2026 CATHOLIC VOTER GUIDE · TENNESSEE · LETTERS FROM LEO

Governor

Open seat (Gov. Bill Lee term-limited). Rated Solid Republican by Cook Political Report and Inside Elections.



Marsha Blackburn

REPUBLICAN · OPEN SEAT

U.S. Senator since 2019; former U.S. Representative and state senator.



Jerri Green

DEMOCRAT · OPEN SEAT

Memphis City Council member; attorney and former public defender.

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)

MARSHA BLACKBURN

No campaign statement found. See voting record below.

VOTING RECORD

No Iran war powers resolution (H.Con.Res. 86), June 2026

No Iran war powers resolution (H.Con.Res. 89), Sept. 2026

Did not vote Russia sanctions bill (H.R. 5334), Aug. 2026

JERRI GREEN

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

MARSHA BLACKBURN

As senator, led the 2025 push to strip a moratorium on state AI laws from the reconciliation bill, saying it "could allow Big Tech to continue to exploit kids, creators, and conservatives."

[1] Blackburn Senate office (July 2025)

JERRI GREEN

Would guarantee an appeal to a human when AI denies a job, housing or medical care, fine large firms that replace 25 or more workers with AI, and support collective bargaining.

[1] Green campaign: Platform

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

MARSHA BLACKBURN

Pledges to "slash wasteful spending" and cut taxes; her campaign site does not address TennCare/Medicaid or SNAP.

[1] Blackburn campaign: Spending

VOTING RECORD

Yes One Big Beautiful Bill Act (H.R. 1), July 2025 — tax cuts with Medicaid and SNAP changes

JERRI GREEN

Would expand Medicaid to cover more working families, opposes "cruel cuts to SNAP or housing aid" and backs "a real living wage."

[1] Green campaign: Platform

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

MARSHA BLACKBURN

Supports closing primaries and implementing party registration; pledges to keep Tennessee elections "safe and secure."

[1] Blackburn campaign: Elections

VOTING RECORD

No Objection to counting Arizona's 2020 electoral votes, Jan. 6, 2021 — a Yes vote supported the objection (failed, 6–93)

No Objection to counting Pennsylvania's 2020 electoral votes, Jan. 7, 2021 — a Yes vote supported the objection (failed, 7–92)

No For the People Act (S. 2093), June 2021 — vote to begin debate (failed, 50–50; 60 needed)

Yes SAVE America Act (S. 1383), Mar. 2026 — motion to take up the bill requiring proof of citizenship to register and photo ID to vote (passed, 51–48)

Yes Photo ID amendment to the SAVE America Act, Mar. 2026 — vote to end debate on requiring photo ID to vote (failed, 53–47; 60 needed)

JERRI GREEN

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

MARSHA BLACKBURN

Campaign calls her "100 percent pro-life"; she has backed ending federal funding of abortion and opposed using human embryos for stem cell research.

[1] Blackburn campaign: Right to life

VOTING RECORD

Yes Born-Alive Abortion Survivors Protection Act (S. 6), Jan. 2025 — vote to advance the bill (failed, 52–47; 60 needed)

JERRI GREEN

Pledges to "Repeal Tennessee's near-total abortion ban" and to protect IVF and miscarriage care from state interference.

[1] Green campaign: Platform

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

MARSHA BLACKBURN

No public position found.

JERRI GREEN

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

MARSHA BLACKBURN

Would have the state work with federal authorities to "implement mass deportations," keep sanctuary cities out of Tennessee and penalize officials who do not follow federal law.

[1] Blackburn campaign: Illegal immigration

VOTING RECORD

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

Yes Secure America Act (S. 2), June 2026 — reconciliation funding for ICE and Customs and Border Protection

JERRI GREEN

Would sign an executive order ending state and local law enforcement cooperation with ICE, bar ICE from state buildings and fund legal help for immigrants facing deportation.

[1] Green campaign: Platform

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

MARSHA BLACKBURN

Supports school choice, saying parents "know what's best for each individual child," and pledges to fully implement Tennessee's new school choice law.

[1] Blackburn campaign: Parental rights

VOTING RECORD

Yes One Big Beautiful Bill Act (H.R. 1), July 2025 — created a federal tax credit for donations to K–12 scholarship organizations

JERRI GREEN

Opposes vouchers, calling for full K-12 public school funding rather than "unaccountable voucher schemes."

[1] Green campaign: Platform

CARE FOR CREATION

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

MARSHA BLACKBURN

No campaign statement found. See voting record below.

VOTING RECORD

Did not vote Resolution overturning EPA approval of California vehicle-emission rules (H.J.Res. 87), May 2025

JERRI GREEN

Backs renewable energy and green jobs, clean air and water enforcement, keeping TVA a public utility and a statewide data center moratorium.

[1] Green campaign: Platform

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