

# PENNSYLVANIA STATE HOUSE DISTRICT 24

District 24 is a majority-Black district that includes parts of several city neighborhoods and eastern suburbs including East Liberty, Highland Park, Homewood, Wilkinsburg, and East Hills. It is currently represented by incumbent Martell Covington, who won the April 5 special election to serve remaining term of former Rep. Ed Gainey after he stepped down to serve as mayor.

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**MARTELL COVINGTON**



**LA'TASHA D. MAYES**



**RANDALL TAYLOR**

## BIOGRAPHY

Born and raised in Homewood. Incumbent candidate. Currently serves as vice president of the Young Democrats of Allegheny County. Previously worked as an aide to state Sen. Jay Costa. Active in a number of Democratic causes and community efforts.

Morningside resident. Founder and executive director of New Voices for Reproductive Justice, an organization focused on reproductive justice for Black women and girls. Nationally-recognized leader in reproductive justice and human rights. Previously served as inaugural Allegheny County Human Relations Commission vice-chair and president of the Urban League Young Professionals of Greater Pittsburgh.

Homewood resident. Former resident of now-demolished Penn Plaza. Affordable housing advocate. Previously served on board of Pittsburgh Public Schools. Former hospital worker. Told 1Hood his life's mission is to work for Black liberation.

## HOUSING

Wrote that he would prioritize "a deliberate focus on affordable housing."

Believes neighborhoods thrive with access to safe, affordable housing. Concerned about displacement of Black residents from the district, and that Black and poor communities are disproportionately exposed to pollution and toxic waste.

Wrote that he will prioritize "ensur[ing] that all our people can afford to rent or buy homes in this City, if they desire." Wants to create pathways to home ownership for renters, like tenant-owned co-ops. Organizer with the Penn Plaza Support and Action Committee, says he helped 23 displaced people find new homes in East Liberty after 2015 evictions.

## VOTING RIGHTS

Told *CP* he believes voting rights are a core issue across all neighborhoods in the district. Plans to cosponsor existing legislation that would create more ballot drop locations, permit same-day registration, and continue to allow for early voting.

Website says she has mobilized voters in this district since 2004 and believes that "vote by mail, early-in person voting, satellite voting locations, drop boxes, and fair redistricting increase access to the ballot."

Told 1Hood that he believes in communities' right to self-determination, saying "I'm extremely concerned about the right to vote." Wrote he supports legislating against "any and all" voter suppression and intimidation, making Election Day a holiday or moving it to Saturdays, and expanding access to mail-in and early voting.

## PUBLIC SAFETY

Supports gun laws, including those that can block a person in crisis from buying a gun. Wants to encourage gun ownership among women and other marginalized groups and "alternative 911" resources for mental health crises, according to platform. Wants to end "death by incarceration" and the death penalty and "produce legislation to upend the school to prison pipeline."

Wants to reduce gun, gender-based, anti-LGBTQ, and police violence, plus "find alternatives to policing our communities," according to platform. Wants to address root causes of violence — poverty and oppression, including wanting to "explore guaranteed basic income [and] pass expanded Human Relations legislation."

Told 1Hood, "Let's begin to question how much money we're spending on police. If they can prove they need more money for policing, then we should spend more." Supports universal background checks, banning automatic weapons, and allowing cities and counties to make their own gun laws through home rule.

## ENDORSEMENTS

Allegheny County Democratic Committee, Pennsylvania AFL-CIO, etc.

Pittsburgh Federation of Teachers, Planned Parenthood Pennsylvania PAC, the Sunrise Movement, etc.

WESA reports he has been endorsed by previous school board members.