

AFL-CIO

2022 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:

REWRITING THE RULES OF THE ECONOMY TO BUILD A BETTER FUTURE FOR WORKERS

The policy choices we make today will determine whether working people share in the benefits of economic growth and technological progress. As the AFL-CIO Commission on the Future of Work and Unions concluded, strengthening worker bargaining power is the key to ensuring that working people can claim our fair share of the wealth we help create. The four building blocks of worker bargaining power are collective bargaining and strong unions, full employment, strong worker protections and robust public investment. We also must rewrite the rules of the global economy and reform Wall Street.

Congress should pass the Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act so that all working people have the freedom to join together and negotiate with their employers for better wages and working conditions.

Research shows that falling union density has been a direct cause of rising economic inequality over the past five decades. Unions reduce inequality during times of high density by bringing workers within our ranks and by raising standards for nonunion workers as well. When unions are strong, they set wage standards for entire industries and occupations. They make wages more equal within occupations. They close pay gaps between White workers and workers of color. They bring living wages to low-wage jobs. They raise wages for women overall and in female-dominated occupations. Unions turn bad jobs into good jobs.

Yet for too long, employers have been able to violate the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) with impunity, routinely denying workers their basic right to join with co-workers for fairness on the job. On March 9, 2021, the U.S. House passed the Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act (H.R. 842) to guarantee that workers have the freedom to form unions and negotiate for better pay and working conditions under a modernized and strengthened NLRA. Sen. Patty Murray of Washington introduced a companion measure (S. 420) on Feb. 24, 2021.

In addition to imposing penalties on companies and individual corporate officers who violate the law, bringing the NLRA's remedies in line with other workplace laws, the PRO Act guarantees bargaining rights for employees who are misclassified as independent contractors and establishes a process for helping newly organized workers achieve a first contract. It also ends "right to work" laws and protects the right to engage in secondary picketing and to strike without being "permanently replaced," i.e., fired.

A bill to protect the freedom of public service workers—including teachers, firefighters and sanitation workers—to join together in a union was introduced in the 116th Congress (H.R. 3463/S. 1970) and in the 117th Congress (H.R. 5727). In addition, the Firefighters and EMS Employer-Employee Cooperation Act (H.R. 2586/S. 2178), introduced in this Congress, would guarantee collective bargaining rights for public safety employees in every state.

- > Would you co-sponsor and vote for the PRO Act in the 118th Congress?
- > Would you co-sponsor and vote for the Public Service Freedom to Negotiate Act in the 118th Congress?
- > Would you co-sponsor and vote for the Firefighters and EMS Employer-Employee Cooperation Act in the 118th Congress?

Another building block of worker bargaining power is “full employment,” or tight labor markets that produce jobs for almost everyone who wants to work. Full employment puts upward pressure on wages for all workers, and especially for workers of color. It makes it easier for workers to organize unions and for unions to grow and reach bargaining agreements. Full employment makes it easier for workers who lose their jobs to transition to other good jobs. Yet full employment does not just happen; it is a policy choice. It depends on the Federal Reserve, the institution that sets monetary policy, allowing unemployment to fall and wages to rise without deliberately slowing down the economy and putting people out of work in order to prevent unemployment from falling “too low” and wages from rising “too high.”

Full employment also requires public investment that boosts demand and creates jobs. Yet America’s infrastructure continues to crumble, falling to 25th in the world, according to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, costing millions of jobs and hindering economic growth.

- > Would you advocate for nominees to the Federal Reserve Board of Governors who are committed to full employment—measured by real wages growing at least as fast as productivity?
- > Would you support President Biden’s Build Back Better agenda, which includes the \$2 trillion “American Jobs Plan” to rebuild America’s infrastructure and create good union jobs, and the \$1.8 trillion “American Families Plan” to invest in education, child care and paid leave?
- > Would you support efforts to expand “Buy America” coverage, eliminate waivers and exemptions, insist on a domestic supply chain for national defense production and strengthen local procurement standards?
- > Would you fight for a national manufacturing policy based on public investment in new technologies, maximizing the advantage of our energy abundance, the domestic production of clean energy goods and an expectation of rising pay?
- > Would you support and advocate for President Biden’s proposal to make big corporations and the wealthy pay their fair share, so we can raise significant revenue and make the investments we need in infrastructure, education and well-paying jobs for working people?
- > Would you support targeting federal workforce development funding for high-quality jobs and high-road employers?

