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## ELECTION INFORMATION YOU NEED

The **League of Women Voters Education Fund** asked candidates to answer questions about policies and issues important to the future of Indiana. The answers included here are verbatim from the [www.vote411.org](http://www.vote411.org) website for Indiana House District 5. For readability and comparison purposes each candidate's responses were put into this format. Dale Devon will be Dr. Don Westerhausen's opponent in November 2018.

<p><b>Don Westerhausen – Democrat</b> Physician – Interventional Cardiologist</p> <p><b>Education</b> BS Secondary Education and Biology-Northwestern University 1981; MD-Univ. of Minnesota 1985; General Cardiology Fellowship-Washington University of St. Louis 1992; Interventional Cardiology Fellowship-Mid America Heart Institute Kansas City 1993.</p> <p><b>Occupation/Current Position</b> Presently employed by Beacon Medical Group as a general and interventional cardiologist at Elkhart General Hospital.</p> <p><b>Email Address</b> DrDon@VoteWesterhausen.com</p> <p><b>Mailing Address</b> 52346 Spring Arbor Court Granger, IN 46530</p> <p><b>Website</b> <a href="http://www.votewesterhausen.com">http://www.votewesterhausen.com</a></p> <p><b>Campaign Phone</b> (574) 400-5262</p> <p><b>Facebook</b> <a href="http://www.facebook.com/votewesterhausen">http://www.facebook.com/votewesterhausen</a></p> <p><b>Twitter</b> @votedoctorDon</p>	<p><b>Dale Devon – Republican</b> Home Builder</p> <p><b>Education</b> Graduated Clay high school 1976 Real estate school</p> <p><b>Occupation/Current Position</b> Home builder/ DeVon Builders State Representative District 5</p> <p><b>Email Address</b> dale@devoncustomhomes.com</p> <p><b>Mailing Address</b> 7508 Toscana ct Granger , Indiana 46530</p> <p><b>Campaign Phone</b> (574) 271-0686</p>
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**What is ONE bill you'd like to sponsor in the 2019 session of the General Assembly? Why this one?**

<p><b>Don Westerhausen:</b></p> <p>The one bill I would like to sponsor in the 2019 General Assembly is the formation of a nonpartisan commission to end gerrymandering and select federal and state political districts. Since a similar question is asked below, the second bill I would like to sponsor in 2019 is to mandate universal pre-K and Kindergarten education in Indiana. This would involve increasing public school funding to cover those age levels. This is important because Indiana must be up to the challenge of educating our children to compete in this century. Every single study on early education shows that educating this age group improves the child's ultimate cognitive and socio emotional gains. Many states and countries realize the advantage of early childhood education. Indiana must do the same.</p>	<p><b>Dale Devon:</b></p> <p>I believe one of our biggest problems in the USA and Indiana are kids having kids. I would love to have a serious study on this issue and look at ways to strengthen The family. I have been volunteering my time the last fifteen years at the Juvenile Detention Center spending time with these children and seeing the pain that it Causes is heart breaking plus the cost that it comes with to our state and nation.</p>
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**What do you think of the voucher system in Indiana? Has it increased or decreased educational quality and opportunity? What about charter schools?**

**Don Westerhausen:**

In 2011, the idea of vouchers was introduced as a way for individual students from low income families to access different schools if their public school wasn't meeting their needs. The policy made sense to many people. Since 2013, the program has expanded to give vouchers to students who've never attended public school, broadened income qualifications and the schools themselves are not required to meet the same standards as public schools or serve the same children. Our legislators have created an unfair playing field for public schools and then claim they aren't performing well by comparison. Public schools have been the great equalizer in American society. No matter who you are, what you look like, where you come from or what you start out knowing, public schools welcome children of all abilities to learn and discover their interests and talents.

**Dale Devon:**

I like giving parents a choice to choose a school that best fits their child's needs, some parents are not able to live in a school district based on their income. If a child is not doing well (because of failing grades or bullying or emotional needs) in their school where they live Vouchers allow them to go to a different school, giving them a chance to succeed. Charter schools are a public school and again give parents more choices.

**A legislative study committee will study school safety this summer. What are some specific policies they should consider as they put together a plan to protect Indiana's students?**

**Don Westerhausen:**

I believe the topics of school safety and gun violence are related. I would support increased funding to make schools safer with respect to bullet-resistant locks, bullet proof glass, and armed security guards. I would also support many of the positions advocated by Gabby Gifford's organization including the following: banning automatic weapons; regulating the sale of silencers; banning bump stocks; universal background checks including online, gun shows and private sales; prohibiting anyone convicted of stalking, domestic abuse and those on the federal terror watch lists or no fly lists from buying a gun; gun violence prevention policies, education and training; continued "red flag" policies that allow family members to seek court orders to temporarily remove firearms from loved ones who may be experiencing a crisis in an effort to prevent violence against others.

**Dale Devon:**

Indiana's is very proactive in school safety and St. Joseph county has a Safe School Commission that works very hard in conjunction with Department of Homeland Security. I believe that we need to work with our Law enforcement, school superintendents and teachers to continue to be proactive in keeping our children safe.

