

2018 Legislative Questionnaire

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CANDIDATE CERTIFICATION

Candidate Name:

Office Sought:

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:

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? **None.**
2. If you have previously held a government office:
 - a. What are the primary issue areas in which you were involved?
 - b. What committees, caucuses or working groups have you served on?
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.)

My background as a politics and community affairs reporter for more than a decade provides great experience for the job of State Representative. I spent my time holding politicians accountable and asking hard questions of them while prioritizing the voices and needs of working people. That's exactly what I plan on doing in Harrisburg every day.

- Chris Satullo, former WHYH News Director. He was my editor and supervisor.
- Marty Moss-Coane, Radio Times host. She was my boss.

4. Please provide copies of all your significant campaign materials, including position papers, and information on your campaign strategy, expected funding sources, and endorsements.

Please see attached "Fiedler Campaign At a Glance."

5. What is your plan to win this race.

Elizabeth Fiedler is a former reporter, first time candidate and young mother running for the office of State Representative for the 184th House District of Pennsylvania. She was raised in Central Pennsylvania by her parents, two union educators. Her family receives health insurance through the ACA and her children are on CHIP and Medicaid. Healthcare and education aren't abstract policy priorities for her but issues that affect her everyday life. Once elected, she will fight for high quality universal healthcare for all of us. She will work to ensure fair and full funding of our schools and to end the school to prison pipeline. She will also fight for an economy that works for all of us — not just the richest few and corporate interests. She will stand in solidarity with existing unions and unionized workers and champion legislation that makes it easier for workers to unionize. She will ensure that all workers have safe working conditions, fair wages, healthcare, and union representation. She will also push to have the state invest in long term, family sustaining jobs and oppose policies that give tax breaks to the richest few at the cost of our communities. Unionization is not just a workplace issue - unions sustain and support our communities. She will oppose efforts to privatize our public resources.

Elizabeth's campaign is lead by a strong team, including a Campaign Manager who ran a successful field program twice already in the district: for Bernie Sanders' Presidential race, and for Reclaim Philadelphia's independent field operation for Larry Krasner's District Attorney bid. The campaign's Field Director most recently worked on Larry Krasner's District Attorney campaign.

The turnout in 2014 for the 184th House District totaled 5,011 votes cast, with incumbent Representative Bill Keller receiving 99.84% in the uncontested race. There are 26,137 registered Democrats in the district. Using the 2014 primaries as a weathervane for 2018, the campaign's win number is 2,903 with a goal of 3,464 votes. In a potential 5-way race, the field is sufficiently divided that Fiedler can always win with only the number of votes (or well fewer) than Krasner received. This is true even in a high turnout scenario where the added votes are driven by opponents mobilizing their bases.

This campaign will be won at the doors, with a full 3 passes through the voter universe. Since Elizabeth Fiedler's announcement, the campaign has had more than 500 volunteer sign ups. With aggressive volunteer engagement and voter contact, targeted persuasion using digital and direct mail, and a compelling message, Elizabeth Fiedler will win the primary on May 15th, 2018.

ISSUES

Please note: Although many of the following questions may be answered "yes" or "no" you should feel free to elaborate if doing so would provide a clearer statement of your position. If you believe you do not have enough information to answer a question, or have not formed an opinion, say so.

I. OVERALL

What would be your three highest priorities as a legislator? Explain.

My top legislative priorities and issue areas are:

- protecting the rights of workers and expanding union representation (see more below),**
- ensuring every person has high quality, free healthcare,**
- ensuring every child has a fairly funded, equitable education, and**
- protecting our climate, water and air.**

If elected, I will work closely with my union cohorts to explore legislative avenues to limit the fallout if *Abood* is overturned. I will always vote against becoming a "right to work" state. I will vote against any state proposals to modify existing laws regarding the duty of fair representation. I will always use my platform to speak on the importance of organized labor and collective bargaining.

II. Education

- 1) How do you feel about the role of charter schools in Pennsylvania's educational mix? If dissatisfied, what changes in state law would you sponsor to fix the problem?

We should institute a charter expansion moratorium in Philadelphia until, at the very least, charters are held to equal standards of accountability and a long-term financial health assessment is conducted. A recent report released by Public Citizens for Children and Youth concluded that the charter sector typically underperforms when compared with traditional public schools. Since 2012, 23 states have amended their laws to improve the quality of charter schools but Pennsylvania has not. Pennsylvania's charter school law must be fixed to ensure all schools receive sufficient funding, all children are treated justly, and communities have a voice in the academic activities in their own backyards. Additionally, PA's cyber charters are among the lowest performing schools in the state. They have received more than \$1 billion in taxpayer dollars yet have not improved our education system.