Congress should protect and strengthen worker protections. The failure to update and strengthen worker protections, and to defend them from attack, has been a significant factor in the undermining of worker bargaining power and the lowering of working families’ standard of living in recent decades.

- > Would you support federal and state legislation to increase the minimum wage to \$15 per hour—with indexing and parity for tipped workers?
- > Would you support federal and state legislation to guarantee overtime eligibility for all workers making less than \$51,000 per year?
- > Prevailing wage laws, which have helped maintain wage standards and guarantee high-quality work on taxpayer-funded projects, have come under greater attack as corporate interests have increased their power in Congress. Would you oppose efforts to 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 the labor protections contained in Section 13(c) of the Federal Transit Act and other applicable rail labor standards apply to all federal programs, including all “innovative finance initiatives”?
- > Would you oppose efforts to undermine the use of project labor agreements?
- > Would you protect public sector employees’ pay, rights and benefits when special interests push privatization and contracting-out schemes?
- > Would you support legislation and budget resources to end the misclassification of employees as “contractors”?
- > Would you oppose further federal pay freezes and benefit cuts for federal employees?
- > Would you oppose legislation to take away just cause protections, support restoration of just cause protections for Veterans Affairs employees, and support an enduring and objective civil service system with fair pay, benefits and working conditions for federal employees?
- > Would you oppose efforts to weaken the Jones Act, which requires U.S.-flagged, -built and -crewed ships between U.S. ports?
- > Would you support enforcement of the terms and conditions of our open skies agreements, including labor protections? Would you support legislation to prevent the spread of “flag of convenience” air carriers and would you support administration efforts to ensure current and future entrant air carriers do not violate open skies agreements or public interest requirements as provided for under the Fly America Act (Title 49 of the U.S. Code)?

Congress should help rewrite the rules of 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 wages. America’s workers have repeatedly raised their voices against poorly designed trade rules, such as those enshrined in the original North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the U.S.-Korea Free Trade Agreement. The United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) addressed many of the flaws that made NAFTA a disaster for working people. The USMCA included for the first time:

1. Labor standards that are fully enforceable, on par with commercial terms.
 2. A new facility-specific enforcement mechanism with rapid timelines, inspections and meaningful penalties that include stopping goods at the border.
 3. The presumption that labor violations are trade related, and a shift of the burden of proof to the defendant to show otherwise.
 4. A requirement that Mexico adopt labor reforms to protect the right to organize and bargain.
 5. Restrictions on the use of the investor-state dispute settlement (ISDS) mechanism.
- > Would you demand that the labor standards and enforcement provisions included in the USMCA be treated as a floor in any future trade deal?
 - > Would you support efforts to further strengthen and expand enforcement of trade agreements?

- > Would you support legislation allowing for the application of countervailing duties to address currency manipulation?
- > Would you defend workers' rights globally and work to raise labor standards in global supply chains?
- > Would you vote to make corporations pay the same taxes on offshore profits as they pay on domestic profits so that they no longer have a tax incentive to send jobs overseas?
- > Would you support budget and tax policies that promote the creation and retention of good jobs in the United States, including investment in domestic manufacturing, production and employment?

