

**Forum for a Better Pennsylvania
PA Gubernatorial Candidates' Issues Questionnaire**

1. **Statewide urban-focused job creation program.** In the midst of a national and statewide African-American unemployment crisis, Pennsylvania's urban centers, such as Harrisburg, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia and Erie, are suffering from disproportionately high joblessness. That situation creates economic and social hardship for Pennsylvanians and negatively impacts the statewide economy. To address that challenge, we believe the next governor should support an urban-focused job creation program. If elected governor, would you support such an initiative?

Yes No .

Please comment:

The national recession has had a disproportionate impact on our cities and on minority families. As Governor, I will create the environment for the private sector to create jobs throughout the Commonwealth and I will address the specific needs – and opportunities – of our urban centers. Small businesses are responsible for creating the most jobs, and the largest increases in business owners have been among minority-owned firms. My economic development plan focuses on helping these small businesses thrive and grow. I will also focus on workforce development opportunities – including expansion of community colleges – so that all Pennsylvanians can receive training for high-demand jobs, and I will launch an Adult Learning Initiative to help adults go back to school and earn a degree or technical certificate.

2. **Among other things, House Bills 2140-2149 and companion legislation, Senate Bills 1210-1218, would ensure that small businesses and minority-owned, women-owned and disadvantaged-owned businesses across the state have fair access to contracts let by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania; create a cabinet-level secretary for minority and women business development; and facilitate timely payments to subcontractors on state projects. Does your campaign support passage of these bills through the House and Senate?**

Yes No .

Please comment:

I support the intent of these bills and will work with the Forum and other business leaders to achieve the important goal of increasing participation in state contracts by minority- and women-owned firms and small businesses. In my Plan for Economic Development, I have also proposed establishing an ombudsperson in the Department of Community & Economic Development to link women- and minority-owned businesses to the state's economic development programs and funding sources.

3. **Disclosure of diversity profile of gubernatorial campaigns, especially at senior levels. A critical indicator for ascertaining the projected accessibility and support that the Commonwealth's 1.3 million black Pennsylvanians will have in the next Governor's Office is the degree to which African Americans are currently included at senior staff or consultancy**

levels in the candidates' campaigns. Please indicate whether your campaign includes such input and describe that involvement?

Yes No .

Please comment / Elaborate:

African-Americans serve at senior levels of my campaign, including as my Southeastern Pennsylvania Political Director and my Southeastern Pennsylvania Field Director. In addition, I rely on the counsel of many of the African-American leaders with whom I have worked closely as Allegheny County Executive. I look forward to continuing to build relationships with African-American leaders in Philadelphia and across the state in order to broaden the advice that I receive.

- 4. Commitment to an accountable and credible diversity initiative for statewide procurement, to include recommended goals of 4, 6, 8 and 10 percent, respectively, in the first four years of the new governor's term. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has not demonstrated a stellar track record in the area of supplier diversity. In fact, it is estimated that contracts let to African Americans stand at less than 3 percent of annual total procurement. Will your Administration commit to more reasonable levels of African-American vendor inclusion at the recommended levels?**

Yes No .

Please comment:

I support and will adopt these targets. As Allegheny County Executive, I have worked hard to increase minority-owned business participation in purchasing and procurement. I changed county procedures to require departments to solicit prices from three suppliers for each purchase – at least one of which must be a disadvantaged business. In addition, under my leadership the county now publishes a list of contracts that are going to expire in the next 60 and 120 days so that there is full transparency and we can maximize the number of firms that can participate. I also launched a partnership with Citizens Bank to make working capital available to minority- and women-owned firms for contract financing, and so far the program has approved 30 loans totaling \$1.3 million.

- 5. A focus on the appointment of representative levels of meaningful, senior-level staff members and board, agency and commission members, wherever feasible and appropriate. According to a March 2003 report by the General Assembly's Joint State Government Commission, the Governor's Office has the authority to appoint nearly 900 Senate-approved nominees to key statewide boards, agencies and commissions. The rate of such appointments among African-Americans candidates – especially at chairmanship levels – has been disappointingly low. Will your administration commit to an initiative that would produce more representative levels of inclusion in such posts?**

Yes No .

