2026 CATHOLIC VOTER GUIDE · ILLINOIS · LETTERS FROM LEO

U.S. House, District 7

Open seat (Democrat Danny K. Davis retired).



La Shawn Ford

DEMOCRAT · OPEN SEAT

Illinois state representative (8th District) since 2007.



Chad Koppie

REPUBLICAN · OPEN SEAT

Farmer and former Delta jet captain.

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)

LA SHAWN FORD

No public position found.

CHAD KOPPIE

Calls for seeking to mediate a ceasefire in Ukraine.

[1] Ballotpedia: Chad Koppie (campaign themes)

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

LA SHAWN FORD

No public position found.

CHAD KOPPIE

No public position found.

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

LA SHAWN FORD

Says preserving and expanding access to Medicaid and SNAP (food stamps) will be among his top priorities.

[1] Ballotpedia: La Shawn Ford (campaign themes)

CHAD KOPPIE

His 2024 campaign site called for repealing the Affordable Care Act.

[1] Ballotpedia: Chad Koppie (campaign themes)

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

LA SHAWN FORD

Supports a constitutional amendment explicitly guaranteeing an individual right to vote.

[1] Ballotpedia: La Shawn Ford (campaign themes)

CHAD KOPPIE

No public position found.

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

LA SHAWN FORD

No public position found.

CHAD KOPPIE

Calls for "protection for all human life" and opposes abortion.

[1] Ballotpedia: Chad Koppie (campaign themes)

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

LA SHAWN FORD

No public position found.

CHAD KOPPIE

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

LA SHAWN FORD

No public position found.

CHAD KOPPIE

His campaign says ICE should try to arrest and deport all people in the country illegally.

[1] Ballotpedia: Chad Koppie (campaign themes)

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

LA SHAWN FORD

No public position found.

CHAD KOPPIE

His 2024 campaign site pledged to "defend and preserve religious freedom."

[1] Ballotpedia: Chad Koppie (campaign themes)

CARE FOR CREATION

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

LA SHAWN FORD

No public position found.

CHAD KOPPIE

No public position found.

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