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

- > Would you support a comprehensive plan to reform financial markets regulation, such as banking, securities and derivatives, to stop Wall Street gambling so that finance once again supports real economy businesses that create good jobs?
- > Would you support passage of a Wall Street speculation tax to discourage harmful speculation that shortchanges investment in the real economy, and to generate revenue for investment in jobs, infrastructure and education?
- > Would you support legislation to rein in abusive private equity practices that allow Wall Street executives to funnel money from productive companies and leave workers, pension funds and communities struggling when the companies fail?
- > Would you support a 21st-century Glass-Steagall Act and breaking up the “too big to fail” banks?
- > Would you vote to close the carried interest loophole so that the income of private equity and hedge fund managers is taxed as much as the income of working people?
- > Would you support legislation requiring the Postal Service to provide basic financial services such as paycheck cashing and electronic funds transfer as a step toward establishing nonprofit, public postal banking?

RETIREMENT SECURITY

Retirement income security is beyond the reach of most Americans. Our retirement income crisis is the flip side of our wage crisis. While worker productivity is on the rise, worker wages have stagnated; a worker without adequate income for today is in no position to save for retirement tomorrow.

One path to higher wages is by enacting the Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act. Because of the power of collective bargaining, unionized workers disproportionately enjoy the benefits of a traditional pension plan, whether it be a single- or multiemployer plan. These benefits, however, may be put at risk because of circumstances beyond workers' control. Corporate bankruptcies all too often leave pensions decimated, as company-employers use the law to eschew their funding liabilities. Further, while the majority of multiemployer

plans are stable and can be counted on to provide lifetime retirement income, some plans have been adversely affected by circumstances beyond their control: trucking deregulation, changes in our nation's energy needs, and changes in the financial sector and regulatory requirements. These financially stressed plans will be receiving federal financial assistance to overcome these otherwise insurmountable challenges and to protect the hard-earned benefits of plan participants and retirees.

As currently constructed, retirement savings plans such as 401(k) plans and individual retirement accounts (IRAs) cannot make up for the loss of traditional pensions. They require workers to bear all of the risk, are often insufficiently diversified, suffer from poor returns, and typically carry heavy fees and expenses. Many households have no retirement savings whatsoever. Of those closest to retirement age, almost 70% have retirement savings of less than one year's income—far less than what they will need to maintain their standard of living in retirement. Part-time workers do not even see retirement as an option, with one in five now saying they will never be able to retire.

These numbers underscore the importance of Social Security, which 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 extremely 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 inflation erosion. But as important as they are, Social Security benefits are too low—only \$1,555 per month for the average retired worker.

With a nearly \$2.9 trillion trust fund and the ability to pay all promised retirement benefits in full until 2033, the Social Security system is not in crisis. Congress can address Social Security's modest funding shortfall over the next 75 years, amounting to 1% of gross domestic product, without any benefit cuts to current or future retirees.

- > Would you support corporate bankruptcy reform to protect workers' pensions?
- > Would you support legislation to require an employer contribution to employees' 401(k) accounts?
- > Would you support legislation requiring all financial professionals and firms who provide investment advice on retirement accounts to put their clients' best interests ahead of their own financial interests and to take affirmative measures to mitigate any professional financial conflicts they may have?
- > Would you support legislation to strengthen retirement income security by increasing Social Security benefits for all beneficiaries?
- > Would you oppose efforts to reduce Social Security's guaranteed benefits under current law, including proposals to increase the retirement age (which is already increasing to 67 under current law), change the calculation for the annual cost-of-living adjustment, change the benefit formula or institute means testing?
- > Would you oppose legislation to replace any part of Social Security's guaranteed benefits with individual investment accounts?

OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH

Workers in the United States have the right to return home after a day at work free from harm. In 1970, Congress enacted the Occupational Safety and Health Act in response to a national crisis of workers being killed, seriously injured or made ill on the job. While progress has since been made, the nationwide toll of workplace fatalities, injuries and illnesses remains unacceptably high: Each year, tens of thousands of workers are killed and millions more injured or made sick because of their jobs. Some groups, including Latino, Black and immigrant workers, are at greater risk due to dangerous conditions, lack of workplace protections and job security vulnerability for raising safety concerns. And millions of workers still are not covered by the law.

