2026 CATHOLIC VOTER GUIDE · CONNECTICUT · LETTERS FROM LEO

# U.S. House, District 2

Incumbent Joe Courtney (D) seeks reelection.



## George Austin

**REPUBLICAN · CHALLENGER**

Construction contractor and small-business owner; first-time candidate.



## Joe Courtney

**DEMOCRAT · INCUMBENT**

U.S. Representative since 2007.

Where the candidates stand on the issues Pope Leo XIV has raised, in their own words and votes. Bracketed numbers link to sources. We do not rate, score, or endorse candidates.

## WAR & PEACE

**POPE LEO XIV** *Leo invited citizens of every country involved in the war with Iran to contact their leaders and members of Congress "to work for peace and to reject war and violence."* Remarks at Castel Gandolfo, Apr. 7, 2026 (Vatican News via The Good Newsroom)

### GEORGE AUSTIN

*No public position found.*

### JOE COURTNEY

*No campaign statement found. See voting record below.*

**VOTING RECORD**

Iran war powers resolutions, Mar.–Sept. 2026 (six House votes): **Yes** Mar., Apr., May, June, July, Sept.

**Yes** Ukraine Support Act (H.R. 2913), June 2026 — authorizes support for Ukraine

## AI & THE DIGNITY OF WORK

**POPE LEO XIV** *"No one can be reduced to productivity, to cognitive performance, or to mere data."* Magnifica Humanitas presentation, May 25, 2026

### GEORGE AUSTIN

Says "AI should serve people, not make people expendable"; backs worker notice and human review of AI job decisions, independent safety testing and an AI "kill switch."

[1] Ballotpedia: George Austin

### JOE COURTNEY

*No campaign statement found. See voting record below.*

**VOTING RECORD**

**Yes** Protect America's Workforce Act (H.R. 2550), Dec. 2025 — nullifies the executive order ending union bargaining for many federal workers

**Yes** Faster Labor Contracts Act (H.R. 5408), June 2026 — sets deadlines for reaching first union contracts

## THE POOR & THE SAFETY NET

**POPE LEO XIV** *The preferential choice for the poor is "a source of extraordinary renewal both for the Church and for society."* Dilexi Te, Oct. 4, 2025

### GEORGE AUSTIN

*No public position found.*

### JOE COURTNEY

*No campaign statement found. See voting record below.*

**VOTING RECORD**

**No** One Big Beautiful Bill Act (H.R. 1), final passage July 2025 — tax cuts with Medicaid and SNAP changes

**Yes** Breaking the Gridlock Act (H.R. 1834), Jan. 2026 — extends enhanced ACA premium tax credits through 2028

## ELECTIONS & CIVIC LIFE

**POPE LEO XIV** *Authentic democracy, "far from being a mere procedure," "recognizes the dignity of every person and calls each citizen to participate responsibly in the pursuit of the common good."* Message to the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences, Apr. 9, 2026

### GEORGE AUSTIN

*No public position found.*

### JOE COURTNEY

*No campaign statement found. See voting record below.*

**VOTING RECORD**

**No** Objection to counting Arizona's 2020 electoral votes, Jan. 6, 2021 — a Yes vote supported the objection (failed, 121–303)

**No** Objection to counting Pennsylvania's 2020 electoral votes, Jan. 7, 2021 — a Yes vote supported the objection (failed, 138–282)

**Yes** For the People Act (H.R. 1), Mar. 2021 — automatic and same-day voter registration, expanded mail and early voting, campaign-finance and ethics rules

**Yes** Presidential Election Reform Act (H.R. 8873), Sept. 2022 — says the vice president's role in counting electoral votes is ministerial and raises the threshold for objections

**No** SAVE America Act (House amendment to S. 1383), Feb. 2026 — requires documentary proof of citizenship to register and photo ID to vote in federal elections

## LIFE OF THE UNBORN

**POPE LEO XIV** *Abortion "cuts short a growing life and refuses to welcome the gift of life."* Address to the Diplomatic Corps, Jan. 9, 2026

### GEORGE AUSTIN

*No public position found.*

### JOE COURTNEY

*No campaign statement found. See voting record below.*

**VOTING RECORD**

**No** Born-Alive Abortion Survivors Protection Act (H.R. 21), Jan. 2025 — requires care for infants born alive after an attempted abortion

**No** Supporting Pregnant and Parenting Women and Families Act (H.R. 6945), Jan. 2026 — lets states use TANF funds for pregnancy centers

## THE DEATH PENALTY

**POPE LEO XIV** *Someone who opposes abortion but favors the death penalty "is not really pro-life."* AP via PBS NewsHour, Sept. 30, 2025

### GEORGE AUSTIN

*No public position found.*

### JOE COURTNEY

*No public position found.*

## IMMIGRANTS & REFUGEES

**POPE LEO XIV** *"Defending human life also includes welcoming, protecting and assisting immigrants."* Letter on the 250th Anniversary of the United States, June 25, 2026

### GEORGE AUSTIN

Backs border barriers, interior enforcement and ending catch-and-release, alongside faster asylum decisions, modernized legal pathways and "practical and humane" treatment of long-settled immigrants.

[1] George for Congress: Securing Our Borders

### JOE COURTNEY

*No campaign statement found. See voting record below.*

**VOTING RECORD**

**Yes** Laken Riley Act (S. 5), Jan. 2025 — requires detention of undocumented immigrants charged with theft and certain crimes

**No** Secure America Act (S. 2), June 2026 — reconciliation funding for ICE and Customs and Border Protection

**Yes** Haiti TPS bill (H.R. 1689), Apr. 2026 — requires temporary protected status for Haitians

## RELIGIOUS LIBERTY & EDUCATION

**POPE LEO XIV** *Religious freedom is "the right of every person to worship according to conscience."* Letter on the 250th Anniversary of the United States, June 25, 2026

### GEORGE AUSTIN

*No public position found.*

### JOE COURTNEY

*No campaign statement found. See voting record below.*

**VOTING RECORD**

**No** One Big Beautiful Bill Act (H.R. 1), July 2025 — created a federal tax credit for donations to K–12 scholarship organizations

## CARE FOR CREATION

**POPE LEO XIV** *"We cannot love God, whom we cannot see, while despising his creatures."* AP, Oct. 1, 2025

### GEORGE AUSTIN

Says he refuses "to bow to extreme green ideology that relies on shame, propaganda, and fear instead of real solutions."

[1] George for Congress: Dollars & Sense

### JOE COURTNEY

*No campaign statement found. See voting record below.*

**VOTING RECORD**

**No** Resolution overturning EPA approval of California vehicle-emission rules (H.J.Res. 87), Apr. 2025

**No** Homeowner Energy Freedom Act (H.R. 4758), Feb. 2026 — repeals home-electrification rebates from the 2022 climate law

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