



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Press Release No. 2022-04

Berks County Republican Committee Believes a Competitive Primary Will Benefit Republicans in State House 124

Apr. 23, 2022, Leesport, Pa.—The Berks County Republican Committee (BCRC) held its annual Endorsement Convention. Members of the Convention from Legislative District 124 deadlocked — 50% to 50% — whether to endorse for State Representative. As a result, no endorsement was had for any of the three contenders seeking to replace State Representative Jerry Knowles.

Before voting occurred, members of the April 23rd Convention heard speeches from all three candidates, Jamie Barton of East Brunswick Township, Ellen (“Elle”) Rulavage of Windsor Township, and Jill Saunders of Hamburg Borough.

“I am not surprised by this outcome because many members in the BCRC believe competitive primaries are healthy for our Party by ensuring our candidates will work hard within the community,” said Chair Clay Breece, “Barton, Saunders, and Rulavage are running spirited campaigns for this seat in the State House. The sense among our members in that district was this—let’s sit back and see what happens. Let the best candidate win!”

On Jan. 20th, incumbent Jerry Knowles announced his retirement.

“Whoever wins this Primary better heed my advice: You cannot take for granted the 124th because it is roughly 58% Republican—we expect a fighter out of that district,” Breece said, “Despite many years of faithful service, we believe Jerry Knowles retired on account of his foolish decision to have voted for Act 77, which created unconstitutional ‘no fault’ mail-in voting and gave the presidency to Joe Biden.”

“To my knowledge, Jerry Knowles was our only member in the State House who had the courage and honesty to apologize to the Berks County Republican Committee for voting for Act 77,” Breece said, “And the rest of our delegation should follow that example instead of giving poor excuses. And start problem-solving. Quickly.”

Breece mentioned several lost opportunities which caused all three candidates to lose any consensus among BCRC members in District 124.

“Jamie Barton has a lot of things going for him, but he started out campaigning on his resume instead of telling us what he would actually do if he was sent to Harrisburg,” Breece said, “If supporting the right issues, someone with no experience can do a good job in a legislative

position than the ‘experienced’ politicians. Barton needs to understand that or else a well-funded candidate from Schuylkill County could have clobbered him.”

Breece added that Barton made-up for that in his speech before the Convention.

Rulavage—a BCRC Committeewoman from Windsor Township—could have cashed-in on her relationships with BCRC members, Breece said. But legislative reapportionment took away that advantage by adding seven precincts and removing two precincts from the district. “The insanely short election calendar made it hard for the new members in that district to get to know Elle the way many of us did, including myself.”

Rulavage formed her candidate’s committee on March 21st, whereas Saunders started February 7th and Barton on February 22nd.

Breece said. “Jill Saunders is young and has a bright future. As far as I can tell, her only disadvantage for the endorsement was that she didn’t have a prior relationship with the BCRC before this year. That can change going forward.”

Legislative District 124.

Legislative District 124 is comprised of portions of Schuylkill and Berks counties. The following municipalities are from Berks County:

Albany Township
Greenwich Township
Hamburg Borough
Kutztown Borough
Lenhartsville Borough
Maxatawny Township
Tilden Township
Upper Bern Township
Upper Tulpehocken Township
Windsor Township

Supermajority Rules for Endorsements.

The Bylaws of the BCRC require a candidate to receive at least 60% of the vote by members who are constituents of the office being sought. The top two vote-getters on the First Ballot proceed to a successive ballot. If no candidate receives 60% by the Third Ballot, then the top two vote-getters are deemed to be “recommended” by the BCRC.

Related Press Releases.

Berks County Republican Committee Endorses Barnette for U.S. Senate, Mastriano for Governor, Saccone for Lt. Governor, Press Release No. 2022-01 (Apr. 25, 2022).

Berks County Republican Committee Endorses David Golowski for State Representative over Incumbent Barry Jozwiak, Press Release No. 2022-02 (Apr. 25, 2022).

For Congress, Berks County Republican Committee Recommends Regina Mauro and Ron Vogel, Endorses Dan Burton and Dan Meuser, Press Release No. 2022-03 (Apr. 25, 2022).

Berks County Republican Committee Endorses Tracy Pennycuick and Chris Gebhard for State Senate, Press Release No. 2022-05 (Apr. 25, 2022).

State House Challengers Enjoy Unanimous Support from Berks County Republican Committee, Press Release No. 2022-06 (Apr. 25, 2022).

Fact Sheet on Endorsements.

Public Office	Candidates	Outcome
U.S. Senate	Kathy Barnette Jeff Bartos George Bochetto Sean Gale David McCormick Mehmet Oz Carla Sands	Barnette is endorsed on the Second Ballot.
Governor	Lou Barletta Jake Corman Joe Gale Charlie Gerow Melissa Hart Doug Mastriano Bill McSwain David White Nche Zama	Mastriano is endorsed on the Second Ballot.
Lt. Governor	John Brown Jeff Coleman Teddy Daniels Carrie DelRosso	Saccone is endorsed on the Second Ballot.

	Russell Diamond Chris Frye James Jones Rick Saccone Clarice Schillinger	
U.S. Representative, Congressional District 4	Dan Burton Christian Nascimento	Burton is endorsed on the First Ballot.
U.S. Representative, Congressional District 6	Guy Ciarrocchi Steve Fanelli Regina Mauro Ron Vogel	Mauro and Vogel are recommended after the Third Ballot.
U.S. Representative, Congressional District 9	Dan Meuser (i)	Unanimously endorsed.
State Senate, District 24	David Moyer Tracy Pennycuick	Tracy Pennycuick is endorsed on the First Ballot.
State Senate, District 48	Chris Gebhard (i)	Unanimously endorsed.
State Representative, District 5	Barry Jozwiak (i) David Golowski	Golowski is endorsed on the First Ballot.
State Representative, District 99	David Zimmerman (i)	Unanimously endorsed.
State Representative, District 124	James Barton Ellen Rulavage Jill Saunders	No endorsement is made.
State Representative, District 126	James Oswald	Unanimously endorsed.
State Representative, District 127	Vincent Gagliardo	Unanimously endorsed.
State Representative, District 128	Mark Gillen (i)	Unanimously endorsed.
State Representative, District 129	Barry Llewellyn	Unanimously endorsed.
State Representative, District 130	David Maloney (i)	Unanimously endorsed.
Note: (i) means incumbent.		

Party Office Endorsements.

The BCRC endorsed the following candidates as the Berks County delegation in the Republican State Committee of Pennsylvania:

Annette Baker
Linda Brancadora
Kelly Lee Held
Donna Merritt
Lisha Rowe
John Fielding
Shawn Gamble
Dean Klopp
Dwight Wegman
John Wojcik

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