

**PA STATE LEGISLATIVE 2022 QUESTIONNAIRE
FOR PHILLY NEIGHBORHOOD NETWORKS**

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CANDIDATE CERTIFICATION

Candidate Name: Rick Krajewski

Office Sought: Representative in the General Assembly

I have read the attached questionnaire responses and certify that the information provided is accurate and the opinions stated accurately reflect my own positions.

Candidate Signature:



Date: 02/18/2022

Please complete, sign and return this form via Email to:

Gloria Gilman: gmgilman@gmail.com

and

Stan Shapiro: shapsj@comcast.net

2022 PA State Legislative Questionnaire

BACKGROUND Please note: answers to questions 7–9 are optional.

1. What, if any, elected or appointed government office(s) have you held?

The office of State Representative in PA's 188th District

2. If you have previously held a government office:

a. What are the primary issue areas in which you were involved?

As a freshman state legislator, my primary issue areas of focus have been affordable housing and eviction prevention, decarceration and criminal justice reform, environmental justice, and fair funding for public schools.

More specifically, I have redirected almost \$5 million into our district towards community violence prevention efforts and public space infrastructure. I have held community hearings on schools, the environment, and the rights of incarcerated parents. I have held town halls on renters' and homeowners' rights and judicial gerrymandering.

I have also been the prime sponsor of 15 bills, including bills focused on protecting the rights of children and their incarcerated parents, allowing minors to access their birth certificates (and therefore have the ability to obtain licenses, jobs, and other important resources), and a bill to prioritize mortgage modification and therefore keep struggling families in their homes. I am currently working on a bill with State Senator Nikil Saval to increase funding for home repair programs across the state, enabling people to stay in their homes longer and to live in homes that are safe.

b. What committees, caucuses or working groups have you served on?

I am currently serving on the Committees on Environmental Resources & Energy, Committee on Health, and Committee on Urban Affairs.

3. If you have not previously held a government office, what community or policy issues have you worked on, and in what capacity? (Please provide the names of two or three individuals who can provide information about your previous work.)

N/A

4. Please provide copies of all your significant campaign materials, including position papers, advertisement copy, and flyers.

We are still in the processing of designing our first round of literature. Our most relevant campaign materials can be found on our website, rickforphilly.com, which is still in the process of being updated.

5. What, if any, endorsements have you received? What others are you seeking?

Currently in this election cycle, we have received endorsements from AFT2620 (CCP), Free the Ballot, and Run for Something. We are in the process of seeking endorsements from Reclaim

Philadelphia, DSA, WFP, 314 Action, OnePA, PhillyNOW, 215People's Alliance, CeaseFirePA, Philly for Change, Planned Parenthood, the Sunrise Movement, and Food and Water Watch. We are also seeking endorsements from many labor unions, including PFT, AFSCME DC33, 47, and 1199C, PASNAP, SEIU, UNITE HERE, the AFL-CIO, the Teamsters, and letter carriers.

6. What is your plan to win this race, including your fundraising goals and strategies.

We currently have raised \$83,000 and our goal is to raise \$125,000. Our main source of funding is through grassroots donations (our average contribution is \$48). These donations are procured through call time, community fundraisers, social media and email requests. Furthermore, we are requesting monetary contributions from labor unions.

Similarly to our campaign strategy in 2020, we plan to mount a serious, grassroots field program to knock on thousands of doors and call thousands of neighbors. Using relational organizing techniques, connecting with community leaders, and mobilizing our 200+ volunteer base, we will reach out to our neighbors to talk about Rick's values and connect his values to the issues that matter most to them. We aim to constantly politicize our district and develop a strong team of volunteer leaders who will gain organizing skills that will continue to build power in our district long after the election is over.

In addition, we aim to build on the power we built in 2020 by prioritizing parts of our district where we received the least support in our first election, as well as reaching out to the new parts of our district that we gained because of redistricting. Furthermore, we have been consistently reaching out to committeepeople, block captains, community leaders, and movement leaders to build and foster new and deeper relationships

7. What, if any, genders, do you identify with?

I identify as he/him.

8. What is your sexual orientation?

I currently identify as heterosexual/questioning.

9. What is your racial, ethnic identity?

I identify as a multiracial Black person.

ISSUES

Please note: Although many of the following questions may be answered "yes" or "no" you should feel free to elaborate if doing so would provide a clearer statement of your position. If you believe you do not have enough information to answer a question, or have not formed an opinion, please say so.

I. OVERALL

What would be your three highest priorities as a legislator? Explain.

