2026 CATHOLIC VOTER GUIDE · NEW JERSEY · LETTERS FROM LEO

U.S. House, District 12

Open seat (Rep. Bonnie Watson Coleman, D, is retiring).



Adam Hamawy

DEMOCRAT · OPEN SEAT

Physician and Army veteran; served as a combat trauma surgeon in Iraq.



Gregg Mele

REPUBLICAN · OPEN SEAT

Educator with a law degree from New York Law School.

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)

ADAM HAMAWY

Supports cutting off military aid to Israel and "Justice for Palestinians"; says Congress "cannot give a blank check to Donald Trump" on Iran.

[1] Hamawy campaign: Priorities
[2] Ballotpedia: Adam Hamawy

GREGG MELE

Supports "Israel's right to defend its people" and "a strong security partnership with Israel."

[1] Mele campaign: Platform

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

ADAM HAMAWY

Supports "The PRO Act and the right to organize," saying "Unions built the American middle class."

[1] Hamawy campaign: Priorities
[2] Ballotpedia: Adam Hamawy

GREGG MELE

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

ADAM HAMAWY

Says healthcare "is a basic human right" and backs single-payer Medicare for All, medical debt cancellation and raising the minimum wage to a living wage.

[1] Hamawy campaign: Priorities
[2] Ballotpedia: Adam Hamawy

GREGG MELE

His earlier platform said "I want people to stop depending on the government for survival" and criticized minimum wage laws as an imposition on the free market.

[1] Ballotpedia: Gregg Mele

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

ADAM HAMAWY

Supports "the protection and expansion of the right to vote" and abolishing the Electoral College.

[1] Hamawy campaign: Priorities
[2] Ballotpedia: Adam Hamawy

GREGG MELE

Supports voter ID laws, saying "there is no valid argument against having these laws."

[1] Ballotpedia: Gregg Mele

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

ADAM HAMAWY

Says "I support codifying the right to abortion in federal law."

[1] Hamawy campaign: Priorities
[2] Ballotpedia: Adam Hamawy

GREGG MELE

No public position found.

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

ADAM HAMAWY

No public position found.

GREGG MELE

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

ADAM HAMAWY

Calls for "Abolishing and prosecuting ICE," dismantling DHS, and "an achievable path to citizenship," including protection for DACA recipients.

[1] Hamawy campaign: Priorities
[2] Ballotpedia: Adam Hamawy

GREGG MELE

Supports legal immigration and calls for restoring "operational control at the border" and enforcing existing immigration law; has opposed sanctuary jurisdictions.

[1] Mele campaign: Platform
[2] Ballotpedia: Gregg Mele

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

ADAM HAMAWY

Pledges to protect "religious minorities against discrimination"; calls public schools "the crown jewel of New Jersey."

[1] Hamawy campaign: Priorities
[2] Ballotpedia: Adam Hamawy

GREGG MELE

Has written that "The best cure is school choice," including home schooling.

[1] Ballotpedia: Gregg Mele

CARE FOR CREATION

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

ADAM HAMAWY

Calls for "A rapid transition to clean energy," saying "The climate crisis is a fossil fuel crisis," and supports making polluters pay.

[1] Ballotpedia: Adam Hamawy

GREGG MELE

Has argued nuclear energy delivers "the best results for the environment"; his platform calls for expanding "reliable American energy."

[1] Ballotpedia: Gregg Mele
[2] Mele campaign: Platform

Full guide and every race in New Jersey: standwithpopeleo.com/vote/new-jersey/ · **Take the Pope Leo voter pledge:** standwithpopeleo.com/vote/
This guide does not endorse any candidate or party. Not authorized by any candidate or candidate's committee. Positions are summarized from candidates' own statements, votes, and campaign materials, with sources linked. Published by *Letters from Leo*. Spot an error? Email cjh@christopherhale.com.