

MARYLAND STATE AND DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA AFL-CIO
&
METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON COUNCIL, AFL-CIO
2006 CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

GENERAL INFORMATION:

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Office Seeking:

Congressional District 00 Legislative District _____ City/County Council District _____

Party Democrat

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Does your campaign accept PAC contributions? yes

PREVIOUS ELECTED / APPOINTED OFFICE:

Office Same Term 8th Office _____ Term _____

Office _____ Term _____ Office _____ Term _____

HAVE YOU EVER RECEIVED LABOR'S ENDORSEMENT? yes WHEN? _____

PLEASE EXPLAIN WHY YOU SEEK LABOR'S ENDORSEMENT:

Labor Democrat

SIGNATURE: [Signature] DATE: 04/07/06

Maryland State and District of Columbia AFL-CIO
Candidate Questionnaire
2006 Elections

1. Freedom to Choose a Union

- a. If elected, would you co-sponsor the Employee Free Choice Act (S. 842/HR 1696) which was introduced in the 108 Congress by Senators Kennedy and Specter in the Senate and Reps. George Miller and Peter King in the House? The Employee Free Choice Act would require employers to honor their workers decision to join a union after a majority of them signed a union authorization card or petition; establishes first contract mediation and arbitration; and create meaningful penalties against employers who interfere with, coerce or fire workers for attempting to join a union. This bill would amend the 1947 Taft Hartley Act to allow worker to form unions as they did when the Wagner Act became law in 1935?

Yes. I am proud of and have always been a labor Democrat. I have supported and introduced numerous pieces of legislation over the years that are union and worker friendly. I am a co-sponsor of H.R. 1696, the Employee Free Choice Act (co-sponsored 6/7/05).

- b. If elected, would you publicly support workers who are forming unions by reaffirming the importance of unions to our communities and by taking actions such as contacting employers and urging them to not interfere with employee free choice, issuing public statements, attending rallies supporting organizing, sponsoring public forums, etc?

Yes. I most recently attended and spoke at a rally at Walter Reed Medical Center here in the District, regarding the potential outsourcing of workers jobs and also most recently have worked with Georgetown University officials regarding the implementation of living wages for custodial workers and also the right of the workers at the University to unionize.

- c. If elected, would you oppose a national “right to work” bill that would prohibit unionized workers and their employers from voluntarily agreeing to “union security” provisions, which allow the union to collect dues from all of the workers that federal law requires it to represent in the workplace?

No

2. Jobs and the Economy

- a. If elected, would you support the repeal of the Bush tax cuts for the top income brackets?

Yes

- b. If elected, will you support funding important infrastructure projects that generate good jobs, such as transportation systems, school modernization, airports and water systems?

Yes

- c. If elected, will you support a fiscal stimulus to enable states to meet increasing demands for Medicaid and education funding?

Yes

- d. If elected, would you support an increase in the minimum wage to historic levels? (More than 7\$ an hour in 2004 dollars)

Yes

3. Manufacturing and the Global Economy

- a. If elected, would you support efforts to strengthen trade law enforcement and effort to secure meaningful remedies for injuries resulting from unfair trade?

Yes

- b. If elected, would you support legislation to reform tax provisions that encourage movement of jobs and investment overseas?

Yes

- c. If elected, would you oppose legislation to implement bilateral, regional, or unilateral free trade agreement that do not require enforcement of internationally recognized worker' rights?

Yes

- d. If elected, would you support adequate funding to fight abusive international child labor and promote the enforcement of internationally recognized workers' rights?

Yes

- e. What will you do to address the trade imbalance with China and promote the rights of Chinese workers, especially the rights to freedom of association and collective bargaining? What actions, will you take to ensure that the Chinese government ceases manipulating its currency?

I have co-sponsored HR 1575 that penalizes the People's Republic of China for continued manipulation of its currency and directs the Secretary of Treasury to negotiate

with the People's Republic for changes in its currency evaluation. I have cosponsored the congressional resolutions calling for action to remedy the denial of collective bargaining and human rights in the People's Republic of China.

4. Health Care

- a. If elected, would you support efforts to control rising health care costs, including pharmaceutical costs, in order to make coverage more affordable for workers and retirees?

Yes

- b. If elected, would you support legislation that help laid-off workers purchase COBRA continuation coverage?

