

PA STATE HOUSE DISTRICT 19

Pennsylvania's 19th State House District includes Pittsburgh city neighborhoods of Downtown, Hill District, Uptown, South Oakland, Hazelwood, Allentown, Beltzhoover, and parts of South Side. Also includes North Side neighborhoods of Marshall-Shadeland, California-Kirkbride, Perry South, Fineview, Central North Side, Manchester, Chateau, Deutschtown, Allegheny Center, Allegheny West, and North Shore. State Rep. Jake Wheatley is the incumbent in this race.

BY RYAN DETO



AERION ABNEY



JAKE WHEATLEY

BIOGRAPHY

A native of Philadelphia, Abney earned a master's degree from the University of Pittsburgh. Currently works as a voting-rights advocate. Has also worked for local Pittsburgh foundations and sits on boards of local organizations focused on advancing rights of people of color. Abney lives on the North Side with his wife and their newborn son.

A Detroit native, Wheatley has served in the State House since 2003. A decorated Marine veteran of the Gulf War. Earned a master's degree from the University of Pittsburgh. Serves on several Pittsburgh boards, including the Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership. Wheatley lives in the Hill District.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Supports housing and development strategies that will improve neighborhoods without pushing community members out due to economic conditions. Backs anti-displacement policies and wants to ensure residents are able to participate in the development planning process. Supports raising minimum wage to \$15 an hour.

His recreational marijuana bill proposes some revenue generated should go directly to affordable housing. Supports raising the minimum wage to \$15 an hour. Helped secure a \$400,000 state grant for the Manchester Citizens Corporation Renaissance Housing Project in the North Side.

RECREATIONAL MARIJUANA

Supports full legalization of marijuana "when done in a pragmatic and equitable way" and believes rules should be set in place so that the marketplace is "not dominated by the companies that have the resources to lobby legislators to pass the laws." Also supports the exoneration and expungements of those with marijuana-released convictions.

Introduced bills to legalize recreational marijuana in 2017-18 and 2019-20 legislative sessions. Those efforts seek to expunge the records for people charged with non-violent, cannabis-related offenses. Supports a state recreational marijuana program that also creates funds to invest into disadvantaged communities. Says recreational and medical marijuana programs must lift up Black communities.

RENEWABLE ENERGY

Pushing for reinvestment of the Department of Environmental Protection and developing ways to "use water, wind, and other renewable energy." Decries the disproportionate air and water pollution that affects Black communities, and wants to "establish community health equity zones to eliminate the vast health disparities in our communities."

Deemed a House Environmental champion 100% record from Conservation Voters of Pennsylvania. A co-sponsor of House Bill 1425, a bill to transition Pennsylvania to 100% renewable energy by 2050. Has backed Gov. Wolf's efforts to create a severance tax on natural-gas drillers.

FRIENDS AND SUPPORTERS

Co-endorsed by the Gertrude Stein Political Club, Allegheny County Councilor Liv Bennett (D-North Side), Pittsburgh Public Schools school board director Kevin Carter, Allegheny County Councilor Bethany Hallam (D-Ross).

Allegheny County Democratic Committee, Pennsylvania AFL-CIO, Steel City Stonewall Democrats, Planned Parenthood PA, co-endorsed by Gertrude Stein Political Club, Pennsylvania Conference of Teamsters, UFCW Local 1776, United Mine Workers.