

2016 AFL-CIO Congressional Candidate Questionnaire

First Name	Middle Name	Last Name
State	District	Party
<input type="checkbox"/> Incumbent <input type="checkbox"/> Challenger <input type="checkbox"/> Open		
Do you currently hold or have you previously held public office(s)? Describe.		
Have you received an AFL-CIO endorsement in the past? If so, for which office(s)?		
Official Campaign Committee Name		
Campaign Address		
City	State	ZIP
Campaign Manager	Email	Cell Phone
Are you now or have you ever been a union member? Union(s) and local(s)?		

Please return this questionnaire to:

1. RAISING WAGES

The defining economic challenge of our time is raising wages and living standards for the vast majority of American workers. Wages have been flat or falling for the bottom 90% of wage earners since 2009 and for the bottom 70% of wage earners since the 1970s. Wage stagnation is not the inevitable outcome of immutable economic forces, but the predictable result of policy decisions made on behalf of the most privileged segments of our society. We must make different policy choices going forward if we want the vast majority of workers to be the primary beneficiaries of economic growth. We must: (1) strengthen collective bargaining and freedom of association; (2) ensure full employment; (3) protect and strengthen labor standards and expand employment protections for working families; (4) reform the global economy; and (5) reform Wall Street.

After World War II, there was a dramatic reduction in economic inequality and a dramatic increase in U.S. living standards. Wages and compensation rose in tandem with productivity until the late 1970s. Since 1979, however, wage growth has been flat or falling for the bottom 70% of wage earners, while productivity and corporate profits have soared. Virtually all income gains since the end of the Great Recession have been captured by the 1%.

Congress should strengthen collective bargaining and freedom of association. The decline of unions in recent decades has been a key factor behind the stagnation of wages for both union and nonunion workers.

- ▶ Would you support the WAGE Act (sponsored by Rep. Bobby Scott and Sen. Patty Murray), legislation that would bring remedies for workers who face retaliation for exercising their rights in line with other workplace laws?
- ▶ Would you support the Workplace Democracy Act (sponsored by Sen. Bernie Sanders and Rep. Mark Pocan), legislation that would (1) permit workers to form unions through a process known as majority sign-up, and (2) establish first contract mediation and arbitration?
- ▶ Would you voice public support for union organizing campaigns?
- ▶ Would you protect the bargaining and representational rights of federal employees by voting against efforts to eliminate the proper use of official time and automatic dues deduction?

Congress should ensure full employment. Until the 1970s, full employment was the primary objective of economic policy making. In recent decades, this goal has been sacrificed to largely unfounded fears of accelerating inflation, and excessive unemployment has had profoundly destructive effects on wage growth for the vast majority of workers. Meanwhile, America's infrastructure continues to crumble, falling to 25th in the world according to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), costing millions of jobs and hindering economic growth.

- ▶ Would you support monetary policies that promote full employment?
- ▶ Would you support funding for large-scale infrastructure projects, such as school modernization, water and energy systems, and transportation—including highways, public transit and airports—

necessary to bring our nation's infrastructure to no less than a B+ grade from the American Society of Civil Engineers, and that would generate good jobs?

- ▶ Would you support efforts to strengthen Buy America and local procurement standards?
- ▶ Would you support the federal government focusing workforce development funds on high-quality jobs and high road employers?
- ▶ Would you oppose further federal pay freezes and benefit cuts that already have cost federal employees more than \$159 billion in lost income?

Congress should protect and strengthen labor standards and expand employment protections for working families. The failure to update labor standards and expand employment protections to help working families has been a significant factor limiting wage growth in recent decades. At the same time, prevailing wage laws that have helped maintain wage standards and guarantee high-quality work on projects using taxpayer money have come under increasing attack as corporate interests have increased their power in Congress.

- ▶ Would you support raising the federal minimum wage with indexing and parity for tipped workers? If so, what should the minimum wage be? Should there be a phase-in period for raising the minimum wage? If so, how would it be structured?
- ▶ Would you support regulatory action to restore overtime protections that have been eroded since 1975?
- ▶ Would you oppose efforts to either weaken or repeal the Davis-Bacon Act?
- ▶ Would you oppose efforts to weaken or repeal the Service Contract Act?
- ▶ Would you support efforts to ensure that Section 13(c) transit labor protections apply to all federal transit programs, including all "innovative finance initiatives"?
- ▶ Would you oppose efforts to undermine the use of project labor agreements (PLAs)?
- ▶ Would you support legislation and budget resources to end the misclassification of employees as contractors?

