



Citizen's Guide to Delaware Public Policy

Do Lawmakers Share Your Values?

Senator Bryant L. Richardson

Delaware's 21st District

Introduction

My dad and mom rarely talked politics, but I knew they voted for the person, not the party.

Back then, the differences between candidates were not that extreme. That has changed.

In the past, I have voted for Democrats who represented my views on the issues. They no longer exist.

Today, Democrat Senators and Representatives vote in lockstep on some utterly outrageous bills.

Today's Democrat Party defends issues such as boys in girls' sports and locker rooms, sexualized material in school libraries, unproven gender transition procedures for minors as young as four, and changing 'mothers' to 'birthing persons,' to name a few.

Are Democrat lawmakers responding to the concerns of their constituents or to special interest groups?

My purpose in preparing this booklet is to inform voters about what is going on in government. By doing so, I hope to encourage more people to get involved.

Special interest groups should not control the statewide agenda. We the People should.

Senator Bryant L. Richardson

To the Delaware Taxpayers

On these pages I highlight some of the bills that went through the Delaware General Assembly the past few years.

Do these bills reflect your values? Are you pleased with the performance of your Representative or Senator?

You can check the voting record of your elected officials at legis.delaware.gov on any of these bills.

As citizens, our obligation is to know more about the integrity of those representing us and their stand on the issues.



Justice will not be served until those who are unaffected are as outraged as those who are.

Benjamin Franklin



*Let it not be said that I was
silent when they needed me.*
William Wilberforce

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To compel a man to
furnish funds for the
propagation of ideas
he disbelieves and
abhors is sinful and
tyrannical.

Thomas Jefferson

Members of the public may want to tell lawmakers who don't respect their First Amendment rights, "Your time is up" on Election Day.

What happens in Dover should not stay in Dover, but be known by taxpayers

Taxpayers have a right to know what their elected officials are doing and how those decisions impact their daily lives.

From electric vehicle mandates to government-ordered shutdowns, the public deserves the chance to push back when policies go too far.

Public involvement is critical to preserving individual rights. Yet anyone who has tried to testify during committee hearings—whether in person or online—knows the process is flawed.

Yes, citizens are allowed to sign up and speak. For most hearings, comments are limited to two minutes.

But in some cases, the time has been cut to a single minute, with speakers



abruptly silenced mid-sentence by the sharp warning: “Your time is up.”

This lack of respect illustrates the deeper problem: when one side holds the votes to pass anything it wants, it no longer has to listen to the voices of those who disagree.

The First Amendment protects free speech precisely to safeguard and promote

open political debate. Shutting down public testimony undermines that principle.

Citizens need to understand how extreme some legislative actions have become.

Regardless of party affiliation, everyone should recognize that this lack of serious dialogue is disrespectful, dangerous, and unacceptable.

President Dennis Assanis said the University received \$1 million for that development, but should have received \$1 billion.

Million vs billion dollar shortfall is eye-opener

When then University of Delaware President Dennis Assanis appeared before the Joint Finance Committee (JFC) a few years ago, I asked him how researchers at UD are protecting the intellectual property that is being developed.

During the UD hearing, Dr. Assanis mentioned that the money given to the university is an investment in the future, and I agree.

However, I expressed my concern that, in the past, Delaware did not fully benefit from the investment in the research for which the state provides funding.

My example focused on the fact that the university helped develop the touch-screen technology that is used on computers and cell phones worldwide.

I asked how the university benefitted from this research. Dr. Assanis' answer did not please me.

The university does not receive any residuals from this discovery.



President Assanis told the JFC that the university received \$1 million as a result of this research, but should have received \$1 billion.

Dr. Assanis was not the university's president at the time of that development.

He said one of his priorities is to make sure the university is aware of the importance of obtaining patents on their research.

Did Delaware get short-changed \$999 million by not protecting its intellectual property?

Taxpayers are asked to invest in our institutions of higher learning, and I agree this is money well spent, as long as our state benefits from breakthroughs.

I'm working to make sure no more billion-dollar opportunities go unprotected.

A poll last year by
The New York Times
found that 79% of
Americans believe
men should be barred
from competing in
women's sports.

Fairness in Women's Sports bills never make it out of committee

I've been trying for three General Assembly sessions to pass a Fairness in Girls' Sports Act.

A poll last year by The New York Times found that 79% of Americans believe men should be barred from competing in women's sports.

The breakdown includes 94% of Republican respondents, 64% of Independent voters and 67% of Democrats.