Job safety and health agencies, most notably the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), are severely underresourced, and the regulatory process for issuing critical worker protections has become more onerous. Job safety agency budgets have been reduced, leaving agencies with fewer resources to enforce current standards, continue work on lifesaving protections, and provide safety and health training. Business groups and many congressional Republicans are also pushing “regulatory reform” legislation that would make it impossible for OSHA, the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) and other agencies to issue needed safeguards. Implementation of the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) has not adequately addressed worker exposures to chemicals.

Ensuring a safe job for all workers requires new policy to strengthen worker rights during safety inspections and worker protections from retaliation for reporting workplace injuries—areas weakened under the Trump administration. In recent history, OSHA has moved at a glacial pace to issue life-saving protections for such substances as silica and beryllium; regulatory action on heat illness prevention, workplace violence and infectious diseases is still pending.

- > Would you support legislation to strengthen the OSH 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 support legislation to ensure agencies fulfill their missions and require OSHA and MSHA to issue comprehensive and timely standards?
- > Would you oppose efforts to weaken or defund the regulatory and enforcement programs of OSHA and MSHA?
- > Would you support efforts that adequately address worker exposures to toxic chemicals during the implementation of the amended TSCA law?
- > Would you oppose legislation making it more difficult or impossible for government agencies to develop and issue necessary safeguards to protect workers, the public and consumers?
- > Would you support an OSHA standard that protects workers from the spread of infectious diseases in their workplaces?
- > Would you support legislation to address the problems of workplace violence and workplace heat illness prevention?

IMMIGRATION

Immigration reform must reflect America's democratic ideals and not create a second class of workers.

The AFL-CIO thinks a broad path to citizenship for the 11 million aspiring Americans must be the centerpiece of any serious immigration reform proposal. We also must remain true to our history as a welcoming nation, provide safe harbor to refugees and asylum seekers, allow families to build a future here together, and keep our doors open to working people from all over the world.

Our immigration system should not be one primarily based on employers' purported needs. The availability of employment-based visas should be tied to the actual shortages in the U.S. labor market, as determined by independent experts, not industry lobbyists. We need a data-driven and rights-based system that reforms—rather than expands—work visa programs that have been fraught with abuse.

The right way to use immigration policy to boost wages is by expanding worker rights by ensuring that all working people—regardless of immigration status—have access to the full protection of our labor and employment laws. Immigration enforcement must complement, rather than conflict with, a strong, well-resourced and effective system of labor standards enforcement.

A more just immigration system is possible, and we urge Congress to advance policies that will help create better jobs, build a stronger economic future, and support the basic rights and dignity of all working people.

Would you support a road map to citizenship for all those whose labor helps our country to prosper, including workers with Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and Temporary Protected Status (TPS)?

- > Would you oppose enforcement-only immigration policies that increase fear in our workplaces and communities?
- > Would you support efforts to reform temporary worker programs by strengthening workplace protections and employer oversight?
- > Would you support legislation to draw clear lines of separation between federal immigration enforcement and local and state law enforcement?
- > Would you support policies that provide status protections to immigrant workers who are organizing and exercising their workplace rights?

WORK AND FAMILY POLICIES

The COVID-19 pandemic made clear that our current work and family policies are not supportive of working families. Workers lack paid leave to recover from illness or injury and to care for sick or injured family or loved ones. The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) of 1993, requiring employers to provide up to 12 weeks of unpaid job-protected family or medical leave, was a major step in helping Americans balance the demands of work and family. But its limited coverage—only 59% of workers are eligible to take FMLA—and the inability of millions of workers to afford leave without pay constrains the FMLA’s effectiveness. According to the March 2020 National Compensation Survey, only 20% of private sector workers had access to paid leave to care for a new child or family member. And Black, Hispanic and low-wage workers were even less likely to have access to paid family and medical leave benefits than other workers.

President Biden’s proposed “American Families Plan” provides a national standard for paid leave that, over 10 years, phases in 12 weeks of paid leave for the serious illness of the worker or a family member or loved one, to care for a new child, during a family member’s deployment or service-related injury, to address issues arising from domestic violence or sexual assault, or while grieving the loss of a loved one

> Would you support legislation to provide paid family and medical leave benefits?

