

Wisconsin Supreme Court

VOTE APRIL 7 FOR WISCONSIN SUPREME COURT

CANDIDATES

MARIA
LAZAR



CHRIS
TAYLOR

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Why your April 7 vote matters

The election on April 7 will decide a seat on the Wisconsin Supreme Court. Maria Lazar and Chris Taylor are running for a ten-year term. Both are currently judges on the Wisconsin Court of Appeals. The election is nonpartisan, but Lazar is generally seen as a [conservative](#) and Taylor as a [liberal](#). Liberal justices currently have a 4-3 majority on the Court. If Lazar wins, that status won't change. If Taylor wins, the liberal majority will be 5-2. In 2019, 6,000 votes decided a Wisconsin Supreme Court seat, while three in four eligible voters stayed home. This election could be just as close.

The Wisconsin Supreme Court decides important questions of state law

In recent years, the Court [overturned](#) an 1849 total ban on abortions beginning at conception, and ruled that the state can regulate PFAS, known as [forever chemicals](#). It also [ruled unanimously](#) against an [attempt](#) in the state Senate to fire the Wisconsin Elections Commission's nonpartisan administrator Meagan Wolfe.

The Court declined to hear a lawsuit that sought to [redraw](#) the state's congressional map. It also declined to hear a lawsuit [seeking to end](#) the state's taxpayer-funded private school voucher program. The Court also [struck down](#) legislature-drawn [legislative](#) maps for failing to meet certain requirements in the Wisconsin constitution. In a meat packing case, the Court ruled that workers [should be paid](#) for time spent putting on or removing protective gear.

The winner of this election may be a part of any further ruling on Act 10, which effectively ended collective bargaining for most Wisconsin public employees, as well as any potential redistricting and voting laws cases, such as a 2022 case where the Court [banned ballot drop boxes](#).

To help you decide

Both [Lazar](#) and [Taylor](#) write that they will follow and uphold the Constitution, and [both state](#) that their personal views will not affect their decisions. Here's background on their public statements, actions, relevant judicial rulings, experience, and publicized endorsements. Follow our links to get further information.

MARIA LAZAR

judgemarialazar.com

- **On abortion**, Lazar calls the U.S. Supreme Court decision throwing out Roe v. Wade "[very wise](#)," and a "[good move forward](#)," because the 1973 Roe ruling "[didn't work](#)." She said that Wisconsinites might back a state law banning abortion once [a fetal heartbeat](#) is detected, which is about six weeks from conception.
- **On citizenship**, she [responded](#) to President Trump's [Executive Order](#), which holds that any children born to mothers who are in the United States illegally are not citizens. The Order says that the Fourteenth Amendment does not apply to those children. Lazar said that birthright citizenship is not necessarily absolute, and that Congress and the President can interpret the scope of citizenship rights.

CHRIS TAYLOR

chrisforjustice.com

- **On abortion**, Taylor writes that she [values](#) "women...having the right to make those personal, private health care decisions." In the Wisconsin Assembly she [introduced a bill](#) specifying "that every woman has the fundamental right to choose to obtain a safe and legal abortion," except "after viability unless her life or health is endangered."
- **On criminal justice**, she [introduced](#) a bill specifying that in law enforcement, "deadly force is to be used only as the last resort." She [introduced](#) a bill that would require police officers to have at least eight hours of training in de-escalation techniques and use of force options.