With such a high percentage of citizens in favor of barring males from competing in women's sports, you have to wonder why this would not persuade elected officials to act.

This tells me that those elected officials are not persuaded by the majority of their constituents, but by something or someone else.

I do not understand the mindset that fails to protect girls' sports when the inclusion of males in women's sports harms female athletes by:

- Decreasing the chances of female athletic success

I'm watching you

One of those testifying online made it apparent that he was watching me. He named two of my grandchildren.

At the end of the hearing, I made it clear that anyone who had a problem with any legislation I was sponsoring should come after me, but leave my family out of it.

Debate is good. Bringing someone's family into the discussion for God only knows what reason crosses the line.

- Taking away roster spots, and playing time
- The loss of the very few scholarships available for female athletes
- Increased chances of injuries in some sports

Add to that list the humiliation girls face having to undress to change in locker rooms with biologically intact males and to share bathroom facilities.

Elected officials with daugh-

ters, grand daughters and sisters should especially be sensitive to wanting to protect their privacy.

A majority of signatures is needed for a bill to be released from committee.

In the seven-member Senate Education Committee four signatures are needed.

Republicans Eric Buckson and Dave Lawson are co-sponsors of SB 215.

The signatures of two Democrats are needed.

The Democrats on the committee are Senators Laura Sturgeon, Elizabeth Lockman, Stephanie Hansen, Nicole Poore and David P. Sokola.

I hope voters will contact these senators and urge them to allow SB 215 out of committee for a full vote on the Senate floor.

Their emails are listed on my website, richardsonsenate.com. Go to the "News" section and find their emails under the Fairness in Girls' Sports Act.

The resolution simply pointed out the benefits of families. Are we no longer allowed to examine the impact of family structure on the stability of society?

The Dissolution of the Family and the Woeful Consequences

In June 2024, I introduced Senate Concurrent Resolution 206 that would establish the Delaware Restoring the Family Unit Task Force.

The purpose of the Task Force was to examine changes in laws and practices that could act to benefit family unity and consequently our state.

Joining me in advocating for the task force were Representatives Danny Short, Tim Dukes, Jeff Hilovsky, Ron Gray, Charles Postles, Michael Smith and Lyndon Yearick, and Senators Dave Lawson, Eric Buckson, Dave Wilson, Gerald Hocker and Brian Pettyjohn.

The six Republican senators voted for the resolution. Twelve of the 15 Democrat senators voted no, one went not voting and two were absent for the vote.

Those in opposition brought up information stating that gay couples were fully capable of raising children in a supportive environment.

To me this seemed odd, since the resolution was not

Tragic loss of life

The discussion about the task force is of particular interest in Laurel.

The tragic deaths of four young people in Laurel in just over a year was the impetus for this action.

Laurel residents are looking for answers.

They want a safe community where they don't have to worry about losing another youth to violence.

critical of non-traditional families, but simply pointed out the benefits of traditional families to children and society.

The Restoring the Family Unit Task Force would have examined the impact the following policies have on families:

- * Delaware tax policies
- * Delaware welfare policies
- * Delaware education policies
- * Delaware recidivism policies

Why the recidivism policies? What I feel is important is helping young men and women avoid serving time in prison.

Young men in particular are needed in their families, providing discipline and guidance.

Providing instructions and incentives for young men to take on the responsibilities of a family will give them purpose.

Instead of occupying a jail cell, they will be fulfilling the important role as provider.

Their children will benefit, and society will benefit.

I want to see children have every opportunity to succeed, and to have the opportunity to grow up in a society that is safe.

Having a dialog is tantamount to understanding and taking steps to improving conditions in Delaware.

Discussion has started on forming a Family Caucus to examine ways our state can benefit from strong families.

On WBOC-TV news, State Representative DeShanna Neal was shown with one of her children, whom she said transitioned at age four.

Decision from the SCOTUS triggers governor's "Order"

The Supreme Court decision in *U.S. v. Skrmetti*, upholding Tennessee's law banning gender-affirming care for minors, is a victory for the protection of children's health and for the role of states in safeguarding young people.

Great news, right?

Not in Delaware, where our governor, Matt Meyer, took it upon himself to sign an executive order that "...adds further protections for gender-affirming care providers and patients."

My question is: If gender-affirming care is such an acceptable practice, why would the providers need protections?

On the news coverage by WBOC-TV, state Representative DeShanna Neal was shown with one of her four children whom she said transitioned at age four.