Congress should reform the global economy. U.S. global economic policies have promoted the economic interests of multinational corporations over those of working people in the United States and overseas; contributed to the deindustrialization of America; and put downward pressure on mid-level wages.

Repeatedly, America's workers have raised their voices against poorly designed trade rules, such as those enshrined in the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the U.S.-Korea Free Trade Agreement. Yet we now face another deal that advances the desires of global corporations rather than the needs of working families and our communities. The Trans-Pacific Partnership's (TPP's) shortcomings span virtually every topic it touches, from its tariff reduction schedule and weak rules of origin to its outmoded financial services rules and its job-killing rules regarding public enterprises and government procurement. Among its most important failures are:

1. Labor provisions that repeat past mistakes and fail to create confidence that they will be enforced;
2. Unreformed investment rules that increase corporate influence over our economy and undermine our democracy;
3. Complete lack of effective rules against currency manipulation; and
4. Restrictions on Buy America policies by opening the U.S. government's procurement market to foreign investors, and expanding to cover state and local procurement policies in the future.

- ▶ Would you oppose the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP)?
- ▶ Would you support efforts to strengthen enforcement of trade agreements?
- ▶ Would you support legislation that allowed for the application of countervailing duties to address currency manipulation (currency CVD)?
- ▶ Would you defend worker rights globally and raise labor standards in the global supply chain?
- ▶ Would you vote to make corporations pay the same taxes on offshore profits as they pay on domestic profits, so they no longer have a tax incentive to send jobs overseas?

Congress should reform Wall Street. Wall Street has diverted resources away from productive investments toward unproductive speculation, and allowed financial and corporate executives to claim a bigger slice of the economic pie without making the pie bigger.

- ▶ Would you support passage of a Wall Street speculation tax?
- ▶ Would you support full implementation of the Dodd-Frank law?
- ▶ Would you support a 21st century Glass-Steagall Act and breaking up the too-big-to-fail banks?
- ▶ Would you vote to end the tax deductibility of stock-based executive pay?
- ▶ Would you vote to close the "carried interest" loophole?

2. RETIREMENT SECURITY

Retirement income security is beyond the reach of most Americans. According to the nonpartisan Center for Retirement Research at Boston College, the retirement income deficit—the gap between what Americans have accumulated for retirement and what they will need for a decent retirement—is a staggering \$7.7 trillion. This gaping deficit is explained in large part by the fraying of our private pension system, with fewer private-sector workers now covered by traditional pension plans.

As currently constructed, retirement savings plans, like 401(k) plans or IRAs, cannot make up for the loss of traditional pensions. They require workers to bear all the risk, often are insufficiently

diversified, suffer from poor returns, and typically carry heavy fees and expenses. Nearly half of all American households have no retirement savings whatsoever; for those with savings, the median retirement account balance is \$2,500 for all working-age households and \$14,500 for near-retirement households.

Social Security remains the foundation of retirement income for working families and the principal insurance against family impoverishment due to death or disability. The Social Security system is extraordinarily well crafted, with a progressive benefits structure that delivers higher returns to lower-wage workers and ensures workers and beneficiaries will not outlive their benefits, which are protected from erosion by inflation. But as important as they are, Social Security benefits are too low—only \$15,936 per year for the average retired worker, little more than the full-time minimum wage and only \$4,000 above the federal poverty level.

With a nearly \$2.79 trillion trust fund and the ability to pay all promised benefits in full for close to two decades, the program is not in crisis. Over the next 75 years, Social Security's modest funding shortfall, amounting to 1% of gross domestic product (GDP), can be addressed without any benefit cuts to current or future retirees.

- ▶ Would you oppose measures to replace any part of Social Security's guaranteed benefits with individual investment accounts?
- ▶ Would you oppose efforts to reduce Social Security's guaranteed benefits under current law, including proposals to: (1) increase the retirement age (which already is increasing to 67 under current law); (2) change the calculation for the annual cost-of-living adjustment; (3) change the benefit formula; or (4) institute means testing?
- ▶ Would you support measures to strengthen retirement income security by increasing Social Security benefits?

3. OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH

In 1970, Congress enacted the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSH Act) in response to the unacceptable number of workers who were being killed or seriously injured in the workplace. Since then, significant progress has been made, but the toll of workplace injuries, illnesses and fatalities remains high. Each year thousands of workers are killed and millions more injured or diseased because of their jobs. And some groups of workers, including Latino workers and immigrant workers, are at much greater risk due to the dangerous conditions and lack of protections. Millions of workers are not covered by the law, and for other workers, protections are inadequate.

The Obama administration has moved to strengthen worker safety and health protections, increasing the job safety budget, enhancing enforcement and issuing needed safety and health safeguards. But business groups and many congressional Republicans have opposed these measures and tried to block new regulations, and cut the safety and health budget.

Workers need stronger safety and health protections. The OSH Act needs to be updated and strengthened. Legislation (the Protecting America's Workers Act) has been proposed in the past several Congresses to expand the OSH Act's coverage to all workers, to strengthen whistleblower protections and to strengthen enforcement, all of which the AFL-CIO strongly supports.

- ▶ Would you support legislation to strengthen the Occupational Safety and Health Act and extend OSHA coverage to all workers, strengthen whistleblower protections and enhance OSHA's enforcement programs?
- ▶ Would you support increases in the job safety budget to strengthen standard setting, enforcement, and worker safety and health training programs?
- ▶ Would you oppose efforts to weaken or defund the regulatory and enforcement programs of OSHA and the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA)?
- ▶ Would you oppose legislation that would make it more difficult or impossible for government agencies to develop and issue new needed safeguards to protect workers, the public and consumers?

4. IMMIGRATION

The AFL-CIO supports comprehensive immigration reform and has strongly advocated for keeping families together and creating a road map to citizenship. Immigration reform must be done in a comprehensive manner to protect U.S. workers and reduce the exploitation of immigrant workers. The most effective way to eliminate the competitive advantage unscrupulous employers gain by hiring undocumented immigrants and captive guest workers is to ensure that all workers—immigrant and native-born—are paid prevailing wages and have the full protection of labor, health and safety, and other laws.

Immigration reform must include five major interconnected pieces: (1) a broad, inclusive road map to citizenship; (2) an independent, professional bureau to measure labor shortages and ensure employers are not bringing foreign workers into the country to displace U.S. workers or to lower industry wages and working conditions; (3) improvement, not expansion, of existing temporary worker programs; (4) a secure, effective work authorization mechanism that treats workers fairly; and (5) rational, humane border control measures.

The AFL-CIO supports President Obama's Nov. 20, 2014, immigration executive actions as an important step toward rational, humane enforcement of immigration law. By extending relief and work authorization to an estimated 4 million people, the Obama administration will help prevent unscrupulous employers from using unprotected workers to drive down wages and conditions for all workers in our country. Although this fix will be temporary, it will allow millions of people to live and work without fear, and afford them the status to assert their rights on the job. We are actively defending the newly created programs, while pushing for further executive actions to protect workers who remain vulnerable to wage theft, retaliation and other forms of exploitation. **Congress**

should pass comprehensive immigration reform and oppose efforts to enact enforcement-only legislation without a path to citizenship.

- ▶ Would you support a timely, certain road map to citizenship?
- ▶ Would you oppose piecemeal immigration reform, such as border or interior enforcement bills that do not provide a path to citizenship?
- ▶ Would you support immigration reform that establishes an independent bureau to make assessments about labor market shortages and that recommends levels of new entry into the workforce based on labor market needs?
- ▶ Would you support efforts to reform temporary worker programs by enhancing workplace protections and oversight over employers?
- ▶ Would you oppose measures to block deferred action or other protections for immigrant workers?
- ▶ Would you support legislation to draw clear lines of separation between immigration enforcement and local and state law enforcement?

5. WORK AND FAMILY POLICIES

The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) of 1993, requiring employers to provide up to 12 weeks of unpaid (but job-protected) family or medical leave, was a major step in helping workers balance the demands of work and family. But its limited coverage and the inability of millions of workers to afford leave without pay constrains the FMLA's effectiveness.

Almost 41 million workers are not covered by the FMLA and, according to a 2000 U.S. Labor Department study, more than three-quarters (78%) of workers who needed leave but did not take it said they could not afford it. To address these shortcomings, Congress should expand FMLA eligibility and guarantee paid leave for workers caring for newborns or sick family members. Congress also must resist calls by employers to curtail FMLA rights by limiting the circumstances under which employees can take leave.

