

League of Women Voters of Wyoming July 2018  
Albany County Attorney

The County Attorney serves a four-year term with no term limits. Salary is \$95,000 with benefits; an office is provided.

**What experience, qualifications and interests do you have that would encourage voters to select you for this office?**

**Tony S. Lopez (R):** I have lived in Laramie for 40 years. I have been a prosecutor, a civil attorney, a criminal defense attorney and the city court judge. I have coached both baseball and soccer for kids here in Laramie. A lifetime ago I was an Infantry officer in USMC. I have four children, all of whom seems to be doing well in spite of their Father. I dream of creating a Skoolie and traveling the two lane roads of America.

**Peggy A. Trent (D):** I have served as Albany County Attorney since 2015. Last election, I promised new, collaborative approaches to prosecuting adults and juveniles that involve law enforcement, community organizations, and victims of crime. Additionally, I committed to efficient office organization and fiscal responsibility. I fulfilled those promises and have been a team leader in addressing critical issues in both civil and criminal matters. I want to continue as County Attorney to enhance our partnerships and work on new initiatives including addressing individuals in the criminal system with mental illness and/or substance abuse conditions and attending to issues facing our vulnerable adult populations.

**How would you exercise the discretion of your office in prosecuting drug offenses?**

**Tony S. Lopez (R):** I have little sympathy for meth where infants or kids are around. Easy choice: your kids or meth. Similar position for heroin. First offenders for using pot, Drug Court or the diversion program. Alcohol is problematic in our society, not much leeway for a DUI with injuries or high BAC. Although I have participated in a 12 step program for 20 years and understand addiction, at some point compassion must be replaced by accountability. If arrested again for alcohol violations, perhaps a quiet place of contemplation and 3 meals a day and the soothing color of bright orange is needed.

**Peggy A. Trent (D):** Currently, our office screens all drug offenses to consider the nature of the crime, previous criminal history, and to determine the most appropriate course of action for the individual and community. Alternatives include treatment, drug court, probation, and/or traditional prosecution. For juveniles, we apply a decision matrix to ensure individualized treatment. Our office is establishing a juvenile drug treatment court to keep youth in our community for treatment instead of sending them to costly residential programs. Next, our office will develop a diversion program for drug offenses to reduce overburdened prisons and expenses incurred by the County for non-violent offenses.

**Please comment on the current penalties applied in court for violent crimes, and any changes your experiences would lead you to recommend.**

**Tony S. Lopez (R):** Violent crimes are individual discrete events. The punishment must consider the damage to the victim, the past criminal history of the defendant, the Pre Sentence Report and the potential for rehabilitation either before or after incarceration. I have little sympathy for domestic violence perpetrators, I didn't have much 35 years ago and as the Father of three daughters I have none.

**Peggy A. Trent (D):** My priority for criminal prosecution is on serious violent offenses. In 2017, our office established the special victims unit to increase victim participation in trial and during sentencing and to provide for victim safety and offender accountability. Imposition of sentences is a function of the Court. Our office makes sentencing recommendations to the Court based on the severity of the crime, the circumstances related to the offense, and the defendant's criminal history to eliminate unfair disparities between offenders while seeking justice. Our state legislature has not created sentencing guidelines for Courts. This could reduce the potential for inconsistencies in sentences.