



Service Employees International Union – PA SWPA Candidate Questionnaire 2009

Please return the completed questionnaire to
SEIU State Council
Lauren Bachorski, Political Organizer
c/o SEIU Local 3
209 9th Street
9th Floor
Pittsburgh, PA 15222
Or email to: LB@seiupa.org

Candidate Information

Name: _____

Work Address: _____ City _____ Zip _____

Campaign Hdqtrs Address: _____ City _____ Zip _____

Campaign Manager's Name: _____

Full Name of Campaign Committee: _____

Treasurer's Full Name: _____

Treasurer's Address: _____ City _____ Zip _____

Which address should we use as your main mailing address – please circle one:

Work

Campaign Headquarters

Candidate Phone (work): _____ Fax (w): _____

Phone (campaign hq): _____ Fax (hq): _____

E-mail: _____

Office Sought: _____ District #: _____

Incumbent? Yes No If yes, year first elected: _____

Campaign Information

Please provide a brief description of the district and the race. Who are your opponents? How many votes do you think are required for victory?

How much money do you think is required for victory? How much have you raised to date?

Please list the organizations – community groups, unions, issues groups, etc. – that have endorsed you.

Issues

In a brief statement, describe how you will use your office to fight for issues important to SEIU members and their families.

Security

SEIU believes that in post-9/11 America, we need a professional, trained, and stable security officer workforce. SEIU supports efforts to increase training standards, wages, and benefits for security officers in order to achieve these goals.

1. Will you support measures to raise standards in the private security industry, including tax incentives for companies that increase training and wages?

Yes No

2. Will you support measures that call for greater public disclosure of companies' security officer training and staff retention practices?

Yes No

3. Will you contact building owners who refuse to raise the training and wage standards for their private sector security officers, urging them to change their practices?

Yes No

Home Health Care

SEIU supports the rebalancing of the long-term health care industry to enable seniors to stay in their homes, and out of institutional care, for as long as possible. SEIU is working to stabilize the home health care industry, so that our seniors can receive services from caregivers who are highly trained, and have adequate wages and benefits.

1. Will you support measures to raise standards in the home health care industry?

Yes No

2. Will you contact owners of home health care agencies who refuse to raise the wage, benefit and training standards for their employees, and encourage them to do so?

Yes No

3. Will you work with the Allegheny County delegations to both the Pennsylvania legislature and the U.S. Congress to ensure that appropriate funding is allocated to home health care services for seniors?

Yes No

Protection for Displaced Contract Workers

In both public and private sectors, many services such as food and beverage, janitorial and maintenance, health care and hotel services are typically not performed by employees of the building owners, but by contractors who have obtained that work through a competitive bidding process. When contractors change, and a new contractor is awarded the service contract, employees (many of whom have worked at that site for many years and have excellent work records) of the old contractor are sometimes displaced. This displacement of employees creates a hardship for those employees and a burden on city/state services.

In November of 2004, Pittsburgh City Council voted unanimously to enact the Displaced Worker Protection Ordinance to protect the employees of building service contractors. Unfortunately, the legislation was overturned in late 2006 in the Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas by Judge Stanton Wettick. SEIU locals in Pittsburgh are now working with SEIU locals in Philadelphia to begin advocating for a Statewide Displace Worker Protection law for contracted employees.

1. Would you support and work with State elected leaders to implement a state Displaced Worker Protection Act requiring that all contractors retain employees of the previous contractor for a 90 day transition period during which period retained employees may not be terminated except for just cause, and to require that such employees be provided with various other job security protections?

___ Yes ___ No

Health Care

SEIU is committed to securing quality and affordable health care for every American. Nearly 1.5 million people in Pennsylvania are uninsured. Nationally, there are over 46 million people without health insurance, and this number is rapidly increasing.

We know that there are limited opportunities for county government to improve access to healthcare for uninsured people. However, a strong commitment to addressing the issue, even at a local level, can help advance that goal of covering all Americans.

1. How do you think we can slow the rise of health care costs and thus prevent the erosion of quality and affordable health care?

2. What steps would you propose to extend health insurance to the uninsured? What steps would you take to help SEIU members protect and gain employer paid health coverage in their union contracts?

Immigrant Rights

Immigrants contribute substantially to the quality of life in our Communities. In some of our SEIU Locals, up to two-thirds of the membership was born outside the United States. Clearly, SEIU locals in Pittsburgh do not have the same numbers of immigrant members. However, the issue of immigration reform is one of our national union’s highest priorities.

The introduction of a Bipartisan Immigration Bill would present an opportunity for reform of the current immigration system. Our union is optimistic that this act will open up a new and more thoughtful dialogue that will assure an immigration system that is fair, orderly and secure.

1. Will you commit to join the efforts to make this bipartisan Immigration bill a reality?

Yes No

Right to Organize and Bargain

1. Will you publicly support workers that are trying to form a union by issuing public statements in support of those workers?

Yes No

2. Will you urge employers to respect their employees' right to form a union, to remain neutral during union organizing campaigns, to recognize a union voluntarily when a majority of their employees choose to form one, and to bargain in good faith and reach an agreement?

Yes No

If possible, please provide some examples of how you've recently helped workers to organize and/or get a fair contract from their employers? (e.g. a picket line that you've walked or an example of steps you've taken to persuade an employer to recognize a union or bargain in good faith)

3. Do you support the Employee Free Choice Act and would you work locally to show your support of this federal issue?

Yes No

Transit

Public transit is vital to the economic health of our region and critical for many SEIU members to travel to and from their jobs. Public subsidies are necessary for an effective, reliable and long term public transit system.

1. Will you work to make sure that City/County residents have access to quality, affordable public transit?

Yes No

2. Will you work with other local elected leaders, community groups and unions to lobby our state legislature for a dedicated funding-stream for mass transit?

Yes No

Public Services You Can Count On

Taxpayers want public services that are accessible to all, reliable, and accountable to the public. Public service workers must be provided the training and resources to do the job. Public services must not be turned over to private, outside profiteers who in many cases will cut corners on quality, fail to protect privacy and abruptly abandon certain services they no longer consider profitable enough.

1. Do you believe that public services should be provided by public service workers who are accountable to our communities or by corporations serving their private interests?

Yes No

Human Services

SEIU believes that all people with developmental disabilities or mental illness should be able to live in their communities and access high-quality services. Quality services are not possible without quality jobs. Low wages, poor benefits and inadequate training are forcing dedicated caregivers to leave the field in huge numbers. SEIU supports efforts to improve the lives of caregivers and expand public accountability for human service agencies.

1. Will you support measures to raise standards in the human services industry, including public report cards for human service agencies?

Yes No

2. Do you believe that human services agencies should be able to use taxpayer dollars to fight workers during union organizing efforts?

Yes No

Economic Development that Benefits the Community

In many parts of the country, labor, faith, environmental and community organizations are coming together to ensure that development projects done with public dollars give back to the community where the development is happening in concrete ways. These coalitions are negotiating “Community Benefits Agreements” that guarantee family-supporting jobs both during and after construction; neighborhood hiring, training programs and affordable housing in addition to many other things.

1. Would you be public in your support of such a coalition in Allegheny County?

Yes No

General Information

If elected, what would be your top three priorities and what steps would you take to implement them?

Include any attachments. You will be contacted to schedule a candidate interview. Thank you for taking the time to share with us your ideas and critical campaign information.

Feel free to include any other information you think is relevant or important.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please Note: This questionnaire and all materials submitted are the property of SEIU. This questionnaire is for internal use only. Its contents will not be shared with any other candidates or Political Parties.

Please return the completed questionnaire to SEIU State Council

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