The Fair Labor Standards Act requires employers to pay a time-and-a-half cash premium for work performed in excess of 40 hours per week. Under the guise of helping families balance work and family, some in Congress have proposed giving employers the option of offering compensatory time off (instead of a cash premium) for overtime work. Supporters claim this legislation would give workers more flexibility and control over their schedules. In reality, compensatory time proposals would undermine the 40-hour week—resulting in more workers working longer hours for less pay—and would give flexibility and control to employers rather than workers.

Congress must enact paid family and medical leave insurance, and guarantee at least seven paid sick days for every worker. Employees should not have to choose between coming to work sick or staying home without pay—and risking their jobs. Yet about four in 10 private-sector workers do

not have access to paid, job-protected sick days. Low-wage workers are especially vulnerable: 78% of the lowest-wage workers—the majority of whom are women—do not have a single paid sick day. When workers can't access paid sick time, their economic and job security suffers. Just 3.5 unpaid days away from work jeopardizes a typical family's ability to afford groceries when breadwinners do not have paid sick days.

Further, employees increasingly face just-in-time scheduling practices—receiving very little notice of their work schedules and facing shorter, unpredictable work hours when work is slow—without payment for their scheduled shifts. Managers often assign workers to call-in shifts or on-call shifts that require them to wait for their employers' calls (often within two hours of their potential shift) to find out whether to report to work. The AFL-CIO supports The Schedules That Work Act to provide greater rights and protections to workers who face abusive scheduling practices.

- ▶ Would you support legislation to provide paid family and medical leave?
- ▶ Would you support legislation to require that companies guarantee at least seven paid sick days per year?
- ▶ Would you oppose legislation that would excuse employers from their obligation under the FLSA to pay a cash premium for overtime work if they offer their employees compensatory time off?
- ▶ Would you support The Schedules That Work Act (sponsored by Rep. Rosa DeLauro and Sen. Elizabeth Warren) that would empower hourly employees with greater scheduling flexibility and certainty?
- ▶ What will you do to help achieve the goal of high-quality, debt-free higher education?
- ▶ What will you do to help the millions of Americans struggling with student loan payments?

6. HEALTH CARE

Health care is a basic human right. America's labor movement has worked for more than a century for guaranteed, high-quality health care for everyone. The enactment of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) marked a notable step toward this goal through the expansion of insurance coverage to almost 18 million Americans. However, much work remains to be done to ensure that all Americans have access to comprehensive coverage through employer-based coverage, ACA plans, Medicare, Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP).

This work begins by ensuring the full potential of the ACA is achieved. Governors who have not allowed their states to pursue a Medicaid expansion under the ACA must make the moral decision to cover as many people as possible. Improving affordability for consumers and controlling health care cost growth are urgent priorities. Affordability problems must be addressed by eliminating the misnamed "Cadillac plan tax," reducing the out-of-pocket costs faced by people with marketplace plans and ending policies that impose unfair costs on collectively bargained plans. Additional work will be needed to ensure that women have access to a full range of needed services—including contraceptive coverage—and that immigrant workers have fair access to coverage under the ACA.

Work also is needed to ensure that Medicare, Medicaid and CHIP effectively can protect our nation's most vulnerable populations—our children, older adults and people with disabilities. It is important that these programs provide affordable access to needed services as well as financial protection for households. Efforts to “reform” Medicare by increasing costs for beneficiaries must be rejected. Proposals to cap the federal contribution to Medicaid also must be opposed, and it is important that the CHIP program be renewed to ensure that out-of-pocket costs do not become a barrier to access. Ultimately, a “Medicare for all” approach holds the most promise in achieving our goal of providing a single, comprehensive standard of health coverage for the nation.

Congress should eliminate the health benefits tax—the misnamed “Cadillac plan tax.” The ACA includes a controversial tax designed to increase the out-of-pocket costs faced by workers with employer-based coverage.

- ▶ Would you support legislation to repeal this tax?
- ▶ Would you oppose any proposal to tax employment-based health coverage?

Congress should build on the Affordable Care Act while preserving the role of Medicare, Medicaid and the Children’s Health Insurance Program in making health care affordable for working people.