Yes, age four.

On her official House profile page, Representative DeShanna Neal includes the following information:

Legal liability

Governor Meyer's executive order in part emphasizes the following:

- Delaware law does not currently provide explicit legal protections to healthcare providers offering gender-affirming care.
- It is imperative to reinforce and expand these protections to ensure that individuals providing or seeking gender-affirming care in Delaware are not subjected to legal liability or professional sanctions.

"DeShanna Neal is a mother of four, an activist for social justice reform, and an author. "They" have recently become the first non-binary elected official in Delaware. DeShanna and their oldest child, Trinity, became public figures back in 2016 after news about their battle with Medicaid to cover Trinity's gender-affirming care, got around."

By affirming that Tennessee and other states with similar laws have the authority to regulate irreversible puberty blockers and hormone treatments for minors, the Court recognizes that these deeply personal and life-altering medical decisions should be made with the utmost care and only when an individual is an adult capable of making such choices.

The SCOTUS ruling sides with parents to ensure that minors receive appropriate care that supports their long-term well-being.

More than 20 U.S. states have banned or severely limited treatment to align a young person's body with their gender identity, according to the Association of American Medical Colleges.

Others report that number may be as high as 27.

In March, Senate Bill 55, known as the SAFE Act (Save Adolescents From Experimentation) was introduced. See more on page 19 about the current status of this proposed bill.

Almost everyone in my life advised me to keep my head down. But I cannot in good conscience do so. What is happening to scores of children is morally and medically appalling.

Jamie Reed, whistleblower

SAFE Act would protect children from experimental procedures

A hearing for Senate Bill 55, known as the SAFE Act (Save Adolescents From Experimentation) was held on March 19, before the Senate Health & Social Services Committee.

The bill has not been released from committee and likely never will.

Senate Bill 55 would prohibit gender transition procedures for children due to the potential for irrevocable harm occurring when there is a significant probability that children will come to identify with their biological gender without such treatments.

As the bill's sponsor, I had three witnesses provide testimony remotely.

They were Jamie Reed of the Courage Coalition, a Pediatric Clinic whistleblower; Camille Kiefel, a detransitioner; and Dr. Christopher Casscells.

I found out later that another detransitioner was prepared to offer testimony.

Prisha Mosley had registered, was in the queue and had put her hand up to speak, but was not acknowledged.

Care suspended

Fortunately, for our youth, Nemours and Planned Parenthood by mid-2025 stopped certain so-called gender-affirming care practices.

President Trump's order to cut off funding for such care was given as the reason.

Apparently it took the threat of the loss of funding to persuade institutions to stop those practices.

So that makes one wonder, was it ever about helping children, or was it about the money?

What's interesting about the testimony of Jamie Reed is that she is a Democrat, is a self-proclaimed liberal and is married to a transman.

In 2018 Jamie worked as a case manager at The Washington University Transgender Center at the St. Louis Children's Hospital.

"By the time I departed, I was certain that the way the American medical system is treating these patients is the opposite of the promise we

make to 'do no harm.' Instead, we [were] permanently harming the patients in our care.

"I left the clinic in November of last year (2024) because I could no longer participate in what was happening there," Jamie wrote.

In an article Jamie authored, she said the center's working assumption was that the earlier you treat kids with gender dysphoria, the more anguish you can prevent later on.

Studies show an overwhelming majority of children who are gender nonconforming or experience difficulty identifying with their birth sex come to identify with their biological sex in adolescence or adulthood, rendering most interventions unnecessary.

In her writings about being a whistleblower, Jamie Reed ends with this warning:

"The doctors I worked alongside at the Transgender Center said frequently about the treatment of our patients, 'We are building the plane while we are flying it.'

"No one should be a passenger on that kind of aircraft."

It is our responsibility
in Delaware to know
more about who is being
elected as lawmakers
at the federal level, and
how they are voting on
the issues.

Laken Riley Act opposed by our state's delegation

In addition to carefully observing what is taking place in Dover, voters should be aware of what their elected officials are doing in Washington, D.C.

With bipartisan support, the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate passed House Resolution 29, the Laken Riley Act in January 2025.

Sadly, the bipartisan effort did not receive any support from Delaware Senators Chris Coons and Lisa Blunt Rochester or U.S. Representative Sara McBride.

The Laken Riley Act requires the detention, without bond, of non-citizens admitting to, charged with, or convicted of theft-related crimes, assaulting a police officer, or a crime that results in death or serious bodily injury, such as drunk driving.