I support revitalizing traditional neighborhood public schools that serve all of us and anchor and enrich our communities. School is one of the largest experiences that forms us, prepares us for adulthood, and defines and binds our communities. As a parent, I find anything less unacceptable. We must increase state school spending (we're currently ninth worst in the nation) to stop punishing poorer rural and urban districts. I also support the greater workplace protections and accountability of traditional public schools, recognizing the importance of unionized teachers empowered to engage all students meaningfully, rather than teaching to standardized tests.

Instead of giving massive state tax breaks to businesses that make contributions to educational programs, including private schools, I believe we should be fully funding our public school system. Also, education savings accounts (ESAs) represent the latest attempt to divert taxpayer dollars out of public schools and into private coffers. The privatization of our public education system is a terrifying prospect, drawing support from big-money ultra-conservative groups such as the American Federation for Children and the American Legislative Exchange Council. We cannot allow PA lawmakers to follow in the footsteps of Arizona, Mississippi and others that have opened the door, threatening to drastically

change our state's K-12 education landscape by siphoning away a fifth of the state's public school resources.

- 2) What factors do you believe should be considered in determining *overall levels* of school funding in the Commonwealth, and funding *per school district*?

Many factors should be considered including but not limited to:

**-student population,
-poverty rates,
-rates of ESOL students.**

- 3) Do you believe public college, or community college, should be tuition free?

Yes.

- 4) What role do you believe standardized tests should play in evaluating teachers, schools and students, if any?

Students don't come "standardized." Curriculum, quizzes, class work, and tests created by educators provide a better understanding of students' abilities than high stakes standardized tests. Funding currently allocated to standardized testing should be allocated to reducing class size and restoring cuts. We must end high stakes testing requirements that force educators to teach to a standardized test, rather than the needs of the students in their classrooms.

I recognize the importance of teacher autonomy and professional discretion to develop a classroom curriculum that promotes critical thinking, creativity, and compassion in our students. I will work to stop the over-reliance on state-mandated high-stakes testing and curriculum as a means to sort, label and punish students, teachers, and schools.

Curriculum should be decided upon with input from schools, districts, educators and departments of educations with the understanding that each district, classroom and student is unique and has different learning needs.

- 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?

I oppose reduction of the number of teachers in classrooms, our class sizes are already far too large.

III. Budget and Taxes

- 1) Do you support a Constitutional Amendment to permit progressive taxation in PA, in whole or part?

100% yes.

- 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?

100% yes.

- 3) What changes if any would you support in corporate net income tax levels?

If corporate taxes brought in the same percentage of general fund revenues that they did between 1988- 89 and 2002-03, total general revenue would be \$2.39 billion higher than projected in 2016-2017 and a bit more than that in 2017-2018. Not only would there be no structural deficit problem, but there would be additional funds available to invest in education, human services, infrastructure, and protecting our air and water. If we are not willing to tax those with higher income, and if we continue to allow our tax system to be twisted by the influence of the rich and powerful, we won't raise the revenues we need to fund the public investments that make our communities thrive.

- 4) What changes, if any, would you support in the personal income tax?

I support the Pennsylvania Budget and Policy Center's Fair Share Tax Plan which proposes bifurcating the personal income tax into 1.) a tax on wages and interest, and 2.) a tax on income from wealth (dividends; net income [from a business, profession, or farm]; capital gains; net income from rents, royalties, patents, and copyrights; gambling and lottery winnings; and income from estates or trusts.)

- 5) Do you support full elimination of the Delaware loophole?

U.S. law, as is well known and [well reported](#), allows companies to incorporate in Delaware (or any other state) and be governed by that state's laws and tax code. Yes, I support closing this tax loophole.

- 6) Do you support a tax on fracking, and at what level?

A severance tax on natural gas is not enough. This taxation revenue is both unstable and will make us further reliant on natural gas as an energy solution. We should be transitioning to renewable energy resources.

- 7) Would you support abolition of the property tax for all or some payers? If so, which ones, and how would you replace the revenue?

Sales taxes and property taxes in every state take a larger share of the income from those at the bottom than those at the top.

IV. Public Banking

Would you support the creation of a Pennsylvania Public Bank, modeled after [the Bank of North Dakota](#)? Explain.

Yes, I would support this. Public banks are able to reduce taxes within their jurisdictions, because their profits are returned to the general fund of the public entity. The costs of public projects undertaken by governmental bodies are also greatly reduced, because public banks do not need to charge interest to themselves. Eliminating interest has been shown to reduce the cost of such projects, on average, by 50%. When the public interest demands, the mission of public banks is to respond immediately, to assure the long-term prosperity of the community.

