

Questions Approved by Presidential Candidates' Workgroup

1. Because it is well known that joining a union is the best way known to raise wages to a living wage, improve working conditions, and create family-sustaining jobs, every working American must have the right to do so. As President, what would you do to address the forces responsible for the Janus decision?

The best way to fight back against corporate power is by building worker power. I believe that all workers should have the right to a voice at work. As president, I will work to pass the *Public Sector Freedom to Negotiate Act* to strengthen public unions and fix the Janus ruling by guaranteeing the the more than 17 million public service employees to join a union and collectively bargain over wages, hours, and the terms and conditions of employment. I will also increase opportunities for worker organizing, including new models like sectoral bargaining, and fight to pass the *PRO Act*, which will strengthen protections for workers' right to organize a union, protect employees' right to strike, and ban anti-union "right-to-work" laws. As president, I will protect and build on federal labor law so that states and local governments can innovate by making the National Labor Relations Act the floor, not the ceiling for labor rights.

Read more about my Opportunity and Justice for Workers plan [here](#).

2. How will you ensure that every American can access affordable healthcare and long-term care as we continue on our path to universal healthcare?

I believe that health care is a human right and that Medicare for All is the best way to safeguard that right for every American. On the path to Medicare for All, we must act with urgency for people across the country who need quality, affordable health care.

I also have a plan focused on fixing one component of our broken health care system on the path to Medicare for All: long-term care. My plan calls for massively expanding Medicaid to ensure access to affordable long-term services and support for every American that needs it. It would:

1. I would increase the asset threshold from \$2,000 to \$200,000 and increase the income limit from \$36,000 to \$49,000 for a family of two.
2. Require all states to offer home and community based care, in addition to institutional care.
3. Recognizes that the women and men of the long-term services and supports workforce perform essential work every day and that they should be compensated as such. That means at a minimum, being paid at least \$15 per hour, having access to affordable health care, retirement benefits, paid family and medical leave, and other workplace benefits that provide economic security.

4. Expand support for family caregivers by making them eligible for an expanded EITC, putting more money in their pockets, and fully funding family caregiver supports in the Older Americans Act.

Read more about my plan to expand access to high-quality, affordable, long-term services and supports [here](#).

3. Do you support a national single payer healthcare plan? And if so, when did you first make that publicly clear? If not, please tell us what you support and why.

I am an original [co-sponsor](#) of Medicare for All in the Senate. I believe that health care is a basic human right, and that Medicare for All is the most efficient way to guarantee quality, affordable health care for every American.

4. If you are elected, when will you begin to address the inequities that all working people including communities of color, immigrants, women, LGBTQ+, and people with disabilities — face in their employment and to address reverse multi-generational poverty, exploitation, low wages and unsafe working conditions, which the most vulnerable among us face?

The problems in our economy--wage stagnation, systemic racism, and lack of opportunity--are not an academic exercise for me. When I go home to my neighborhood in Newark, a majority Black and Brown community with a median income of about \$15,000, I see them in my friends and neighbors. When I am president, I am going to work to create an economy where everyone has a stake in its success; where workers actually benefit from the profits that they help create; where small businesses can compete and grow without being swallowed up and spit out by monopolistic giants; and where every community--not just a few cities on the coasts--is empowered and thriving.

That starts with strengthening workers' rights to collectively bargain because when workers are able to build power and come together to secure higher wages and better benefits, our entire economy does better. I will protect and build on federal labor law by closing loopholes that allow workers to be misclassified as independent contractors, strengthening protections for workers' rights to collectively bargain and strike, and expanding opportunities for worker organizing, including support for sectoral bargaining models.

I will fight to ensure the basic dignity of a living wage and overtime protections, affordable child care and guaranteed paid family leave, and to pass the *Paycheck Fairness Act* to finally close the gender pay gap. I will fight against workplace harassment by pushing for the *Be HEARD Act*, which would ensure that workplaces have resources to prevent harassment and that all workers — including contractors, interns and trainees — are protected from workplace harassment and discrimination. And, I will fight for protections from discrimination and closing loopholes that leave

workers vulnerable to being fired for who they are, including with the *Equality Act*, to extend protections to LGBTQ Americans, and the *Protecting Older Workers Against Discrimination Act*.

Additionally, I will work to pass my Rise Credit, which would give every working American a cost-of-living refund of up to \$4,000 each year. And, I will reverse multi-generational poverty by implementing “Baby Bonds,” a proposal that would create a new American birthright to close the wealth gap and give every American a shot at economic opportunity.

