2026 CATHOLIC VOTER GUIDE · GEORGIA · LETTERS FROM LEO

U.S. House, District 11

Open seat (Rep. Barry Loudermilk, R, is retiring).



John Cowan

REPUBLICAN · OPEN SEAT

Neurosurgeon and small-business owner (Cortex Toys); won the June 2026 Republican runoff for this open seat.



Chris Harden

DEMOCRAT · OPEN SEAT

Attorney who has spent 14 years as a parent defense lawyer; former forklift operator who worked through school at night.

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)

JOHN COWAN

No public position found.

CHRIS HARDEN

No public position found.

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

JOHN COWAN

No public position found.

CHRIS HARDEN

Would ban "AI-driven surveillance pricing" on essentials like groceries and require data centers to employ local labor, generate their own power and not raise residents' utility bills.

[1] Chris Harden for Congress

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

JOHN COWAN

Proposes to "fix the problems created by Obamacare" — lowering premiums, expanding choices and getting "the government out of the doctor's office" — and supports tax relief for families.

[1] Cowan for Congress: Issues
[2] Ballotpedia: John Cowan

CHRIS HARDEN

Would restore and expand Affordable Care Act premium tax credits, protect Medicare and Medicaid, cap drug costs and raise the minimum wage "so a full day's work pays for a full day's living."

[1] Chris Harden for Congress

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

JOHN COWAN

Calls for requiring proof of citizenship to vote and nationwide voter ID — "make it easy to vote and impossible to cheat" — plus full transparency in how ballots are cast and counted.

[1] Cowan for Congress: Issues
[2] Ballotpedia: John Cowan

CHRIS HARDEN

Supports banning partisan gerrymandering through independent redistricting commissions, saying "voters should pick their politicians."

[1] Chris Harden for Congress

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

JOHN COWAN

No public position found.

CHRIS HARDEN

Calls reproductive freedom "a fundamental right" and supports access to contraception, fertility treatment and abortion care, saying such decisions belong to patients and doctors, "not politicians."

[1] Chris Harden for Congress

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

JOHN COWAN

No public position found.

CHRIS HARDEN

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

JOHN COWAN

Says "President Trump is securing the border. Congress needs to back him up."

[1] Ballotpedia: John Cowan

CHRIS HARDEN

No public position found.

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

JOHN COWAN

Pledges to "preserve and protect" constitutional rights including free speech, freedom of worship and the right to bear arms.

[1] Cowan for Congress: Issues

CHRIS HARDEN

No public position found.

CARE FOR CREATION

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

JOHN COWAN

Calls for policies to "unleash American energy" alongside spending cuts, tax cuts and reduced regulation.

[1] Ballotpedia: John Cowan

CHRIS HARDEN

Criticizes the 2025 reconciliation law's rollback of clean-energy tax credits and pledges to expand clean energy, modernize the grid and protect clean air and water.

[1] Chris Harden for Congress

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