V. Women's Rights

- 1) Do you believe there should be any restrictions on a woman's right to choose? If so, what?

We should have control and autonomy over our bodies and should have access to abortion services as needed. I will oppose any and all legislation that seeks to undermine the rights of individuals who are capable of being impregnated, regardless of their gender.

- 2) What additional protections should be enacted into law to protect women's health care?
- 3) Would you support proposals to ensure that women and men working in the Commonwealth receive equal pay for equal work?

Yes.

- 4) Do you support legislation to protect individuals against sexual assault?

Yes. The #MeToo movement has already changed lives and brought to light countless instances of harassment and abuse, from Hollywood to Congress to Harrisburg to our everyday lives. Women everywhere are sharing stories and traumas that, only months ago, would have felt forbidden. The behavior they're describing is horrible — but unsurprising. As women, we're taught by society to feel ashamed — of our bodies, of our minds -- and that somehow we are to blame for the behavior of others. Shame is a very powerful tool — and it's made even more powerful when it's wielded by a person who has power over you.

There is no place in our movement for this kind of behavior.

Before running for office, I worked for a decade as a reporter. As a young woman in my mid-20's who was just starting out in my professional life, my goal was to work hard, build

a career, hold politicians accountable, and tell the stories of Philadelphians. Day in and day out I did that.

During that time I also had many experiences that were difficult to endure: offensive comments, treatment and behavior I received because of one simple fact: I was a woman. Many people have reached out and shared very personal stories from their private and professional lives. It is not easy to address this behavior, especially when the person targeting you holds power. Whether you speak up immediately, after a year, five years, ten or never — know that I stand beside you. The experiences of everyone who is affected by harassment and assault are valid and real. My experiences are valid and real.

And, I must take a moment to talk about one other thing: “jokes.” I have a 3 year old. I know all about light-hearted, humorous jokes like “Why did the chicken cross the road?” That is a joke. Disgusting comments disguised as “jokes,” have no place in our political leadership and no place in our society. These are not “jokes.” They are targeted barbs aimed at objectifying our bodies and at minimizing our role in the world. If we don’t smile and laugh in an attempt to hide our discomfort, we’re further targeted. Enough is enough.

I admire the work being done by lawmakers in Harrisburg to advance legislation that would ban non-disclosure agreements that mask the names of General Assembly members who harass, prohibit General Assembly members from using taxpayer funds to pay settlement costs, and provide for other reforms. I support efforts of this kind, and as a state representative will move to advance any legislation that protects victims of abuse and holds legislators accountable.

VI. Children and Families

- 1) Should the state require businesses to provide paid family leave?

Yes.

- 2) Should the state provide universal availability of affordable child care?

I support universal pre-K and universal elder care. I support Reclaim Philadelphia’s Universal Family Care Campaign which calls for child, elder and disability care as a human right.

The statewide average annual cost for childcare services is \$10,640, while the median assisted living facility and nursing home cost \$43,200 and \$116,800 per year, respectively.

All of us need a strong social foundation from which to build a prosperous life, as individuals and in our communities.

In addition to guaranteed healthcare, I strongly support universal care legislation that would provide support for childcare to parents and support for home and nursing care to seniors and the disabled. All of us start our lives and end our lives dependent and vulnerable. As it stands, financial stress about childcare and eldercare costs rob too many parents of moments they have to cherish with their children, and too many adult children of the final moments they could cherish with their dying parents. People's needs should not be a commodity for corporations to use to drive up their profits.

Homecare is not simply an issue of care, it's also an issue of labor: homecare workers are some of the lowest paid workers, they rarely have union representation, are most often women, and are likely to be women of color or foreign born. They deserve fair pay, safe working conditions, and union representation. These demands must be included in elder and childcare legislation.

VII. Environment

- 1) What measures, if any, would you support to move PA off its reliance on fossil fuels and expand use of renewable energy sources?

I support transitioning to a zero-carbon economy. The climate crisis and inability of establishment politicians to address it clearly show how our profit-driven economic and political systems have failed us. They will fail our children, including my children, even worse--unless we take this transformational opportunity to build something better. To me that means two things. The first is a big investment in converting existing systems to be low-carbon. That means creating hundreds of thousands of jobs across PA in solar, wind, efficiency, retrofits, electric grid, and other energy fields. It means investing in public transportation and green infrastructure for climate adaptation. These are jobs and investments that would be great for South Philadelphians.