Read more about my plan to provide opportunity and justice for workers [here](#).

5. Specifically concerning immigrants, what relief can we expect you to extend to those who hold temporary protected status, what protection to the Dreamers and what clear path forward can we expect from your administration on this issue. How would you make the United States a welcoming nation to immigrants again?

Our immigration system should reflect our values. Separating children from their families, abusive and indefinite detention of immigrants, and shutting the door to desperate refugees does not reflect who we are as Americans. As president, I will fight to pass legislation in Congress that reforms our immigration system and provides earned citizenship for the millions of undocumented immigrants living and working with us as our colleagues, neighbors, and friends.

But I understand the urgency of this issue. We can't wait for Congress to act. Starting on Day One as president, I will use my executive authority to reform our immigration system by restoring and expanding policies that provide protection to Dreamers, their families, individuals with TPS, and those with DED status, and promote opportunities to help beneficiaries pursue available pathways to citizenship. I will also immediately eliminate for-profit detention facilities and virtually eliminate our nation's reliance on immigration incarceration. And, I will also take steps to end the backlog of immigration cases, reverse this administration's public charge rule and its discriminatory Muslim ban, in addition to increasing the cap on refugees to a minimum of 110,000.

Read more about my plan to take immediate action to reform our immigration system through executive action [here](#).

6. Do you support \$15.00 minimum wage, and an opportunity to join a union? If so, when did you first make that clear publicly? And if not, what is your vision of what is a living wage?

I am an original co-sponsor of the *Raise the Wage Act*, which would increase the federal minimum wage to \$15.00 an hour and index the minimum wage to median wage growth. I strongly support the right for workers to join a union, and as president, would fight to strengthen collective bargaining and support state and local efforts to do so, including by fighting to pass the *Pro Act*, the *Public Service Freedom to Negotiate Act*, and the *Workplace Fairness Act*. I would also fight to for models like sectoral bargaining that increase opportunities for worker organizing.

Read more about my plan to provide opportunity and justice for workers [here](#).

7. Climate change is a real and present danger to all of us and the powerful corporations are not being held responsible for the rampant pollution that contributes to it. As President, how would you hold these corporations responsible? Would you agree to work with other nations toward this goal?

The crisis of climate change and environmental injustice is what happens when corporate polluters are allowed to privatize their profits and externalize their costs on to everyone else — when they're given license to do things they would never accept in their own neighborhoods or for their own children. Decades of federal policy have padded these companies' profits and made the crisis worse, not only through lackluster oversight and disinvestment in low-income and Black and Brown communities, but by literally subsidizing corporate polluters and the fossil fuel industry.

I have put forward a comprehensive plan to achieve a 100% carbon neutral economy by 2045, millions of good-paying jobs, and a guaranteed right to clean air, water, and soil for all Americans. If we are serious about meeting the existential threat of climate change, we all must join in the fight. My plan would hold corporate polluters accountable by:

- Forcing companies that pollute to pay to clean up their pollution, instead of taxpayers footing the bill, by reauthorizing and tripling the Superfund tax on chemical and oil companies;
- Reinvesting in communities by extending and doubling the fees on coal mine operators to help fund the cleanup of all abandoned mines within 10 years and provide opportunities for new economic development;
- Protecting marginalized communities suffering from environmental injustices by increasing staffing tenfold at the EPA's Environmental Justice Office and the External Civil Rights Enforcement Office, with resources specifically allocated to ensure timely cleanup of Superfund sites;
- Stepping up efforts to defend communities of color, low-income communities, and indigenous communities by doubling staffing in all EPA enforcement offices;

- Safeguarding the basic human right of safe drinking water, by increasing resources for investigation and enforcement of violation of the Safe Drinking Water Act standards for public water systems;
- Ending the plague on communities caused by lead paint by requiring responsible paint companies to pay for cleanup and abatement;
- Strengthening bankruptcy laws so that polluting companies cannot evade responsibility for environmental cleanups, as well as owed worker benefits and pensions;
- Putting the overall health of communities ahead of corporations by requiring the EPA to consider the level of existing pollution in the area before granting or renewing new Clean Air Act or Clean Water Act permits.
- Rescinding approvals for the Keystone Pipeline and the Dakota Access Pipeline, and require free, prior, and informed consent from tribal nations for all future major energy projects on federal lands that would affect those communities. Honor and enforce the federal government's government-to-government consultation obligations with tribal nations for all actions or inactions that may impact tribal interests.

