



NJ CANDIDATES QUESTIONNAIRE

In our continuing efforts to bring disability issues to the forefront of campaigns for elected office, we have prepared a candidates' questionnaire. The questionnaire, developed by disabled advocates, contains 13 questions that address disability- related issues. By filling out this questionnaire, you will help voters with disabilities make informed decisions in the upcoming midterm elections. In order for us to have ample time to distribute your responses, please return your completed questionnaire by **OCTOBER 30th 2018**. Please contact ctonks@adacil.org if you have any questions.

PART ONE: SUPPORT/OPPOSE

For this section, please mark if you support or oppose the indicated legislation or legislative goals. Please provide a comment clarifying or expanding upon your response.

1. Disability Integration Act (S. 910 / H. R. 2472)

☒ Support

☐ Oppose

Comment:

2. EMPOWER Care Act (S. 2227 / H. R. 5306)

☒ Support

☐ Oppose

Comment:

3. ADA Education and Reform Act (H. R. 620)

☐ Support

☒ Oppose

Comment:

4. Medicaid block spending and per capita systems

☐ Support

☒ Oppose

Comment:

5. Keeping All Students Safe Act (H. R. 4247)

☒ Support

☐ Oppose

Comment:

6. Electronic Visit Verification (EVV) requirement for Personal Care Assistants under the 21st Century Cures Act (H. R. 34)

☒ Support

☐ Oppose

Comment:

PART TWO: OPEN ENDED QUESTIONS

For this section, please respond to the questions with a specific answer, including details for your plan to address these disability issues.

1. In the *Olmstead v. L.C.* (1999) decision, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that states are required to eliminate unnecessary segregation of persons with disabilities and ensure that persons with disabilities receive services in the most integrated setting appropriate to their needs. Do you feel the state is doing what it can do to fully implement this ruling? If not, what measures does NJ need to take?

New Jersey has taken important steps to fulfill its obligations under *Olmstead*. I'm hopeful that the state's focus on "no wrong door" for long-term supports and services and emphasis on community supports can help New Jersey residents move into the most appropriate setting of care for their needs. We need to make these systems more accessible, transparent, and affordable for New Jersey families. We also need to make these systems flexible and responsive to the changing needs of people who require these services.

2. If elected, what will you do to ensure that people with disabilities are included in the planning and implementation of emergency preparedness efforts on the state, county, and local levels?

It's vitally important that we include people with disabilities into our disaster planning and emergency preparedness efforts at every level of government. If elected, I'll make that a priority of the service I do, and I pledge to work with my colleagues in state and local government to do that same.

3. Medicaid eligibility and programmatic requirements now create barriers for individuals with disabilities seeking to enter or return to the workplace because they cannot access needed supports, assistive technology, and services. Do you support initiatives that would allow workers with disabilities to continue to work past age 65, maintain their eligibility from state to state, and carry their Medicaid benefits into private employment settings? How would you work with the private sector to address the critical independent living supports that many private insurance programs do not cover for people with disabilities?

I support initiatives that would help people with disabilities get into the workforce and stay there. It's a win for people with disabilities, for the employers that hire them, and for the economy as a whole. Restrictive eligibility criteria shouldn't be the reason that anyone drops out of the workforce. We need to improve coordination between private insurers and Medicaid to make sure that we're best serving the needs of working people with disabilities.

4. Former Governor Christie shunted Medicaid funding for pure mental illness into co-occurring programs. As a result, those with serious mental illness but no substance abuse issues have lost services. What will you do to fill the gap and stabilize mental health funding in NJ?

We should support people with mental illness, people with substance abuse issues, and people with co-occurring conditions -- not pit them against each other. I'll work with my colleagues in state and local government and with federal agencies to ensure access to affordable, comprehensive healthcare, including coverage for mental health services, for everyone in New Jersey.

5. According to estimates from the Corporation for Supportive Housing, New Jersey has a need for approximately 27,265 units of supportive housing, the 9th highest need in the nation. How would you propose to increase the inventory of safe, accessible, affordable housing for people with disabilities?

We need to make sure that all the stakeholders -- the federal government, state and local governments, developers, and the community -- make accessible housing a priority in our affordable housing work. That includes making sure that accessible housing is available to people using federal housing supports, including accessibility into our work combating homelessness, and working to invest in additional units of accessible housing.

6. What would you do to expand access to affordable and accessible transportation for people with disabilities, especially in rural areas?

We must ensure people with disabilities have access to transportation, so that they can fully participate in our community and are not isolated. I would work with local disability advocates and local governments to increase ride services for people in our community, work with rideshare companies to provide affordable transport, and encourage organizations to help coordinate volunteer drivers.

7. Do you support providing or increasing funding for new, accessible voting systems to replace the first- generation accessible voting systems that have outlived their usefulness?

Voting should not be difficult. We should be making it easier for all Americans to vote -- including Americans with disabilities. I support updating our voting systems to bring them into the twenty-first century, making them safer, more secure, and more accessible.

8. The disability community lives by the South African proverb “Nothing about us, without us”, meaning that individuals with disabilities should be at the center of decision-making on issues affecting our community. Have you hired and incorporated PWD as part of your political team? What are you doing to make sure qualified people with disabilities will be a part of your political team and, if elected, a part of your staff?

I am committed to ensuring that Americans with disabilities have full access to the jobs in our community -- whether in jobs, volunteering on a campaign, or in the voting booth. I want my staff to be inclusive and include people from all groups in our community, including people with disabilities, because I believe our workplaces benefit from that diversity. My campaign has a wonderful team of committed volunteers from all walks of life, including many with a range of this disabilities. I'm proud that these members of our community are volunteering their time on my campaign.