Workers should not have to choose between coming to work sick or staying home without pay—and, perhaps, risking their job as well. Yet about three 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 cannot access paid sick time, their economic and job security suffers. Just 3.5 days without pay jeopardizes a typical family’s ability to afford groceries. The Healthy Families Act (H.R. 2465/S. 1195) introduced in April 2021 provides seven paid sick days a year for a worker’s own illness, to care for a sick family member, or to attend school meetings related to a child’s health or disability.

> Would you support legislation setting a national paid sick days standard that guarantees at least seven paid sick days per year?

Workers are unable to do their jobs if the care needs of a family member are unmet. Working parents entrust their children’s care to child care centers and home-based providers. Moreover, a growing number of workers, in addition to working a full-time job, are informal caregivers who assist older and disabled adults with the activities of daily living. A 2021 study by the Administration for Children and Families found that working families with young children spent an annual average of \$13,000 on child care. Studies conducted by the American Association of Retired Persons and the National Alliance for Caregivers found that more than 34 million family caregivers provide care to an adult. The care workforce, mostly women and workers of color, is chronically underpaid, and often lacks paid leave and medical benefits. The American Families Plan proposes historic investments in working families that improve the quality of child care and make child care more affordable. This legislation mandates a \$15-per-hour minimum wage and compensation comparable to that of kindergarten teachers with similar qualifications for the child care workforce. It further invests in the adult care workforce by increasing pay and providing labor protections, while providing an opportunity for adults in need of care to remain in their homes with access to home- and community-based services through expanded Medicaid eligibility.

> Would you support legislation that embodies the principles of the American Families Plan by increasing access to improved child care and providing better financial assistance to families and providers?

- > Would you support legislation that expands Medicaid long-term care eligibility?
- > Would you support legislation to provide a \$15 minimum wage and union rights for the care workforce?

The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) 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. While supporters claim this legislation would give workers more flexibility and control over their schedules, compensatory time proposals, in fact, would undermine the 40-hour workweek—resulting in more workers working longer hours for less pay—and provide employers, rather than workers, with more flexibility and control.

- > Would you oppose legislation that would excuse employers from their obligation under the FLSA to pay a cash premium for overtime work if they were to offer compensatory time off?

HEALTH CARE

Health care is a basic human right. This is why the American labor movement has fought for more than a century for a health care system that guarantees all of us high-quality health care without financial barriers. Our longstanding goal is to move expeditiously toward a single-payer system, such as Medicare for All, that provides universal coverage using a social insurance model, while retaining a role for workers' health plans. We can advance toward a single-payer system by lowering Medicare's eligibility age from 65 to 50 and by creating a public health insurance option that provides comprehensive coverage. Affordable access to care also can be enhanced by enabling Medicare to negotiate lower prescription drug prices for all Americans and by improving benefits in existing health programs.

- > Would you support single-payer proposals that recognize the important role that unions play in securing comprehensive coverage for working people?
- > Would you support lowering the Medicare eligibility age from 65 to 50?
- > Would you support creating a public option?
- > Would you support the Lower Drug Costs Now Act (H.R. 3), enabling Medicare to negotiate lower drug prices for program beneficiaries and those in private plans?
- > Would you support improving current Medicare benefits by adding dental, vision and hearing coverage and establishing an annual out-of-pocket limit?
- > Would you support making Affordable Care Act (ACA) coverage more comprehensive, raising benchmark coverage from the silver level to platinum?
- > Would you oppose changes that weaken the employer shared responsibility requirements of the ACA?
- > Would you oppose any proposal to tax or impose fees on employment-based health coverage?
- > Would you oppose efforts to restrict access to FDA-approved birth control methods for women?
- > Would you support slowing the substance abuse epidemic by dramatically expanding access to effective treatment?

