



2018 Legislative Questionnaire

Prepared by: State Representative Christopher M. Rabb

Phone/Email:

campaign@chrisrabb.com

Campaign Manager: n/a
215-380-6017

Phone/Email:

Committee Name: Chris Rabb for State Representative

Campaign Address: TBD
Email: campaign@chrisrabb.com
Website: www.chrisrabb.com

CANDIDATE CERTIFICATION

Candidate Name: Christopher Rabb

Office Sought: State Rep

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: 3/16/18

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?

I have been the Representative for the 200th Legislative District since 2016. Prior, I have been committeeperson in the 9th Ward Democratic Committee since 2006, which I now lead.

2. If you have previously held a government office:
 - a. What are the primary issue areas in which you were involved?
 - Community economic development and wealth inequality
 - Criminal justice reform
 - Climate change
 - Gun violence
 - b. What committees, caucuses or working groups have you served on?

I serve on the finance, commerce, urban affairs, agriculture/rural affairs & state government committees as well as the policy committee.

I'm a member of many caucuses, most of which are either informal or largely inactive. I am the treasurer of the PA Legislative Black Caucus, founding member of the Climate Caucus, and a member of the Women's Health, Early Childhood Education & LGBTQ Equality caucuses, among others.

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

www.ChrisRabb.com

5. What is your plan to win this race.

Same way as in 2016: strong message based on inclusion, fairness & integrity, using a combination of traditional high-touch and innovative high-tech tactics, and executed by a largely volunteer-led team and some paid campaign workers earning \$15/hour.

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.

- (1) Giving communities the economic tools they need to succeed in the 21st century with a focus on community-centered entrepreneurship;
- (2) Ending mass incarceration in Pennsylvania and proving that model to the country
- (3) Facilitating civic engagement through electoral, voting and media reform.

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?

I believe we should place a moratorium on new charter schools, examine best practices and focus on properly funding our public school system. I would also increase oversight of existing charters.

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

The main factor should be what it costs to provide a holistic, state-of-the-education for students living in the richest country in world history. As for individual school districts,

Funding per school district should account for not just for the cost of living, but the range of collective needs of public school stakeholders within the socio-economic context that these students are living and studying, and into which they will be entering college, trade school or joining the workforce.

What we *cannot* do is invest in public education in ways that deepen the opportunity gap based on whiteness.

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

I believe that the PASSHE schools should be *entirely free* to the majority of Pennsylvanians based on socio-economic factors, the most important one being family (financial) wealth.

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

None - we have to give kids the ability to learn and succeed, not the ability to regurgitate specific information on tests devoid of a relationship with their socio-economic future.

- 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?

Students should have access to both computers and teachers. We cannot start replacing teachers with technology - technology is a tool that should be used to enable teachers to teach, not as an excuse to cut spending and lower taxes on the rich.

III. Budget and Taxes

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

Yes, in whole.

- 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?

Yes, and I introduced legislation to this end called the Fair Share Tax bill.

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

I would support lowering corporate net income tax levels as long as other responsible, recurring sources of revenue preceded such a cut.

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

My Fair Share Tax Plan bill will cut personal income tax from 3.07 percent to 2.8 percent on wages and income. Passive income from net profits, dividends, net gains derived from rents, royalties, patents and copyrights, gambling and lottery winnings and net gains derived through estates and trust would see an

increase to 6.5 percent. As a result, 85 percent of Pennsylvanians would see either a decrease or no change in their taxes due to the state.

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

Yes.

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

Yes - I support a fracking tax pinned to the needs of the school districts of Pennsylvania. Natural gas companies are going to extract the gas - the least we can do is force them to provide our communities a tangible benefit, like properly funding each and every school and stopping the rash of school closures.

I also support a carbon fee-and-dividend plan that would place a carbon tax and progressively distribute revenue. The top 1% of income earners disproportionately use carbon - they should pay for that externality. This would be a way to provide Pennsylvanians with a basic income and signal tax prices to corporations - the idea has support from progressive environmentalists and moderate Republicans.

