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## 2018 Suburban Legislative Questionnaire

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### CANDIDATE CERTIFICATION

Candidate Name: Joe Ciresi

Office Sought: PA State Rep. 146

I have read the attached questionnaire responses and certify that the information provided is accurate and the opinions stated accurately reflect my own positions.

Candidate Signature:  Date: 4/1/17

**Please complete, sign and return this form via mail to:**

**Neighborhood Networks  
c/o Stan Shapiro  
7213 Cresheim Rd.  
Philadelphia, PA 19119**

**If returning via email, please send to shapsj@comcast.net and sign and return this first page with the candidate signature by mail.**

## NN Legislative Candidate Questionnaire

### BACKGROUND

1. What, if any, elected or appointed government office(s) have you held? Spring-ford Area School board for 12 years
2. If you have previously held a government office:
  - a. What are the primary issue areas in which you were involved? Public Education
  - b. What committees, caucuses or working groups have you served on? Finance, Property, Personnel, Legislative, Vocational Education
3. If you have not previously held a government office, what community or policy issues have you worked on, and in what capacity? (Please provide the names of two or three individuals who can provide information about your previous work.) in addition to school board I have been President of Petra Community Housing (builds and runs housing complexes for Seniors, disables, and Vets), board member for Community Music School, Steering Committee for Steel River Theater, President of the U of Miami Alumni Club
4. Please provide copies of all your significant campaign materials, including position papers, and information on your campaign strategy, expected funding sources, and endorsements.
5. What is your plan to win this race. To hit as many doors as possible, speak at community events, attend local board meeting, and fundraise for all mailers, TV, and materials

### ISSUES

**Please note: Although most of the following questions may be answered "yes" or "no" feel free to elaborate if doing so would provide a clearer statement of your position.**

#### I. OVERALL

What would be your three highest priorities as a legislator? Explain. We need to work to establish more living wage jobs throughout the Commonwealth, strengthen our education systems by providing a Fair Funding formula for ALL Students, continue to rebuild and invest in our infrastructure

#### II. Education

- 1) How do you feel about the role of charter schools in Pennsylvania's educational mix? Not in favor If dissatisfied, what changes in state law would you sponsor to fix the problem? I would like to see an oversite board put in place that consists of members of the sending school districts, I want the state to make them accountable to the same levels as all f our school board.
- 2) What factors do you believe should be considered in determining *overall levels of school funding in the Commonwealth, and funding per school district? We need to have a formula that is based on the whole student and not parts of the students.*

- 3) Do you believe public college, or community college, should be tuition free? If there is a way to do this without massive taxes yes. At the least community colleges should be free.
- 4) What role do you believe standardized tests should play in evaluating teachers, schools and students, if any? None they are overrated. We should be teaching the students how to be lifelong learners not test takers
- 5) What is your view of plans to increase the use of computers in public schools, particularly as a way to reduce the number of teachers? Computers are needed to enhance the learning experience for all students. They are needed to allow students to work at their levels. They are not to ever replace an educator.

### **III. Budget and Taxes**

- 1) Do you support a Constitutional Amendment to permit progressive taxation in PA, in whole or part? Explain. Yes. A progressive tax plan would help poor and middle class families keep more money in their pockets. It would also help raise more money from the wealthy to pay infrastructure, schools, and more. In order to do this, we must amend the PA constitution to eliminate the uniformity clause.
- 2) If legal, would you support raising the tax on unearned income as a way to increase state revenue without increasing burdens on working people? I would consider it if it would not hurt those who need it the most
- 3) What changes if any would you support in corporate net income tax levels? I would support Governor Wolf's plan
- 4) What changes, if any, would you support in the personal income tax? I support the idea of a graduated personal income tax plan
- 5) Do you support full elimination of the Delaware loophole? Yes. The Delaware loophole allows companies to avoid paying taxes and it is morally wrong
- 6) Do you support a tax on fracking, and at what level? I would rather support a full ban on fracking. Fracking is dangerous and unnecessary. With the undoubtable rise of extreme weather caused by global warming, it is time we fully invest in renewable resources. If we had no choice but to frack I would support a tax at the highest level possible

#### **IV. Public Banking**

Would you support the creation of a Pennsylvania Public Bank, modeled after the Bank of North Dakota? Explain. Public banking was first introduced on the Quakers in the colony of PA. This question would best be answered by economists and well I am no economist. but ,I will say that North Dakota has been very successful with their bank.

