2026 CATHOLIC VOTER GUIDE · VIRGINIA · LETTERS FROM LEO

U.S. Senate

Sen. Mark Warner is seeking a fourth term and says it will be his last. Rated Solid Democratic by Cook Political Report (Oct. 2026).



Bert Mizusawa

REPUBLICAN · CHALLENGER

Retired Army major general; former deputy under secretary of the Army and senior adviser to the CIA director.



Mark Warner

DEMOCRAT · INCUMBENT

U.S. senator since 2009; former Virginia governor (2002–2006) and telecommunications entrepreneur.

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)

BERT MIZUSAWA

Backs the president on Iran — "I think we have to trust the president on that account" — calling higher gas prices "a relatively small price to pay."

[1] Cardinal News: Virginia's Senate race

MARK WARNER

Calls the Iran war "a fiasco of historic proportions" and says "we need to bring this war to an end."

[1] Cardinal News: Virginia's Senate race
[2] WSET: Senate candidates at Buena Vista Labor Fest

VOTING RECORD

Yes Iran war powers resolution (H.Con.Res. 86), June 2026
Yes Iran war powers resolution (H.Con.Res. 89), Sept. 2026
Yes Russia sanctions bill (H.R. 5334), Aug. 2026

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

BERT MIZUSAWA

Says data centers "should not be put in any local community that doesn't want it" and that regulation must not let China and other competitors pull ahead.

[1] Cardinal News: Virginia's Senate race

MARK WARNER

Has introduced an AI legislative package with basic safety protocols; says the industry "has done a dreadful job of showing how this can actually work for human beings."

[1] Cardinal News: Virginia's Senate race
[2] WJLA: Warner faces GOP challenger Mizusawa

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

BERT MIZUSAWA

No public position found.

MARK WARNER

Opposes the 2025 reconciliation law, which he said "slashes Medicaid, nutrition assistance"; his bill would reverse its Medicaid cuts, restore enhanced ACA tax credits and create a public option.

[1] Warner–Kaine statement on Republican budget bill (July 2025)
[2] Roll Call: Warner pitches health care expansion

VOTING RECORD

No One Big Beautiful Bill Act (H.R. 1), July 2025 — tax cuts with Medicaid and SNAP changes

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

BERT MIZUSAWA

Calls election integrity "job one" and supports requiring proof of citizenship to vote.

[1] WSET: Senate candidates at Buena Vista Labor Fest

MARK WARNER

Supports Virginia's existing voter ID requirements but opposes the SAVE America Act, calling it "a pretext for voter suppression."

[1] Warner–Kaine statement on SAVE America Act (March 2026)

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)

Yes For the People Act (S. 2093), June 2021 — vote to begin debate (failed, 50–50; 60 needed)

No 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)

No 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)

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

BERT MIZUSAWA

No public position found.

MARK WARNER

Supports legislation protecting abortion access and IVF; says "women have the right to make their own decisions about their health care."

[1] Warner Senate office: statement on Reproductive Freedom for Women Act (July 2024)

VOTING RECORD

No Born-Alive Abortion Survivors Protection Act (S. 6), Jan. 2025 — vote to advance the bill (failed, 52–47; 60 needed)

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

BERT MIZUSAWA

No public position found.

MARK WARNER

As governor in 2005, commuted a death sentence after evidence was destroyed before DNA testing, saying capital punishment must be "done fairly"; 11 executions proceeded during his term.

[1] NBC News: Clemency forestalls nation's 1,000th execution

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

BERT MIZUSAWA

Calls border security "a national security issue" and says "We must keep our borders secure while making legal immigration... an easier process."

[1] WJLA: Warner faces GOP challenger Mizusawa
[2] Ballotpedia: Bert Mizusawa

MARK WARNER

Says "Biden screwed up the border and it was way too open," and wants to reform ICE operations and how its agents are recruited.

[1] WJLA: Warner faces GOP challenger Mizusawa

VOTING RECORD

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

No Secure America Act (S. 2), June 2026 — reconciliation funding for ICE and Customs and Border Protection

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

BERT MIZUSAWA

No public position found.

MARK WARNER

No campaign statement found. See voting record below.

VOTING RECORD

No One Big Beautiful Bill Act (H.R. 1), July 2025 — created a federal tax credit for donations to K–12 scholarship organizations

CARE FOR CREATION

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

BERT MIZUSAWA

Supports bringing new nuclear power online to cut household energy costs, saying "Nuclear power is clean, cheap, reliable and safe."

[1] Ballotpedia: Bert Mizusawa

MARK WARNER

Endorsed by the League of Conservation Voters, which cites his clean-energy and Chesapeake Bay work; says the country "urgently needs more electricity."

[1] LCV Action Fund endorses Mark Warner (Dec. 2025)

VOTING RECORD

No Resolution overturning EPA approval of California vehicle-emission rules (H.J.Res. 87), May 2025

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