Please comment:

I have relied on African-American men and women in major leadership positions in my County Administration and on the boards, commissions and authorities where I make appointments – including as department directors and board chairs. One important step that I took was to issue a Fair Representation Executive Order to create transparency and promote diversity on entities where the

County Executive has appointment power. As Governor, I will ensure that leadership positions in my Administration and on the boards and commissions where I make appointments fully reflect the diversity of Pennsylvania. I will also expand the pipeline for political leadership by reaching beyond the normal pathways to power in the appointments that I make to agency management positions, boards and commissions – since these are often a stepping stone to future elected office and other leadership opportunities.

6. A commitment to continue to provide adequate levels of funding to the Commonwealth’s public schools and charter schools. Given the demographic profile of the School District of Philadelphia and other school districts in high-density, African-American-populated urban centers. We are seeking a commitment to a continuation of adequate levels of funding for those districts. We are also seeking a commitment that the composition of the School Reform Commission (SRC), and other such school district governance/fiduciary bodies, will fairly reflect that demography. Given the critical role that school board chairpersons play in these school districts, we are also interested in the retention of the current SRC board chairperson. Will your administration make such commitments?

Yes No .

Please comment:

I am committed to adequate funding of Pennsylvania’s schools by continuing to implement the state’s school funding formula, which has provided essential resources to Philadelphia and school districts across the Commonwealth, and to advancing policies that do not pit traditional public and charter schools against one another. I am also a strong supporter of early childhood education, and I have set a goal of doubling the number of children in high-quality pre-kindergarten programs over the next 10 years. I agree that boards like the SRC should reflect the diversity of the communities they serve, and I look forward to working with and getting to know Chairman Archie and the other members.

7. The Pennsylvania Convention Center; We are seeking a commitment that board appointees, executive and senior-level leadership and procurement activities at the expanded facility be appropriately inclusive of African-Americans – as managers, trustees and vendors. There has been no regular, ongoing disclosure of operations-based supplier diversity or management composition at that facility, to date. Will you make such commitments and disclosures, if elected governor?

Yes No .

Please comment:

I agree that diversity and transparency are important with respect to the Convention Center and other major economic development projects.

8. We are seeking executive-level elected official support for review of race-based inequities in sentencing across the Commonwealth, and the development of a credible, statewide re-entry initiative? Will you make such commitments?

Yes No .

Please comment / Elaborate:

In addition to supporting a review of race-based sentencing inequities, I will focus on re-entry as Governor – just as I have done as Allegheny County Executive. Under my leadership, recidivism in the Allegheny County Jail System is down by at least 15% thanks to a program that focuses on what works in preventing re-arrests – including education, job training, family reunification, treatment for mental illness and substance abuse and attention to successful reintegration into society. My Plan for Safe Communities lays out an ambitious strategy to prevent people from entering the correctional system in the first place and to prevent recidivism for those who are imprisoned. It includes re-entry preparation, job training and inmate education so that inmates have the skills to make better decisions when they rejoin society. I will also expand and coordinate the drug and alcohol and mental health services that inmates receive so that they are less likely to commit additional crimes as a result of addiction and mental illness.

- 9. We are seeking a commitment to an enhanced focus on preparing young Pennsylvanians for careers in three of the Commonwealth’s anticipated economic growth areas – education, healthcare and the sciences. Such a program should include a discrete focus on underrepresented African-American and minority students. Will you make such a commitment, should you be elected?**

Yes No .

Please comment / Elaborate:

Preparing students to enter these high-growth professions is critical to our economic future, and I agree that our strategies should include a focus on under-represented populations. For example, in my Plan for Higher Education, I propose expanding the number of students who are trained for science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) professions in our colleges and universities, and I call for benchmarks and annual targets for increasing enrollment and supporting retention for academically prepared students who are the first in their family to attend college or who have not been adequately represented in the STEM fields, including women, African-Americans and Latinos.

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