#### **V. Women's Rights**

- 1) Do you believe there should be any restrictions on a woman's right to choose? If so, what? Absolutely NOT!
- 2) What additional protections should be enacted into law to protect women's health care? In the 21<sup>st</sup> century this shouldn't even be a question. Women should be treated equal to men in all ways. I would seek the advice of the women in the house, senate, and those in my community about what they feel needs to be done. A man should not tell a women how to live her life.
- 3) Would you support proposals to ensure that women and men working in the Commonwealth receive equal pay for equal work? Yes!!! There is no reasonable explanation why they shouldn't.

#### **VI. Children and Families**

- 1) Should the state require businesses to provide paid family leave? yes, paid family leave is an essential right for all people.
- 2) Should the state provide universal availability of affordable child care? There are a long list of things the state should provide its citizens and affordable child care is one of them.

#### **VII. Environment**

- 1) Do you support a ban on fracking in whole or part? Explain. As I stated above I support a full ban on fracking. Fracking is dangerous and unnecessary. With the undoubtable rise of extreme weather caused by global warming, it is time we fully invest in renewable resources
- 2) Would you support developing the Philadelphia area as an Energy Hub? Explain. If it were renewable energy yes but, not for the continued use of fossil fuel
- 3) Do you think Philadelphia should be compelled or induced to sell PGW? I think that we should be able to offer all residents public works that work! I am not 100% familiar with this issue.

- 4) What measures would you support to move PA off its reliance on fossil fuels and expand use of renewable energy sources? I support renewable energy and programs that create incentives for businesses and people to use clean renewable energy sources.

### **VIII. Criminal Justice**

- 1) Should marijuana be legalized in all circumstances, or for medical use? Explain.  
Marijuana should be legalized in all circumstances. This will give the state an ability to control the product and impossible taxes
- 2) Should privately-owned prisons be permitted in Pennsylvania? No. Private Prisons are bad for the culture of America. We must learn to rehabilitate offenders instead of instantly marking them a bad person.
- 3) Should we ban the box in Pennsylvania? Yes. The box creates an unfair disadvantage for ex-offenders trying to turn their life around
- 4) Should PA continue to build new prisons? PA should build prisons as needed, but monitor why those prisons are needed. Why is there an increasing number of offenders? We should look for programs that help keep people out of prison and make sure if they do go when released they never return.
- 5) Should PA begin to close prisons? Explain. As I said before, PA should close prisons as needed. The main goal of the prison industry should be to put itself out of business. We must focus on rehabilitation and not so much on incarceration
- 6) Do you support an end to the death penalty? Yes. Abolishing the Death Penalty would free up money that could be invested in programs that are proven to rehabilitate violent criminals. (there is a racial bias as well but I would not get into that)
- 7) When if ever, should a juvenile be tried as an adult? I think there are certain crimes where the juvenile should be tried as an adult always. (murder, assault with a deadly weapon)
- 8) How would you deal with the problem of mass incarceration of minorities, particularly minority youth? We need to review the process and make sure that each criminal is treated equally not based on race.
- 9) Should stop and frisk be limited or outlawed? Stop and frisk should be outlawed. It is inherently biased, and multiple studies have concluded that it does nothing to stop crime.

## **IX. Campaign Finance Reform**

Would you support legislation to provide public financing for state and local election campaigns? Although this is a great idea, I think the money that would be spent on this, can be better spent in other places

## **X. Labor**

- 1) Should the minimum wage be increased? If so, to what level and should the increase be indexed to inflation? The minimum wage should be increased right now. As for the future, the minimum wage should be indexed for inflation. We need to work with our small business owners to make sure that the increase doesn't force them to close their doors.
- 2) Do you believe that Philadelphia and other municipalities should continue to be pre-empted from increasing the minimum wage on their own? I feel this needs to be a state action.
- 3) Do you support privatization of retail liquor sales in Pennsylvania? Are there any other services that you believe should be considered for privatization? I support organized labor, therefore I support whatever system where workers can unionize and their rights be protected.
- 4) Would you support legislation to strengthen protection for workers trying to form or join a union? Explain. Yes. Unions protect the rights of workers and therefore doing anything to help that is great.

## **XI. Transportation**

Currently the state constitution mandates that revenue from the state gasoline tax be spent only on roads and bridges. Would you support an amendment to the Constitution allowing gas tax revenue to be spent on public transportation? The revenue generated from the gas tax must go to our roads and bridges. Over 20% of our bridges are structurally deficient and we need to do more to improve our infrastructure if we want to grow as a state.