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?

I would eliminate property tax for people who either live in high-poverty census tracts and/or have low-incomes. An increase in the personal income tax, along with closing the Delaware loophole, instituting a shale tax, legalizing adult-use cannabis and establishing a carbon fee could replace this and create massive surpluses.

IV. Public Banking

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

Yes. And I have brought this proposal to the attention of the Minority chair of the House finance committee. I also introduced a resolution urging Congress to do the same on a federal level.

V. Women's Rights

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

No, I fully support a woman's right to choose.

- 2) What additional protections should be enacted into law to protect women's health care?

We should pursue an amendment to secure the right to choose. Pennsylvania on its own should pursue one to further national conversations.

- 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, and there should be no loopholes in these laws that protect those in power.

VI. Children and Families

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

Yes, businesses as well as other organizations over certain reasonable revenue and payroll thresholds.

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

Yes.

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 have proposed legislation that would move PA off its reliance on fossil fuels by 2050 through renewable energy expansion.

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

I do not support banning fracking as a strategy for ridding PA's reliance on fossil fuels, just as I do not support banning coal or nuclear. I believe by taxing shale — ideally via a carbon fee and dividend policy — and executing a plan to move toward 100% renewable energy portfolio, natural gas will — and thus, fracking — will be die on the proverbial vine.

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

Yes - as a 100% renewable Energy Hub!

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

No.

VIII. Criminal Justice

1) Should stop and frisk be limited or outlawed?

Outlawed.

2) How would you deal with the problem of mass incarceration of **Black and Latinx women and men**—particularly youth in those communities?

Reform misdemeanors, end juvenile life sentences, end cash bail, solitary confinement, reform civil asset forfeiture, end mandatory minimum sentencing, increase diversion. Naturally, I support full and fair funding of public schools as well as universal, high quality pre-K.

3) Should marijuana be legalized for recreational use?

I strongly support legalizing adult-use cannabis.

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

No, they are a moral abomination. And thankfully, our current secretary of the DOC strongly opposes them, which is why PA has none presently.

5) Should we ban the box in Pennsylvania?

Yes, and we should endorse further protections to ensure successful reentry. I am currently working on such legislation as it relates to colleges and universities that receive state funding.

6) Should PA continue to build new prisons?

No.

7) Should PA begin to close prisons? Explain.

PA has already begun closing prisons as of 2017 and should continue to do so as long as more of my fellow state lawmakers embrace more effective, humane, and fiscally sound policies as they relate to crime and punishment.

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

Yes. We have wasted a billion dollars executing 3 people since 1976, and each wanted to be executed. Suicide-by-court should not come at the expense of schools. The death penalty is applied disproportionately against people of color and poor people, and convicts innocent people. It does not reduce crime, and

cannot be carried out humanely. It is an affront to civilized society. That is why one of the first bills I introduced upon taking office was to abolish capital punishment.

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

Never. Everything we know about the brain from neuroscience and adolescent psychology and other developmental studies shows juveniles must have less culpability than adults, and should never be tried as adults.

IX. Campaign Finance Reform

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

Yes. It is long overdue.

X. Labor

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

Yes. And early in my candidacy for this seat in 2015, I helped Union 1,500 fellow adjunct professors at Temple.

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

Yes, \$15 and indexed to inflation. Further, my campaign has in 2016 and presently paid canvassers and others \$15/hour.

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

No. Local officials know their areas' needs; Philadelphia should be able to set its own wage minimums.

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

No. I strongly oppose privatization generally.

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, I have long said that whatever your issue is, your second and third issues have to be electoral and media reform – we have to change how society engages with government. The core of that is ensuring people’s voices are heard – that their votes matter – and gerrymandering throws voices away. I fully support an independent commission that would draw fair lines. And I am a co-sponsor of HB 722.

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

Absolutely not. I strongly opposed HB 153, introduced by my right-wing colleague, Rep. Jerry Knowles.