MARIA LAZAR

- **On the environment**, as an appellate judge Lazar [ruled that](#) PFAS, also known as “forever chemicals,” can’t be regulated under Wisconsin’s decades-old spills law, that Wisconsin DNR’s regulation of PFAS amounted to “unlawfully adopted rules.”
- **On gun laws**, as a circuit court judge, she [ruled](#) that the Wisconsin city of Delafield [could not deny](#) an operating permit for a gun range.
- **On labor**, as Assistant Attorney General, Lazar [defended](#) the manner of enactment of Act 10, which effectively [ended](#) collective bargaining for most Wisconsin public employees. “I am proud of how hard everyone at DOJ worked on that case and of the ultimate result,” [she said](#) in 2015.
- **On redistricting**, she [says](#) that judges who redraw legislative maps are not following the law. “[That’s not](#) what judges are meant to do.”
- **On voting rules**, as an appellate judge, Lazar [ruled](#) that disabled people are not allowed to receive absentee ballots by email, only overseas and military voters. She [ruled](#) that the confidential records of people placed under guardianship for incompetency should be made public, in order to see if ineligible voters have voted in Wisconsin elections.
- **On her priorities**, Lazar [says](#) it is time to “draw a line in the sand and stop the destruction of our courts, especially our state Supreme Court.” She [says](#), “I want to bring back dignity, respect, integrity, impartiality, and independence to the court,” [suggesting that](#) the public may feel “that the state Supreme Court is bought and paid for.”

Maria S. Lazar is [currently](#) an appellate judge in the Wisconsin Court of Appeals. She was a Waukesha County Circuit Court Judge from 2015 to 2022. She was a Wisconsin Assistant Attorney General from 2010 to 2015 and before that was an attorney in private practice from 1989 to 2010. She earned a bachelor’s degree in history, with minors in English and political science, from Mount Mary University, and her J.D. degree from Georgetown University Law Center.

Lazar’s endorsements: As of publication, no endorsements were listed on Maria Lazar’s website or were otherwise available.

CHRIS TAYLOR

- **On the environment**, in the Wisconsin Assembly Taylor [introduced](#) a bill that would require the DNR to establish and enforce regulatory standards for PFAS, also known as “forever chemicals.” She [introduced](#) a bill that would allow cities and towns to regulate pesticides.
- **On gun laws**, she [introduced](#) a bill to prohibit anyone found guilty of misdemeanor domestic violence from possessing a firearm (expanding from the current felony-level prohibition). In a 2018 interview, she [supported](#) background checks and a red flag law. (No recent statements found.)
- **On labor**, Taylor [said](#), “I’m honored to have the support of the Wisconsin AFL-CIO in this race. Every working family deserves to have their rights and freedoms protected.”
- **On redistricting**, she [sponsored](#) a bill in 2017 that would have created new procedures for preparing redistricting plans. It would establish a Redistricting Advisory Commission and prohibit “redistricting plans from abridging the right to vote on account of race or color or because a person is a member of a language minority group.”
- **On voting rules**, as an appellate judge, Taylor [ruled](#) that missing information in a witness’s address does not invalidate an absentee ballot, so long as the included information is sufficient for a witness to still be contacted by a municipal clerk. In the Assembly, she [introduced](#) a bill to allow 17 year olds to vote in a primary election if they turn 18 by the date of the following general election.
- **On her priorities**, Taylor [says](#) she would make sure that people’s “Constitutional rights are protected.” It is [important](#) “for our courts to be places where people feel heard, respected, and treated equally under the law.”

Chris Taylor is [currently](#) an appellate judge in the Wisconsin Court of Appeals. She was a Dane County Circuit Court Judge from 2020 to 2023, and before that a representative in the Wisconsin Legislature from 2011 to 2020. She was the Policy/Political Director for Planned Parenthood of Wisconsin from 2003 to 2011 and before that an attorney in private practice from 1996 to 2002. She earned a bachelor’s degree from the University of Pennsylvania and her J.D. degree from the University of Wisconsin Law School.

Taylor’s endorsements include: Justices Susan Crawford, Rebecca Dallet, Jill Karofsky, and Janet Protasiewicz; former justice Louis Butler; Senator Tammy Baldwin; 156 former and current Wisconsin judges; and Wisconsin AFL-CIO, United Steelworkers, United Auto Workers Region 4, and American Federation of Teachers Wisconsin.

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