The votes of our senators and representative suggest a disregard for public safety, as the bill directly addresses the need to protect our communities from individuals who have shown they are willing to break our laws.



The United States Capital in Washington, DC. Photo by JamesDeMers

On February 22, 2024, Laken Riley, a 22-year-old Augusta University nursing student, was murdered while jogging at the University of Georgia in Athens.

Her assailant, José Antonio Ibarra, a 26-year-old Venezuelan, had entered the United States illegally.

When Riley fought back against her attacker, he repeatedly bashed her skull in with a rock.

Ibarra was sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole.

On another note

There's a video of Rep. McBride reading a book to kindergarteners about choosing one's gender.

Many children at that age need help tying their shoes.

They should not be exposed to this dangerous ideology.

Increasing the debt limit is NOT a solution. It's an admission by members of Congress they are incapable of managing the federal government in a responsible manner.

Article V was the safeguard against unstable government

The national debt at the time of this writing in late May 2026 was nearly \$39.2 trillion.

The average share of the debt per taxpayer was \$355,963.

Two to three trillion dollars have been added to the debt annually in recent years.

Does anyone think this rate of increase is not a problem?

Ask members of Congress this question.

A few years ago U.S. Senator Chris Coons of Delaware introduced legislation to repeal the debt ceiling. A press release he issued at the time said in part:

"The time has come for Congress to eliminate the debt ceiling. Debt limit showdowns have become far too routine, and it's now considered almost normal to threaten default. That must change."

If this is the type of logic allowed to advance, what

COS Resolution

In early 2026 Senate Concurrent Resolution 114 was brought before the Senate.

Minority Leader Tim Dukes was the prime sponsor of SCR 114 in the House. Others on board as co-sponsors were Senator David Wilson and Representative Jeff Hilovsky.

The resolution did not make it over to the House. It was defeated in the Senate by a vote of 7 yes, 7 no and 7 not voting.

The only Democrat to vote yes was Stephany Hansen of Middletown.

hope is there for the future of our nation?

The debt is not seen by Congress or the Administration as being a threat to our way of life. It is.

Want proof? Consider the fact that the Debt Ceiling has been raised 90 times in the past few decades.

Do we take a risk with a COS under Article V? Perhaps, but how much more

unbearable and overpowering does our federal government become before we take action?

Washington will not fix itself. Here are some questions to think about:

- What happens to middle class America when a crisis is declared?
- What freedoms will we be asked to sacrifice to ensure our security?

Congress members have shown us repeatedly that they do not have the will to correct the problem of spending more money than is supported by revenues.

I agree wholeheartedly with the COS opponents that we already have an excellent Constitution.

Sadly, we do not have enough members of Congress willing to put the interests of protecting and preserving our Republic above their own self interests.

The founders knew this and included the Article V provision in the Constitution.

**Parents who complain
will be reminded
that HB 119 specifies
that “library material
should not be removed
because of partisan,
ideological, or religious
disapproval.”**

Library controversy centers on who decides “allowable materials”

House Bill 119, a bill dictating to libraries, passed in the House and the Senate, mostly along party lines.

HB 119 states that library material should not be “...excluded, removed, or prohibited from a catalogue because of the origin, background, or views of those who created the material.”

It further states, “...material should not be excluded, removed, or prohibited from a library because of partisan, ideological, or religious disapproval.”

HB 119 includes similar requirements for school libraries.

An appeal of a decision determining whether library material may remain in the school library may be made to the board of the local education agency.

So, if a parent objects to material in a school library, they may seek its removal.

If they don't like the decision of the local school board, they may appeal to the School Library Review

School Library Review members

- The President of the School Chiefs' Association
- The State Librarian
- The Secretary of the Department of Education
- The President of the Delaware State Education Association
- The President of the Association of School Administrators
- The President of the Delaware Association of School Librarians
- The President of the Delaware Library Association

Committee, created under HB 119.

Organized efforts exist to place material in school libraries that parents could very well find objectionable.

One such effort is from GLSEN (formerly the Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network).

GLSEN works to promote “...cultural inclusion and awareness in K-12 schools.”

It boasts to be in schools in the majority of states.

The American Library Association announced on July 25, 2025 that Sam Helmick, (they, them) is the 2024–2025 president-elect.

(They/them pronouns are used to refer to someone without specifying their gender. When a person uses they/them pronouns, it means you should refer to them using those pronouns instead of gendered ones like he or she.)