Yes

- c. If elected, would you support legislation that strengthens the employment-based system of coverage, including a federal reinsurance program that stabilizes premiums for employer coverage by helping cover the highest cost individuals?

Yes

- d. If elected, would you oppose legislation that would undermine coverage for 160 million Americans who are insured through their employer, including proposals that encourage cost shifting to workers through Health Savings Accounts and high-deductible health plans? Imposing a cap on the amount of health benefits that are excluded from taxation? Stripping important consumer protections and driving up for most workers in small firms because of unfair competition with association health plans?

Yes

- e. In light of the success of public programs in keeping the number of uninsured from growing more than it already has, would you support efforts to ensure enough funding for Medicaid and the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) to keep pace with the growing need? Would you oppose efforts to block grant Medicaid, thereby shifting greater costs onto state and threatening coverage for low-income families, the elderly and people disabilities?

Yes

- f. If elected, would you support legislation that would establish minimum nurse staffing ratios in our nation's hospitals to ensure safe patient care?

Yes

5. Prescription Drugs

- a. In the light of the difficulty and confusion surrounding the roll out of the new Part D benefit, would you support legislation that would protect beneficiaries from the harsh penalties associated with delaying or making a bad choice, including delaying imposition of the late enrollment penalty, allowing beneficiaries to change plans within the first year, and preserving retiree health benefits for retirees to return to in the first year if they were unaware of the full consequences of leaving their employer's plan?

Yes

- b. If elected, would you support efforts to improve coverage by eliminating the federal payment gap for individual expenditures (which will be for drug costs between \$2,250 and \$5,100 in 2006 but will grow with annual drug cost increases)?

Yes

- c. If elected, would you support efforts to rein in rising drug prices, starting with requiring the Secretary of Health and Human Services to use the bargaining power of 40 million beneficiaries to get better drug prices?

Yes

- d. If elected, would you work to preserve traditional Medicare and prevent private plans from undermining the program through inflated payments and "cherry picking" the healthiest seniors?

Yes

- e. If elected, will you work to reverse the new law's discriminatory treatment of retirees who have employer-provided prescription drug benefits?

Yes

- f. If elected, will you oppose efforts to use the new accounting rules (known as the "cost containment" provisions and expected to be triggered for the first time in 2007) to cut back on Medicare benefits and/or charge beneficiaries more for their coverage?

Yes

6. Labor Standards

- a. If elected, would you oppose any effort to exclude more workers from the protections of the 40-hour workweek or deny more workers the absolute right to overtime pay?

Yes

- b. If elected, would you oppose any effort to allow employers to avoid paying case overtime for work in excess of 40 hours per week or to exclude certain forms of compensation from the calculation of overtime pay?

Yes

- c. If elected, would you oppose any proposed legislation that would either weaken or repeal the Davis-Bacon Act?

Yes

- d. If elected, would you oppose any proposed legislation that would either weaken or repeal the Service Contract Act?

Yes

- e. If elected, would you oppose any regulatory or legislative effort to limit the circumstance under which an employee is able to take FMLA leave?

Yes

- f. If elected, would you support and effort to expand the FMLA to cover workers in companies with fewer than 50 employees?

Yes

- g. If elected, would you support legislation to provide for wage replacement during periods of FMLA leave?

Yes

- h. If elected, would you support legislation to require that companies guarantee seven days of annual paid sick leave?

Yes

7. Pensions

- a. If elected, would you support measures to encourage the creation and expansion of defined benefit plans?

Yes

- b. If elected, would you support measures to protect the retirement savings of workers who participate in 401(k)s by broadening their diversification rights, ensuring their access to independent investment advice and mandating equal worker representation on 401(k) boards?

Yes

8. Occupational Safety and Health Act

- a. If elected, would you oppose; Proposed legislation that would weaken the OSH Act by weakening job safety enforcement or shift the emphasis to voluntary compliance; Proposed legislation that would rely on third part audits instead of OSHA inspections; Any budget cuts that would weaken the ability of OSHA to protect the safety and health of US workers?

Yes

- b. If elected would you support: Proposed legislation to extend OSHA coverage to the million of state and local employees currently excluded from the OSHAct; Proposed legislation to strengthen whistleblower protection for worker who raise job safety concerns; Proposed legislation that would make criminal violation involving a death of a worker a felony instead of a misdemeanor?