EDUCATION

Currently, more than 50 million students attend our country’s public schools. The teachers, paraprofessionals and other school employees who work with these students each day care deeply about the quality of our public schools and the education their students receive. Since 1965, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) has represented the federal government’s largest investment in K–12 education, and it is a crucial mechanism both in funding and in guiding policy for all public schools.

- > Do you think the federal government has a role in elementary and secondary education? Should Congress fully fund the ESEA?

Many states still spend less on K–12 education than they did before the 2007–2009 recession. Despite this, some in Congress want to use taxpayer money to support private and religious schools by expanding the use of vouchers, opportunity scholarships and tuition tax credits. Decades of experiments with voucher programs have led to the same conclusion: Vouchers fail most of the children they intend to benefit.

- > Do you oppose vouchers and other proposals that allow taxpayer dollars to be used for private and religious schools at the K–12 level, whether as a limited experiment or a full-scale program?

When states cut funding for higher education, the bulk of college costs are shifted to students—and few can afford the rising price tag. That means that many who would benefit from attending college—and, in turn, benefit all of society—choose not to go. Others take on student loans. Their post-graduation paycheck—if there is anything left after paying for basic needs—then goes toward paying off debt rather than generating more demand in the economy, let alone saving for a home or retirement.

- > 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 young Americans struggling with student loan payments?

CIVIL AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Today, more than 200 years since our Constitution was ratified, voting rights are not assured for all American citizens. As Chief Justice John Roberts wrote in the 2013 *Shelby County v. Holder* decision, “Voting discrimination still exists; no one doubts that.” In that case, however, Chief Roberts, writing for a five-vote majority, 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. Then, in the 2021 *Brnovich v. DNC* decision, a 6–3 majority of the Supreme Court weakened another provision of the Voting Rights Act, making it more difficult to challenge voting laws and procedures that disproportionately impact minority voters.

New state laws also have been enacted to allow partisan government officials to manipulate election administration procedures and overturn election results. Experienced state, county and municipal election officials who disagree with such partisan election interference have been threatened, harassed and removed from their positions. These changes threaten not only to suppress votes, but also to subvert our democracy.

Meanwhile, in another affront to democratic principles, more than 500,000 U.S. citizens live in our nation's capital and have no voting representation in Congress.

The John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act of 2021 (H.R. 4/S. 4), introduced in the 117th Congress, would restore the protections of the 1965 Voting Rights Act, and the For the People Act of 2021 (H.R. 1/S. 1) would protect and expand early voting, voting by mail and automatic voter registration. It also would end partisan gerrymandering and eliminate dark money from undermining our electoral process.

- > Would you sponsor and work to enact the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act?
- > Would you sponsor and work to enact the For the People Act?
- > Would you oppose efforts to erect obstacles to voting, including those based on an individual's race and/or economic status?
- > Would you support legislation to allow the delegate elected by District of Columbia residents to vote in the U.S. House of Representatives?

Nearly one in 100 American adults is incarcerated. America's prison population, which has increased 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 to reduce the "three-strike" penalty—which mandates 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 new authority for judges to depart from certain mandatory minimums?

The Equal Pay Act of 1963 made it illegal for employers to pay unequal wages to male and female employees doing the same work. Yet wage disparities between men and women are still evident today in both the private and public sectors, and at every educational level. The Paycheck Fairness Act (H.R. 2490/S. 205) 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 employer's wage practices. It would bring Equal Pay Act remedies and class-action procedures into conformance with those available for other civil rights violations, and strengthen the government's ability to identify and remedy systematic wage discrimination.

- > Would you support the Paycheck Fairness Act?

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) Americans need basic protections from discrimination—in securing consumer credit, education, employment, housing and public accommodations. While significant progress has been made in recent years—through expansion of hate crimes legislation, open participation in military service and marriage equality—LGBTQ Americans remain vulnerable to discrimination in many spheres of life absent comprehensive federal protection.

- > Would you support the Equality Act (H.R. 5/S. 393), legislation to ensure that nationwide civil rights protections cover LGBTQ Americans?