

Election 2016

IDAC

Questions for Candidates

Active engagement in our democracy is how Americans ensure that we have government “of the people, by the people, and for the people.” Although it might seem difficult to have an impact on a campaign, every one of us can play a role in shaping the dialogue. These candidate questions are a resource for people who want to question candidates for federal, state, and local office about their positions on issues that affect people with disabilities, their families, and their communities. This wording is only a suggestion and these questions are not proprietary—feel free to change them to suit your personal voice and share them widely.

How can I use these questions?

- E-mail a question to the candidate’s campaign.
- Ask a question at a candidate’s town hall meeting or other public appearance.
- Write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper encouraging them to include disability issues in their coverage of the candidate’s policy positions.
- Tweet your question to the campaign and/or during a Twitter town hall.

Hashtag: #IDACvote

- Sponsor a town hall meeting at your congregation and use these questions.
- Share the candidates’ answers widely.

Independence and Community Living

Medicaid provides assistance to more than 8 million persons with disabilities, giving them the tools they need to live and work independently in their communities, such as battery powered wheelchairs, personal care attendants, and other rehabilitation devices and services. There have been proposals to restructure Medicaid.

Questions:

- Please explain your position on Medicaid reform and its impact, if any, on the levels of funding and services currently provided under the existing Medicaid rules with respect to persons with disabilities. Specifically, how would you ensure that persons with disabilities now eligible for Medicaid will continue to receive the same level of services as are currently available?
- Please explain your position on the expansion of the Medicaid waiver program in ways that will facilitate the ability of persons with disabilities to live independently in the community.

Education

Since passage and implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), which sets standards to ensure that persons with disabilities will have equal access to public education, graduation rates for people with disabilities have increased 45 percent, with an associated decrease in dropout rates for students with disabilities. Similarly, enrollment in college has doubled for students with disabilities. Nevertheless, students with disabilities seeking a higher education continue to face enormous barriers to success.

Questions:

- Do you support the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and funding it at higher levels to ensure that more students with disabilities complete high school?
- What initiatives would you propose to increase post-secondary educational opportunities for students with disabilities?

Employment

Americans of faith believe that work brings dignity, self-respect and responsibility. Unfortunately Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which mandates equal access to employment for people with disabilities, has failed to result in a significant increase in employment for people with disabilities.

Questions:

- What would you do to increase competitive integrated employment for people with disabilities, particularly in the private sector?

Access to Health Care

The Affordable Care Act of 2010 (ACA) includes reforms that will help persons with disabilities lead healthy lives, and live and work independently in their communities. One important reform is a requirement that health insurance must be made available at reasonable cost to persons with pre-existing health conditions and disabilities. In addition, the ACA expands coverage of mental health services and substance use disorders essential for the health of many citizens, including those with disabilities.

Questions:

- Will you support the continuation of reforms passed into law as part of the Affordable Care Act that help people with disabilities lead healthy lives and increase their access to long term services and supports, as well as support further expansion of mental health and substance use services?