Yes

9. Social Security

- a. If elected, would you oppose measures to replace any part of Social Security's guaranteed benefits with individual investment accounts?

Yes

- b. If elected, would you oppose efforts to increase the retirement age or to penalize workers who retire before Social Security's full benefit age (which is already increasing to 67 under current law)?

Yes

- c. If elected, would you oppose measures that would reduce the guaranteed defined benefit under current law?

Yes

10. Education

- a. If elected, would you actively oppose all private school voucher proposals and other schemes intended to divert taxpayer dollars from public to private schools?

Yes, as the Congresswoman from the District of Columbia, I spearheaded the opposition of the imposition of schools vouchers here in the city.

- b. If elected, would you actively support legislation that would help state and local school district reduce their class sizes and finance school repair, construction and modernization projects at local prevailing wages?

Yes

11. Equal Pay

- a. If elected, would you support federal legislation to end pay discrimination against women and provide more effective remedies for its victims?

Yes

12. Privatization

- a. If elected, would you oppose efforts to privatize public services and instead support efforts to work with public employees to improve services through cooperative job redesign, training and labor-management coordination?

Yes

13. Immigrant Workers

- a. If elected, would you support legislation that would provide otherwise law-abiding undocumented workers and their families who work here and contribute to their communities with permanent legal status through a new legalization program?

Yes

- b. If elected, would you support legislation to protect immigrant workers' workplace rights, including the right to improve their live by freely joining or forming a union.

Yes

- c. If elected, would you support reform, but not expansion, of guest-worker programs to give greater protection to workers?

Yes

14. Unemployment Insurance

- a. If elected, would you support efforts to strengthen our unemployment insurance system by covering part-time workers and recent hire and increasing the weekly benefit?

Yes

- b. If elected, would you oppose so-called “devolution” proposals to weaken or eliminate the historic federal role in funding UI program administration and overseeing the states’ UI systems?

Yes

- c. If elected, would you support providing federal extended benefits during periods of high long term unemployment?

Yes

15. Nondiscrimination in the Workplace

- a. If elected, would you oppose employment discrimination based on sexual orientation?

Yes

16. Union Dues

- a. If elected, would you oppose restriction on the use of union dues for political and legislative activities?

Yes

17. The War in Iraq

- a. Would you support the call from members of Congress for the establishment of benchmarks in the key areas of security, governance, reconstruction, and internationalization, and call for a commitment to bring our troops home rapidly?

Yes

- b. Would you publicly call for the recognition of a strong, free, and democratic labor movement as necessary bedrock of Iraqi democracy?

Yes

- c. Would you support expanded benefits for veterans of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan including a new G.I. bill and a VA housing program to meet current needs?

Yes

18. Dedicated Funding for Mass Transit

- a. If elected will you work to insure that: the federal government will commit funding to the operating cost of WMATA base on the number of federal workers who ride mass transit; such dedicated funding will not be an excuse for modifying the labor protection features of the WMATA compact; such dedicated finding will not be the sole source of government support and will also focus on raising money from the business community?

Yes. As a senior member on the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, I have worked continuously to secure funding for WMATA resulting in significant increases. I am an original cosponsor of HR 3496, the "Metro Funding and Oversight Act," which provides \$1.5 billion dollars to Metro for capital expenses. I spearheaded the unique public/private partnership that funded the New Yew York Avenue Metro station.

19. Full Voting Representation for resident of the District of Columbia

- a. If elected will you endorse and strongly support the No Taxation Without Representation Act; and work for passage of legislation supported by the organization called Our Nation's Capital to deal with the structural imbalance in the finances of the District of Columbia that makes it impossible for the District to meet its expenses?

As the Member that represents the District I introduced H.R. 398, the No Taxation Without Representation Act, the bill that provides for full voting representation for the District of Columbia in both the House and the Senate. I am also working with Government Reform Committee Chairman Tom Davis to improve his House bill. I introduced H.R. 1586 which provides an annual federal contribution to the District of Columbia to directly address the District's structural imbalance, which the Government Accountability Office reports is a direct and exclusive result of federal mandates and requirements. H.R. 3699, my land transfer bill I introduced with Mr. Tom Davis, transfers land from the federal government to the District of Columbia in a first step toward addressing the structural imbalance the District faces.