**Should the legalization of marijuana, for medical or recreational use, be decided by the states or by the federal government? What is your position on legalization?**

**Don Westerhausen:**

At this time, I do not believe that marijuana should be legalized for recreational use. I do believe that marijuana should be removed as a Federal Schedule I controlled substance. I also believe the Federal Government, through the National Institutes of Health (NIH), should facilitate grants for adequate well controlled trials of marijuana and related cannabinoids in patients with serious conditions for which pre-clinical, anecdotal, or controlled evidence suggest possible efficacy. In the meantime, I support states legalizing marijuana for medical use under strict guidelines such as treatment of nausea and vomiting during chemotherapy or for chronic pain patients addicted to opioids. Ultimately, we will need to distinguish potential benefits or harm from the whole, unprocessed marijuana plant or its basic extracts from benefits from specific cannabinoids or individual chemicals in the marijuana plant.

**Dale Devon**

I believe that the federal government should make the decision on all drugs like they do through the FDA

**This session, the chairman of a conference committee removed CBD oil language from a bill and replaced it with language to deregulate gun sales. Do you support the use of such “vehicle bills”? Critics note that they completely transform the nature (and topic) of a bill and have the effect of avoiding floor debate on the legislation put up for a vote?**

**Don Westerhausen:**

I do not support “vehicle bills”. Elected officials need to be transparent. They need to understand that open debate is good. There is no place for “vehicle bills” which transforms the nature of the bill in an attempt to avoid open debate. Full Stop!

**Dale Devon:**

There are a lot of moving parts through out every session. On average there are close to 1,000 bills that are filed every year. Many of those bills are similar to each other and get merged into one bill. I believe all issues should have public input.

**Some states are proposing free tuition for state colleges and universities. Do you support such an initiative, and, if so, how would you propose to PAY for it?**

**Don Westerhausen**

I support free or severely reduced tuition at state schools. With respect to funding, I support legislation such as the amendment put forth by State Rep. Ryan Dvorak (D-South Bend) to Senate Bill 50 which was empowered “to study all the recent proposals from other states that are designed to provide free or substantially reduced tuition to students

**Dale Devon**

I do not believe in complete free tuition I believe if people have investment in their education They will put more effort into there future. The state budget is about 16 billion a year and approximately 13% Goes into our state colleges and students.

attending state colleges and universities, and see how we would use those plans in Indiana.

**Should the legislature raise the age to purchase cigarettes and/or handguns to age 21? Please answer with respect to both cigarettes and guns.**

**Don Westerhausen**

I strongly support raising the age to purchase cigarettes to 21. There is increasing evidence that by raising the minimum age of legal access to 21 would significantly reduce smoking initiation, prevalence, and addiction, especially among those younger than 18 years. I also strongly believe that the minimum age to purchase handguns should be 21.

**Dale Devon**

I believe if we can send 18 year olds off to fight our wars and protect us in the military, then they should have the right to buy cigarettes and a hand gun.

**Both Democrats and Republicans in the legislature have argued against partisan gerrymandering whereby legislators draw district lines to gain a partisan advantage. What factors should be considered when drawing district lines? Would you support legislation that makes it illegal for legislators to consider partisanship or incumbent protection when drawing district lines? Would you support legislation to create a bipartisan commission to draw state legislative and congressional districts?**

**Don Westerhausen**

Indiana is one of the worst states for gerrymandering. I support creating an independent redistricting committee that would consider competitiveness, with the goal of creating districts that would be as evenly split in two-party partisanship as possible. Other factors should include contiguity, consistency with natural and political boundaries, and compactness with a low perimeter to area ratio.

**Dale Devon**

I would be willing to support a bipartisan commission to draw legislative and congressional districts.

Some people have argued that the legislature has failed to protect children by allowing the Governor to revert money the legislature has appropriated to the Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) back to the state General Fund. DCS has given back over \$240 million to the General Fund since 2009 while children face neglect (and even death) in drug-infested homes. Should the legislature exercise additional oversight to ensure that the money allocated is actually spent in ways that saves children's lives? What concrete steps should state policymakers take to protect the state's most vulnerable children?

### **Don Westerhausen**

The legislature should exercise its mandated oversight to ensure that money allocated to DCS is spent in ways that saves children's lives. However, as time passes it is apparent that money is not the only problem with DCS. The first step is to review the report from the Alabama-based nonprofit corporation, The Child Welfare Policy and Practice Group, hired by Governor Holcomb. The legislature then needs to hold public hearings reviewing the private organizations findings and potential solutions, while also obtaining independent input. Once this review is completed, the legislature needs to enact laws which will address the problems found in the legislature hearings.

### **Dale Devon**

I believe we have to do all that we can to support all our children especially children at risk. I just Authored HB 1314 that studies foster and homeless children with the department of Education to give us ways to better understand how we can create legislation that can assist Them and their needs. I all so sponsored SB 428 that requires DCS to coordinate with school officials In a child's case plan. It also requires DCS to provide information to the courts if a parent our a guardian may have violated a Dispositional order.

#DrDon2018MishawakaGranger



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