The second part of building something better is seizing this moment to make our society more just, more democratic, and more caring. I support a clean energy transition that puts the needs of people before corporations and profit. I want jobs created to go first to poor and exploited communities, and they should be unionized or in worker cooperatives. I want energy generation to be democratized through distributed electricity generation. I want government decisions about everything--economic development, investment, land-use, social programs--to be

made based not on a relentless obsession with business growth but on caring about and sustaining the lives of people like the South Philadelphians I talk to everyday.

These are big tasks that will take many years. I would start by proposing increasing the state's Advanced Energy Portfolio Standard for renewable energy. I would propose legalizing shared renewables like community-owned solar, which taps into a strong statewide desire for energy freedom against the current consolidation by large corporate generators. I would support a statewide public bank to capitalize renewable energy investments, with priority for worker-owned businesses. I will fight strenuously for mass transit in terms of both infrastructure upgrades and long-term sustainable funding.

2) Do you support a ban on fracking in whole or part?

Yes. While a full ban may require some time, and requires attention to electricity and heating costs for working and poor Pennsylvanians, a complete ban in riversheds like the Delaware River Basin should be possible immediately. Much of the new drilling capacity, and all of the new pipelines, are for export of natural gas or natural gas liquids out of the state. They provide almost no benefit to Pennsylvanians. This is a personal issue for me, since the Atlantic Sunrise pipeline is currently being built directly behind my parents' house, tearing through the land where I spent my childhood.

In addition to the damage this extraction does to Pennsylvanians' health, water quality, and air quality, it has had a devastatingly corrosive impact on our state politics. The big donations, gifts, and lobbying money of the Marcellus Shale Coalition and their corporate allies have bought off large parts of the state legislature. The tragic impact is that Pennsylvania is being held back from making the policy changes and investments in clean energy that could create hundreds of thousands of jobs. Thus, even if shale drilling had no climate and environmental impact, we would still have to ban it because it is a classic example of a vested corporate interest rigging the system to maintain the status quo even though it's bad for most Pennsylvanians.

3) Would you support developing the Philadelphia area as an Energy Hub?

I believe we all have a right to clean air, clean water, renewable energy and an equitable share of resources. Climate change is caused by human activity, including burning fossil fuels like coal and oil. Climate change threatens our lives and livelihoods through floods, droughts, urban heat waves, crop failures, hurricanes and other extreme weather events. We must accept that the impact of climate change is already upon us and that we need to adapt how and where we make our homes, businesses, roads and cities. We must break our

dependence on fossil fuels, by banning offshore drilling, fracking, and new fossil fuel infrastructure including pipelines and natural gas power plants, and divesting from energy companies that make a significant portion of their revenues from fossil fuels. I believe we must plan to acquire 100% of Pennsylvania's electricity from renewable sources by 2030, pass legislation to permit shared renewables like community-owned solar projects, put in place limits on leakage for existing natural gas distribution systems and dramatically improve public transit to make it the best option for travel in cities. In Pennsylvania, we also must fully fund the DEP and state parks.

I support the concept of a “Just Transition.” Taken together, the transformations of our energy, agricultural, transportation, and industrial systems provide a once-in-a-century opportunity to reshape our economy towards justice and democracy. This transition must be funded by the super-rich, who have extracted so much wealth from the fossil fuel economy. The benefits, starting with the hundreds of thousands of jobs created in Pennsylvania alone, must go first to poor, black and brown communities, as well as to former workers in the fossil fuel industry.

4) Do you think Philadelphia should be compelled or induced to sell PGW?

No. We should figure out creative ways to have all of the unionized employees of PGW retrofit and prepare homes for green energy and keep them as public employees.

VIII. Criminal Justice

1) Should stop and frisk be limited or outlawed?

Stop and frisk should be outlawed. It is ineffective and disproportionately targets men of color.

2) How would you deal with the problem of mass incarceration of minorities, particularly minority youth?

We must end cash bail and reduce pretrial incarceration. Cash bail is criminalization of the poor and communities of color. We also must prevent the unjustified expansion of oppressive surveillance. We need to move away from using racially biased algorithms to determine whether or not someone is “risky” enough to be forcibly detained pretrial. We also must refuse coordination with ICE and shut down the Berks Detention Center. It is essential that we treat drug addiction as a public health issue and recognize that the human beings who are struggling are our friends, neighbors and loved ones. We are spending too much time prosecuting minor property crimes and minor drug offenses. We must focus on prosecuting cases only if they have sufficient evidence and review past convictions to work toward freeing those who have been wrongfully or unjustly convicted. The myth that prisons make us safer has prevented us from dealing with many of the largest causes of violence.

3) Should marijuana be legalized for recreational use?

