



CANDIDATE FORUMS SAMPLE QUESTIONS FROM JFNA

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During the election season, candidate forums can be a powerful tool for charities such as Jewish federations and affiliated agencies to gain exposure for our shared public policy agenda. Such events increase awareness of our issues with donors and other constituencies as well as serve to foster bridges with candidates for a variety of public offices. It is important to remember, however, that such events need to remain nonpartisan and should cover a broad array of issues, providing each major candidate with equal opportunities to respond to the issues. With this background in mind, The Jewish Federations of North America (JFNA) has provided a number of sample forum questions for your consideration.

Feel free to modify the questions to take reflect local issues and perspectives. If you have any questions, feel free to contact Liz Leibowitz, Director of Government Affairs, at 202/736-5878 or elizabeth.leibowitz@JewishFederations.org.

ADVOCATING FOR THOSE WITH DISABILITIES

According to the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP), the unemployment rate for people with disabilities in July 2016 (the latest month where figures were available) was 11.1% while the unemployment rate for those without disabilities was 4.9%. In the same month the Labor Force Participation Rate was 20.4% for people with disabilities and 69.2% for people without disabilities. The figures are similar each month. Do you have thoughts on how to improve the employment rate for people with disabilities?

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act makes appropriations for the grant program to assist states and outlying areas in providing special education and related services to children with disabilities. Do you support this program, and if so, what steps would you take to assure its reauthorization?

Social Service Block Grants is a flexible funding stream that pays for a variety of initiatives for vulnerable populations including children and adults with disabilities. A bill has been introduced in Congress to end federal funding of the Social Services Block Grant. If the legislation reached the floor, would you vote for or against the legislation and why?

ENTITLEMENTS & HEALTH CARE

Our federation understands that all solutions to the nation's fiscal challenges require shared sacrifice. That being said, the solution, in our opinion, should not unfairly target the most vulnerable. What is your approach to entitlement reform that will protect those who need income security and health coverage? Do you think it is

possible for the Democrats and Republicans to find common ground over Medicaid and Medicaid reform moving forward?

CHARITABLE GIVING INCENTIVES

With America's charities asked to play an increasingly important role in caring for those most needy among us and with political candidates from each party offering differing "tax reform" plans, can you pledge to protect the existing tax incentives for charitable contribution deductions in the tax code as such provisions are proven to increase giving?

OLDER ADULTS

Each day, an estimated 10,000 people reach the traditional retirement age. Aging issues are of critical importance to the Jewish community, in which 24% of American Jewish adults are age 65 or older (compared to 18% of the general adult population). While most public health experts agree that aging in place is correlated with better long term health outcomes than institutionalization, funding for programs like the Older Americans Act that allow older adults to stay health and safe in their homes has not kept up with the ever increasing need. If you were elected, how would you work to ensure that older Americans are able to age with dignity at home and in our communities?

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

The U.S.-Israel relationship is built upon a firm foundation, with both democracies working jointly to maintain stability in the ever-changing Middle East. In support of this friendship, the United States entered into a 10 year Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Israel in 2007, which, has provided an annual average of \$3.1 billion in security assistance to Israel. The current MOU expires in 2018, and negotiations are underway to forge a new agreement. What are your thoughts on the friendship between the U.S. and Israel, and what would you do to support ongoing relationships between these two allies?

The boycott, divestment, and sanctions (BDS) movement is a global network of individuals and organizations who aim to isolate Israel politically, economically, and culturally. The BDS movement's political goal is to undermine the legitimacy of the Jewish state. What are your thoughts on the BDS movement and what would you do to combat delegitimization efforts against Israel?