratic Candidate

Introduction: Democrat **Susan Wild**, former Allentown Solicitor and the first woman to serve as solicitor for the city of Allentown, defeated Northampton County District Attorney John Morganelli and Pastor Greg Edwards in the May 15, 2018 Democratic primary, winning with 32.86% of the vote. Wild received her B.A. from American University and her J.D. from George Washington University. Wild is a civil litigator with experience in health care, civil rights, and employment law. She has been on the Board of Directors of Second Harvest Food Bank, Program for Women & Families, and the Jewish Federation of the Lehigh Valley, and was recognized in 2017 by Gov. Tom Wolf for her leadership and contributions to Pennsylvania. Wild has been endorsed by NARAL, Emily's List, and National Organization of Women.

Issues: Wild supports raising the federal minimum wage to \$15/hour, with regional cost-of-living adjustments, supports unions and opposes "right-to-work" laws, and supports investment in large-scale infrastructure projects, particularly clean energy development.

She opposes cuts to benefits or privatization of Social Security and supports leveraging Medicare's negotiating power to cut health care costs, including the cost of prescription drugs. She also supports universal health care coverage, expanding Medicaid in Pennsylvania, and implementing immediate fixes to the ACA to stabilize insurance markets. She believes in providing communities with more resources to address opioid addiction and using regulatory power to hold drug companies accountable for their role in fueling the opioid crisis.

She supports the Equality Act that would amend the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to "add sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity" to the list of already protected classes. Wild supports rejoining the Paris Accord, protections of natural resources, and incentivizing the development of renewable technology.

Learn more at swingleft.org/resources/PA-07



PA-07: Better Know the District

Geography

The district includes all of Lehigh and Northampton Counties and part of Monroe County. The city of Allentown, is the largest city in the Lehigh Valley, a geographic region bounded by Blue Mountain, a ridge of the Appalachian mountain range, which varies from 1,000 to 1,600 feet (490 m) in height about 17 miles (27 km) north of the city, and South Mountain, a ridge of 500 to 1,000 feet (300 m) in height that borders the southern edge of the city.

Economy

The economy of the area used to rely heavily on manufacturing (including steel plants), but the town has re-centered its focus into the service industries, to the point that in 2016, the Urban Land Institute listed Allentown as a "national success story" for its downtown redevelopment and transformation. In addition, the Neighborhood Improvement Zone (NIZ) was created by the Pennsylvania State Legislature in 2009 to encourage development in Allentown. The NIZ consists of approximately 128 acres in downtown Allentown and the new Riverfront district with of hope of not just revitalizing the economy but to encourage young professionals to live and work downtown.

Elections

The district contains Lehigh County (Allentown is the county seat), which as of 2010 has over 223,000 registered voters, 50% of which are Democrats. When Pennsylvania redrew the district earlier this year, Old District 15 was compressed around Allentown. Lehigh County voted 50-45 (Clinton over Trump) and 48-47 McGinty over Toomey in the Senate election. Charlie Dent won big for the Congressional seat, but he is not running for re-election.

This area voted for John Kerry in 2004 and Obama in 2008 (this was before the districts were gerrymandered in 2012). Barack Obama carried Lehigh County in 2012. Old PA-15 was R+4, new PA-07 is D+1.

Higher Education

Four-year Universities include Cedar Crest College, Muhlenberg College, Penn State Lehigh Valley Campus, Lehigh University. Two-year Colleges include Lehigh Carbon Community College.

Arts & Culture

Allentown has gone through an arts and culture transformation recently. Shops, restaurants, and art galleries have opened to attract both young people and business to the area. More than \$600 million has been invested in in the area leading to more than 1.4 million square feet of development. The Civic Theater of Allentown stages "Broadway-Style" shows, and is the city's only independent and foreign film house. The Allentown Art Museum has a large collection and many exhibitions, including more than 13,000 works of art.

PA-07: Facts & Stats

Largest Cities

- Allentown, 118,032
- Bethlehem, 74,982
- Lower Macungie Township, 30,633
- Easton, 26,800

2016 Presidential Results

- Trump (R) - 47%
- Clinton (D) - 49.3%

2016 House Results

- Meehan (R) - 59.5%
- Balchunis (D) - 40.5%

2014 House Results

- Meehan (R) - 62%
- Balchunis (D) - 38%