

Pennsylvania Gubernatorial Primary Election
Tuesday, May 17, 2022

American humorist Will Rodgers famously said, “I am not a member of any organized political party. I am a Democrat.” Pennsylvania’s 2022 gubernatorial primary seems to prove that statement wrong. State Attorney General Josh Shapiro has a clear path to the Democratic nomination on Tuesday, May 17. He has no primary challenger. The Democrats seem to be well organized in this particular election.

By contrast, the Republican nominating contest boasts a bevy of eight candidates with less than one week before the election. In addition, the Republican State Committee declined to endorse any candidate when they met in the late winter. Party elders recently attempted to narrow the field, but only one candidate, state Senate President Pro Tempore Jake Corman, dropped out of the race as a result. In 2022, the GOP seems to be far less organized than their counterparts.

At this juncture, Franklin County’s State Senator Doug Mastriano leads the pack. Former upstate Congressman Lou Barletta holds the second place spot in most polling data. These two candidates have consistently led in the voter surveys despite airing few or no television ads. Their name recognition and appeal to different sectors of the Republican electorate have kept them on top, with Mastriano enjoying an increasing advantage as election day draws near.

To aid PAOrtho members, the OrthoPAC Committee is providing this election overview. The OrthoPAC is specifically not endorsing any primary election gubernatorial candidate. In fact, only one candidate, Nche Zama, MD, has published a healthcare policy statement for public review. Without more specific candidate healthcare policy information, the OrthoPAC Committee cannot recommend any of the remaining primary contestants.

With that stated, the OrthoPAC Committee hopes this information is helpful. The candidates are presented in alphabetic order:

Republicans

- **Lou Barletta**, Hazleton, Luzerne County. Former U.S. Representative.
 - Barletta started his political career as a Hazleton City Council member in 1998. He was elected mayor in 2000 and made a national name for himself by enacting city ordinances to prohibit housing rental leases to undocumented immigrants. In 2010, Barletta parlayed his fame into a congressional seat. He served eight years in the U.S. House of Representatives.
 - [Home | Lou Barletta](#)
- **Joe Gale**, Plymouth Meeting, Montgomery County. Current county commissioner.
 - Gale was elected Montgomery County Commissioner in 2015 with virtually no political experience. He labels himself an outsider and does not consider the Pennsylvania Republican Party conservative enough. On the political continuum, he is definitely far right.
 - [JOE GALE .COM - Governor](#)

- **Charlie Gerow**, Hampden Township, Cumberland County. Republican strategist and consultant.
 - Born in Brazil, Gerow was adopted by American missionaries and has essentially lived his entire life in the USA. A Republican political strategist, he began his career on Ronald Reagan’s presidential campaign staff. Since then, Gerow has worked as a lobbyist and consultant, owning his own firm. He is currently the vice-chairman of the American Conservative Union, which hosts the annual Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC).
 - [Charlie Gerow for Governor of Pennsylvania - From The People. For The People. \(charlieforgovernor.com\)](http://charlieforgovernor.com)
- **Melissa Hart**, Bradford Woods, Allegheny County. Attorney and former U.S. Representative.
 - Hart first served Allegheny County as a state Senator in the 1990s and next as a member of Congress in early 2000s. She touts those electoral successes in majority Democratic districts as evidence of her electability in the fall. An attorney, Hart has worked the past 14 years for a Pittsburgh-based law firm.
 - [Home | Melissa Hart For Governor | Pennsylvania \(hartforpa.org\)](http://hartforpa.org)
- **Doug Mastriano**, Chambersburg, Franklin County. State Senator.
 - A retired Army colonel, Mastriano has served in the state Senate since 2019. He has been an outspoken critic of the Wolf administration’s response to the covid pandemic. Mastriano is a Donald Trump supporter; sponsored two busloads for people to accompany him in Washington, D.C. on January 6, 2021; and has been subpoenaed to appear before the congressional January 6 investigative committee. His Pennsylvania and national supporters are legion. He consistently has been the GOP frontrunner throughout the primary campaign.
 - [Home | Doug Mastriano for Governor \(doug4gov.com\)](http://doug4gov.com)
- **Bill McSwain**, West Chester, Chester County. Former U.S. Attorney.
 - McSwain is a former Trump-appointed U.S. Attorney in Philadelphia. He has the traditional GOP platform of stimulating the economy and energy production; improving access to education through School Choice; limiting access to abortion; dealing with the opioid epidemic; and returning to law and order. Donald Trump singled out McSwain as the candidate Trump supporters should vote against.
 - [Bill McSwain for Governor](http://billmcswain.com)
- **Dave White**, Ridley Township, Delaware County. HVAC business owner.
 - White is a former Ridley Township Supervisor and Delaware County Council member. He owns and operates a very successful HVAC company. White is a union steamfitter by trade and he is leveraging his blue collar roots and business success to prove he is the only political outsider with real world experience.
 - [Dave White For Governor](http://davewhite.com)
- **Nche Zama**, MD, Wind Gap, Northampton County. Heart surgeon.
 - Zama is a cardiothoracic surgeon who lives in the Poconos. Although he has no political experience, Zama believes his independence from the political establishment will distinguish him from the other candidates. He is the only GOP candidate with a published healthcare policy.
 - [Zama for PA](http://nchezama.com)

Polling: Since the beginning of May, Senator Mastriano’s polling lead has risen by more than 2%. The Real Clear Politics average of polls shows his advantage at 10.4% as of May 8. Approximately one-third of GOP voters polled are undecided heading into the primary’s last weekend.

Source: [Real Clear Politics](#)

Polling Data												
Poll	Date	Sample	MoE	Mastriano	Barletta	McSwain	White	Corman	Hart	Gale	Gerow	Spread
RCP Average	4/20 - 5/8	--	--	25.7	15.3	13.0	11.3	3.7	3.3	2.0	1.3	Mastriano +10.4
Trafalgar Group (R)	5/6 - 5/8	1080 LV	3.0	28	18	14	15	5	4	3	2	Mastriano +10
FOX News	5/3 - 5/7	1001 RV	3.0	29	17	13	11	5	4	2	1	Mastriano +12
Franklin & Marshall	4/20 - 5/1	325 RV	6.9	20	11	12	8	1	2	1	1	Mastriano +8

Health Care Positions:

Issues other than healthcare have overshadowed the GOP primary election thus far. Heading into the campaign’s final weekend, only Dr. Zama has published a healthcare policy position. In summary, Dr. Zama noted he remains concerned about the immediate and long-term consequences of the pandemic. If elected, he would establish a team to develop preemptive strategies to deal with future infections and pandemics. Further noting that Pennsylvania has some of the best health care institutions and providers in the world, Dr. Zama would strive to continue to promote and enhance the healthcare system. Finally, his website states that he will focus on the opioid addiction crisis and mental health. Please access his website via the link above if you wish to read his full statement.