I will also work to restore our global leadership on this issue. On Day One in office, I will rejoin the Paris Climate Agreement, and bring the international community together around even more ambitious commitments, with binding emissions targets and transparent monitoring and enforcement mechanisms. I will also refocus international aid toward clean technologies, dramatically increase US funding commitments to the UN Green Climate Fund, and prioritize progressive environmental and labor standards in all free trade agreements.

Read more about my plan to address the threat of climate change [here](#).

8. Do you believe the United States can free itself from the horrible Citizens United decision, and if so, do you have a plan that would hold corporations at bay and elevate the one- person one-vote doctrine for fair elections?

I support a constitutional amendment to overturn *Citizens United*, which was a grave mistake that unleashed the floodgates for special interest dollars in our elections. Washington is a town dominated by money and special interests. That's why my campaign does not accept contributions from corporate PACs, federally registered lobbyists, pharmaceutical company executives or executives from the oil, gas, or coal industries.

We need to rebuild our democracy so that everyone has a voice. That means ending *Citizens United* and getting rid of the influence big money has on our politics. But it also means creating a new Voting Rights Act--one that restores Section 5 of the Voting

Rights Act, ends partisan gerrymandering and voter roll purging and makes it easier for people to vote. We need to set up automatic voter registration, allow more people to vote early and by mail, make ballots available in different languages, make Election Day a federal holiday and put an end to felon disenfranchisement.

Read more about my plan for a new Voting Rights Act [here](#).

9. Could you please give us specific example on your labor-related activities, such as previous membership; or, if you have previously a mayor, governor, etc. talk about your contract negotiations and support of unions; if you have been in Congress or Legislatures, please talk about specific votes and bills you sponsored.

My grandfather migrated from the Jim Crow South to Detroit, where he landed a union job on the assembly lines during World War II that brought him and his family, including my mom, out of poverty. My dad grew up in a segregated mountain town in North Carolina but was able to lift himself and his family into the middle class in the span of a generation. For them and countless others, the story was the same: if you work hard in America, America will work for you.

I believe that an economy that leaves no one behind is good for everyone. I've worked toward that goal my entire life — whether it's partnering with the Laborers to start a new local union in Newark and ensure local residents benefited from federal investment, or in the Senate, where I am a co-sponsor of the Pro Act, the Public Service Freedom to Negotiate Act, the Workplace Fairness Act, and more.

As Senator, I have been proud to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with subcontracted airport workers in their fight to collectively bargain. These workers have for too long been held powerless as a result of corporations' no-stone-left-unturned effort to cut costs, where they contract out key business functions rather than hiring employees directly. My efforts to help them organize included shining a light on the stories of working people living in poverty, joining rallies at airports to raise public pressure, and personally calling airline CEOs urging them to negotiate in good faith.

I am also proud to say that my campaign has entered into a neutrality agreement with the Teamsters and that we voluntarily recognized the International Brotherhood of Teamsters Local 238 as our workers' union representative after a majority of state workers signed a union card.

10. If you are elected President of the United States, what would your policy goals be for the first 100 days and what leadership style would you bring to the position to accomplish it?

During my first 100 days in office, I will work to repair the damage this president has wrought--from pulling us out of the Paris Climate Accords, to weakening anti-discrimination in the Affordable Care Act, to rolling back critical consumer protections. I would use my executive authority to immediately begin [reforming our immigration system](#), [protecting reproductive rights](#), and [initiating the clemency process](#) to liberate the more than 17,000-plus nonviolent drug offenders serving unjust and excessive sentences. But as I've said throughout this campaign, beating Donald Trump is the floor, not the ceiling. Many of the challenges we face existed long before Donald Trump got in the White House. That's why I will fight to pass legislation to reform our democracy and strengthen our institutions, reform our criminal justice system, create economic security and opportunity for all, take on the existential fight of climate change, and restore our standing around the globe.

My leadership style is rooted firmly in the community I go home to. For the past twenty years, I've lived in the same community in Newark, New Jersey and for close to seven years I served as the city's mayor. Newark is a majority Black and Brown inner-city community and the biggest city in the state of New Jersey. In Newark, I learned from activists, advocates and mentors, who inspired me, challenged me, and taught me to understand that in the face of injustice, there can be no wait--only work and urgent action. Every decision I make is informed by the struggles and challenges of my neighbors and those across the country who find more month at the end of their money than money at the end of their month. In considering key appointments, I will prioritize individuals who represent the people--not corporate interests--that they are fortunate enough to serve.