

U.S. Senate

Open seat (Sen. Tina Smith retiring).

Peggy Flanagan

DEMOCRATIC-FARMER-LABOR · OPEN SEAT

Lieutenant Governor of Minnesota since 2019 and former Minneapolis School Board member.

Michele Tafoya

REPUBLICAN · OPEN SEAT

Former NFL sideline reporter and sports broadcaster.

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](#))

PEGGY FLANAGAN

Supports a lasting ceasefire and two-state solution in Gaza, says she would have voted to halt offensive weapons sales to Israel, and supports aiding Ukraine against Russia’s invasion.

[\[1\] Flanagan campaign priorities](#)

MICHELE TAFOYA

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](#)

PEGGY FLANAGAN

Supports the PRO Act to strengthen union organizing and opposes using AI for Medicare prior authorization decisions.

[\[1\] Flanagan campaign priorities](#)

MICHELE TAFOYA

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](#)

PEGGY FLANAGAN

Supports Medicare for All, reversing Medicaid and SNAP cuts in the 2025 reconciliation law, an expanded Child Tax Credit, and a minimum wage of at least \$17 an hour tied to inflation.

[\[1\] Flanagan campaign priorities](#)

RECORD IN OFFICE

No SF 1 (2017), temporary health insurance premium assistance and health insurance changes (House passage)

MICHELE TAFOYA

Pledges to protect the 2025 “Working Family Tax Cuts” and oppose middle-class tax increases; says she will fight “bureaucrats, middlemen and price-gougers” to cut health and drug costs.

[\[1\] Tafoya campaign issues](#)

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](#)

PEGGY FLANAGAN

Supports the Women’s Health Protection Act to restore Roe v. Wade protections and nationwide access to abortion, contraception, and prenatal and postnatal care, saying health decisions belong to patients and their providers.

[\[1\] Flanagan campaign priorities](#)

RECORD IN OFFICE

No HF 809 (2017), limiting abortion funding from state-sponsored health programs

No HF 812 (2017), requiring licensure of facilities that perform abortions

MICHELE TAFOYA

Calls herself a pro-choice Republican and supports “reasonable access” to abortion in the first 12 weeks of pregnancy.

[\[1\] MPR News: Flanagan-Tafoya Senate race](#)

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](#)

PEGGY FLANAGAN

No public position found.

MICHELE TAFOYA

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](#)

PEGGY FLANAGAN

Grounds her view in her Catholic faith; says ICE is “out of control” and should be dismantled and reimagined, supports a path to legal status for long-term undocumented residents, and backs fair asylum processes.

[\[1\] Flanagan campaign priorities](#)

MICHELE TAFOYA

Pledges to deport criminal illegal immigrants, oppose efforts to abolish ICE, and cosponsor a bill to deport immigrants convicted of fraud.

[\[1\] Tafoya campaign issues](#)

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](#)

PEGGY FLANAGAN

Supports funding K-12 public education “without a voucher program”; lists the right to worship among rights she says are being eroded.

[\[1\] Flanagan campaign priorities](#)

MICHELE TAFOYA

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](#)

PEGGY FLANAGAN

Supports action on climate change, wind and solar with union jobs, biofuels including sustainable aviation fuel, and opposes the Trump administration’s rollback of clean energy investments.

[\[1\] Flanagan campaign priorities](#)

RECORD IN OFFICE

No HF 3759 (2018), authorizing construction and routing of the Line 3 oil pipeline replacement

MICHELE TAFOYA

Supports “all-of-the-above” U.S. energy sources to lower utility bills and gas prices “while continuing to protect our environment.”

[\[1\] Tafoya campaign issues](#)

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