Helmick seems the perfect choice to promote the K-12 activities of GLSEN.

My hope is local school boards are not allowing what parents may find objectionable into the K-12 libraries to begin with.

Regrettably, school board members may find they are standing in the way of organized efforts to force them to accept materials they find to be in poor taste.

Being inclusionary does not mean you have to abandon all community standards.

With socialism, incentives for free enterprise suffer, as do the benefits to consumers. Do you want to choose the type of car you will drive, or have the government decide for you?

Socialism vs capitalism in education, a crucial lesson

According to a 2025 Cato-YouGov survey, 62 percent of American adults under 30 say they hold favorable views of socialism.

This makes you wonder about what is being taught to our students in the public school system.

While many in our society refer to our system as capitalism, I prefer the phrase “free enterprise.”

In a free enterprise system, ideas are tested in the marketplace.

Good ideas succeed. Bad ideas fail.

Also, in a free enterprise system, commodities or products improve over time.

Those who bring ideas to the marketplace are aware that if they do not build that “better mousetrap,” so to speak, they will lose out to other entrepreneurs who realize the value of continuous improvement.

There is a strong incentive to produce the best television, the best automobile,

How to succeed

Our young people need to know the principles that lead to gaining independence.

- 1 Earn a diploma**
- 2 Start working**
- 3 Wait until marriage to have children**

Almost anyone can enjoy at least a middle class quality of life by following these three steps.

the best video game, the best computer, the best cell phone, the best delivery system and so on.

That is how people of ordinary means gain access to materials to improve their lives.

Consumers benefit greatly from this competition.

When power is concentrated in the government, incentives for individual enterprise suffer, as do the benefits to consumers.

Those who work hard, pursue advanced education or pursue learning in the trades, employ their ingenuity and risk their capital have an expectation to do significantly better than those who do not.

Socialism takes away this incentive to improve your life and to benefit from the rewards of hard work. In government ideas that are not working receive additional funding.

Socialists think socialism will work if the “right people” are in charge.

Those “right people” do not exist.

That’s why the failed ideas of Marx and Lenin will never work.

They have been tried with disastrous results. Look at history.

Socialism says things should be given to you because you exist.

The free enterprise system says you work hard and you benefit from your labor.

HB 31 did not originate because women were concerned that the abortionist might be charged if someone dies as the result of a poorly performed abortion.

Let's stop pretending this is about the rights of women

Let's stop pretending that the changes in abortion laws are about protecting women's health.

In the 151st General Assembly, House Bill 31 was passed. That bill increased the risks to women seeking abortions.

Before HB 31, Delaware law said this: "A person who commits upon a female an abortion which causes her death, unless such abortion is a therapeutic abortion and the death is not the result of reckless conduct, shall be guilty of manslaughter."

Was HB 31 demanded by women who feared their abortionist might be charged if they died from a botched procedure?

Or was it designed to shield abortion providers from accountability?

Would not the risk of facing charges help influence the abortionist to provide the safest services?

On the other hand, is it not possible that removing this risk makes it less likely that

Informed choice

Courts have ruled that, as the patient must bear the expense, pain, and suffering of any injury from medical treatment, a patient's right to know all material facts pertaining to the proposed treatment cannot be dependent upon the standards of the medical profession.

Women should have the right to see an ultrasound before making this important decision.

adequate precautions will be provided to protect the woman's life?

In March of this year I introduced for the third time a Woman's Right to Know Ultrasound Act to ensure that every woman considering an abortion receives complete information on the reality and status of her pregnancy and of her unborn child through ultrasound imaging and auscultation of fetal heart tone services.

The Act ensures that any woman considering an abortion will receive complete information on the reality and status of her pregnancy.

A woman will be able to see and hear the development of her unborn child through ultrasound imaging and auscultation of fetal heart tone services.

Minority Leader Tim Dukes of Laurel is the prime sponsor in the House.

When will the rights of women include an opportunity to make an informed choice?

Can you really call it reproductive health care when the emphasis is on abortion?

Too often women are told that children are an encumbrance to their chances for leading a productive life.

The opposite is true. Having your own child gives your life purpose.

Real reproductive health care would encourage women to deliver healthy babies and would protect women from risky procedures.

Legislation does not solve problems created by a culture that is in decline. We have to revive our culture, starting with families and individuals, then our laws will have more meaning and will be less necessary at the same time.

Senator Bryant Richardson