- ▶ Would you support adding a public health insurance plan option to the ACA or, as an alternative, creating a single-payer health plan, such as Medicare for all?
- ▶ Would you oppose Medicare changes that shift costs to seniors, including premium increases, co-payment increases, benefit reductions or conversion to a voucher system?
- ▶ Would you oppose significant cuts to the Medicaid program, through block-granting, “per capita caps,” changes to the funding formula or other approaches?
- ▶ Would you support legislation to preserve coverage provided by the Children’s Health Insurance Program?

Congress should promote policies that enhance fairness, quality and cost-effectiveness in the health care system.

- ▶ Would you oppose efforts to undermine the employer shared responsibility requirements of the ACA by limiting the workers to whom these protections apply or by loosening enforcement of the requirements?
- ▶ Would you support legislation to advance government negotiation of pharmaceutical drug prices and requirement of mandatory drug rebates?
- ▶ Would you oppose efforts to restrict access to FDA-approved birth control methods for working women?

For decades, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has used contract care to supplement the specialized, cost-effective, in-house care it provides to veterans. The 2014 Choice Act provided the VA with hiring funds to address the chronic shortage of in-house staff. The act also authorized a three-year program to allow the temporary use of more contract care based on wait list times and traveling distance.

- ▶ Would you support full funding of the VA to enable the VA health care system to remain the primary source of care to our nation's veterans?

7. CIVIL AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Congress should reform the criminal justice system. Nearly one in 100 American adults is incarcerated. America's prison population, which has increased by 500% over the past 30 years, is the largest in the world. Mass incarceration has affected individuals and families across the nation, but has had a disproportionate impact on communities of color and people in poverty.

- ▶ Would you support legislation that would require the reduction of the "three-strike" penalty—mandating life sentences for certain individuals—to a term of 25 years and shorten a previously mandated 20-year sentence for certain individuals to 15 years?
- ▶ Would you support giving judges more discretion to sentence below prescribed mandatory minimums by expanding the existing "safety valve" and creating a new authority for judges to depart from certain mandatory minimums?

Congress should restore full voting rights for all Americans. In the 2013 *Shelby v. Holder* decision, Chief Justice John Roberts wrote: "voting discrimination still exists; no one doubts that." Yet in that same decision, a 5-4 majority of the Supreme Court invalidated key provisions of the Voting Rights Act that required jurisdictions with a long history of voting discrimination to seek federal preapproval of proposed changes to their voting laws. Almost immediately after that decision, states and localities no longer under federal oversight began imposing new obstacles to voting, shortening early voting periods and closing polling places.

Meanwhile, more than 500,000 U.S. citizens live in our nation's capital and fulfill the responsibilities of citizenship. However, they have no voting representation in Congress. This situation is an affront to our principles of democracy.

- ▶ Would you sponsor and work to enact legislation to restore the strength of the Voting Rights Act?
- ▶ Would you oppose efforts to erect obstacles to voting, including those based on economic condition or race?
- ▶ Would you support efforts to promote greater voter participation and access, including early voting?

- ▶ Would you support universal registration and oppose all barriers to universal registration?
- ▶ Would you support legislation to allow the delegate elected by the citizens of the District of Columbia to vote in the House of Representatives?

Congress should strengthen the Equal Pay Act to ensure women are not shortchanged at work.

When the Equal Pay Act of 1963 was enacted into law, it became illegal for employers to pay unequal wages to male and female employees who perform the same work. Yet wage disparities between women and men are evident today in both the private and public sectors and at every educational level. The Paycheck Fairness Act would require employers to demonstrate that wage gaps between men and women doing the same work are truly a result of factors other than gender. It also would prohibit retaliation against workers who share salary information, or inquire about their employers' wage practices. It would bring Equal Pay Act remedies and class-action procedures into conformance with those available for other civil rights, and strengthen the government's ability to identify and remedy systematic wage discrimination.

- ▶ Would you support the Paycheck Fairness Act, legislation that would provide targeted remedies needed to update the historic Equal Pay Act?

Congress should fully protect the rights of LGBT Americans. LGBT Americans need basic protections from discrimination—in credit, education, employment, housing and public accommodations. Significant progress has been made in recent years (coverage under hate crimes legislation, open participation in military service and marriage equality), but until comprehensive federal LGBT civil rights protections are enacted, LGBT Americans remain vulnerable to discrimination in almost every sphere of life.

- ▶ Do you support the Equality Act, legislation that would ensure that nationwide civil rights protections cover LGBT Americans?