It's important that we not just push for legalization but also remember the impact that the criminalization of marijuana has had on poor communities and communities of color. Also, we must address the economic impact of marijuana — communities that have been disproportionately impacted by the “War on Drugs” must benefit economically from the legalization of marijuana — both with financial investment in these communities and with family sustaining job creation.

4) Should privately-owned prisons be permitted in Pennsylvania?

I am opposed to for-profit and privately-owned prisons. They exist simply to provide profits for a select few — at the expense of black, brown and poor communities. We must take a number of steps to reduce prison populations. We must end cash bail and reduce pretrial incarceration. We also must prevent the unjustified expansion of oppressive surveillance. We need to move away from using racially biased algorithms to determine whether or not someone is “risky” enough to be forcibly detained pretrial. We also must refuse coordination with ICE and shut down the Berks Detention Center.

5) Should we ban the box in Pennsylvania?

Yes.

6) Should PA continue to build new prisons?

No.

7) Should PA begin to close prisons? Explain.

Yes. We must take a number of steps to reduce prison populations and to close prisons. We must end cash bail and reduce pretrial incarceration. Cash bail is criminalization of the poor and communities of color.

8) Do you support an end to the death penalty?

Yes.

9) When if ever, should a juvenile be tried as an adult?

Juveniles should never be tried as adults.

IX. Campaign Finance Reform

Would you support legislation to provide public financing for state and local election campaigns?

Knowing firsthand how hard it is for non-establishment politicians to run for office, I would like to see a public small-donor matching system for Pennsylvania. I also support citizen commissions for non-partisan redistricting to limit gerrymandering (a practice insiders in both parties have used when citizens weren't looking). I also strongly support automatic voter registration, same day voter registration, early voting, making election day a public holiday or moving it to Saturday, and voting by mail.

X. Labor

- 1) Would you support legislation to strengthen protection for workers trying to form or join a union?

I will support all legislation that aims to strengthen protections for workers trying to form or join unions. Unions sustain and anchor our communities. We currently live in a society that does not value organized labor and actively seeks to dismantle and attack it. We're seeing this happen right now with *Janus v. American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees*.

Public-sector unions are important engines of equality and economic opportunity for people of color and in particular women (56% of all public sector union members are women). The gender wage gap for union-represented women working in the public sector is 20 percent smaller than the gap experienced by their non-union-represented counterparts and by workers overall.

Collective-bargaining agreements also typically protect union workers from discriminatory adverse actions, including termination, providing important heft and enforcement mechanisms to workplace-equality guarantees.

As the daughter of two union public schools teachers and a fierce supporter of labor, I am committed to building an economy that works for all of us — not just the richest few and corporate interests. I will stand in solidarity with existing unions and unionized workers and champion legislation that makes it easier for workers to unionize. I will ensure that all workers have safe working conditions, fair wages, healthcare, and union representation. I will also push to have the state invest in long term, family sustaining jobs and oppose policies that give tax breaks to the richest few at the cost of our communities. Unionization is not just a workplace issue - unions sustain and support our communities. I will oppose efforts to privatize our public resources.

- 2) Should the minimum wage be increased? If so, to what level and should the increase be indexed to inflation?

I support raising the wage to \$15/hour. However, \$15/hour is not enough to support our families. We must fight for \$15 and continue fighting to increase wages adjusted for inflation. Also, wages do not start and end at the amount in our paychecks. We must continue to fight for worker protections and rights such as healthcare.

- 3) Do you believe that Philadelphia and other municipalities should continue to be pre-empted from increasing the minimum wage on their own?

Absolutely not.

- 4) Do you support privatization of retail liquor sales in Pennsylvania? Are there any other services that you believe should be considered for privatization?

I oppose the privatization of liquor sales in PA. I oppose any and all privatization of public services. When our institutions are privatized, they are suddenly transformed into engines to profit for a handful of individuals. We cannot allow a small, elite group of individuals to profit off of our lives. We need more unionized jobs, not fewer, and services are more efficient and effective when publicly run and publicly owned. The private sector relies on massive subsidies from the public to function and then privatizers decry a lack of efficiency and functionality of public services after they are deprived of investment and resources.

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?

Yes.

XII. Reforming Legislative Districts

- 1) Do you support SB 22 (2017), which would (1) form an independent commission, and (2) apply sound methodologies, to draw all congressional, State House, and Senate districts fairly in Pennsylvania?

Yes.

- 2) Would you support the reduction in size of the current PA House from 203 seats to 151 seats, as stipulated in HB 153?

Less representatives means less representation of our communities. Districts would become larger, more expensive to run and win and there would be fewer leaders fighting for our communities. We also must address the gerrymandering issue and establish a citizen commission to handle the redistricting process.