As a legislator, my three highest priorities are ending mass incarceration and gun violence, fair and full funding for public schools, and a Homes Guarantee for PA. Specifically, I will continue to push for early release of geriatric and high-risk incarcerated people, providing resources and information to our communities about their rights as returning citizens or as family members of incarcerated people, and working with abolitionist movement organizations to lift up their demands in the State House. Furthermore, I will continue to advocate for toxic-free, fairly and full-funded public schools in which every student is given a high-quality education and every teacher is provided with the resources that they need to thrive. I will also continue to advocate for safe, longterm, affordable housing that ensures our neighbors can stay in their homes and that our communities aren't overwhelmed by luxury, rapid housing development.

II. Education

- 1) Do you believe public college, or community college, should be tuition free?

Absolutely. I believe every person should be able to go to college without going into debt.

- 2) What role do you believe standardized tests should play in evaluating teachers, schools and students, if any?

I do not believe standardized tests are an accurate method to evaluate teachers, schools, and students. The tests are often biased and do not take into account different populations and different experiences throughout Pennsylvania.

- 3) What factors do you believe should be considered in determining overall levels of school funding in the Commonwealth, and funding per school district?

I believe that school funding should be determined by need and prioritize equity across the commonwealth. It is unjust and immoral that we fund schools based on property taxes that resegregate our students based on their families income and where they live. A child in a Philadelphia public school receives half the investment as their counterparts in Lower Merion or other neighboring school districts. We must ensure that our budget fully funds our schools and provides the resources for every school based on population and the work needed to ensure our schools are safe and healthy spaces for our children, teachers, and school workers.

- 4) Approximately 33% of Philadelphia students are enrolled in charter schools. What is your position on the expansion of charter schools? Should they be given public money via vouchers or similar programs (like ESAs)? What role do you think public schools play in our city?

I believe in a full moratorium on charter schools in Philadelphia. Furthermore, charter schools should not be given public funding as they are not accountable to public scrutiny or state-wide requirements. Charter schools are a band-aid to a systemic problem of underfunding. We must expand funding for our public schools and ensure charters are accountable to the state. I support heavily investing in rebuilding our public schools and expanding the breadth of resources our public schools have to offer to students, families, and their communities.

III. Budget and Taxes

- 1) Do you support a Constitutional Amendment to permit progressive taxation in PA, in whole or part?

Yes, I support an amendment to allow Pennsylvania to implement a progressive tax system that forces the wealthy and corporations to pay their fair share.

- 2) What changes if any would you support in the corporate net income tax levels? See this: <https://krc-pbpc.org/issues/corporate-income-taxes/>

I support raising corporate income tax levels in Pennsylvania, and closing corporate loopholes that allow corporations to pay minimal if not zero corporate income tax.

- 3) What changes, if any, would you support in the personal income tax?

I support a progressive income tax that allows residents to pay proportional taxes based on income.

- 4) Do you support the [Fair Share Tax Plan](#) proposed by the PA Budget and Policy Center, with its emphasis on raising the tax rate on unearned income?

Yes, I support a tax plan that increases taxes on unearned income.

- 5) Do you support full elimination of the Delaware loophole?

Yes. The Delaware loophole is harming our schools, public infrastructure, environmental protection, and communities by allowing corporations to avoid paying their fair share of taxes in our state.

- 6) Do you support a tax on fracking, and at what level?

Yes, I support a heavy tax on fracking and all fossil fuel industries in Pennsylvania.

- 7) Do you support the Keystone Opportunity Zone program? Would you introduce legislation to eliminate it, or to limit the number of times a parcel's KOZ designation can be renewed or extended? More generally, do you support tax breaks to lure or retain businesses?

I believe the role of government is to create programs to support our citizens and our communities. I do not think granting tax breaks, or tax abatements to businesses and corporations is the best way to support the welfare of our people. I would support bringing some of these properties under public ownership for building public housing, community gardens, and other public spaces that would benefit local communities.

IV. Public Banking

Would you support the creation of a Pennsylvania Public Bank, modeled after the Bank of North Dakota, and/or the creation of local public banks in PA cities and counties?

Yes.

V. Women's Rights

- 1) Do you believe there should be any restrictions on a woman's right to choose? If so, what?

No, reproductive rights are human rights. I believe that women and any person with a uterus should have full autonomy over their bodies.

- 2) What additional protections should be enacted into law to protect women's health care in light of the pending decision by the U.S. Supreme Court to override or sharply curtail Roe v. Wade?

We must pass the equality act in Pennsylvania and ensure equal pay and equal access for all people in Pennsylvania regardless of gender.

- 3) Would you support proposals to ensure that women and men working in the Commonwealth receive equal pay for equal work?

Yes.

VI. Children and Families

- 1) Should the state require businesses to provide paid family leave?

Yes, I believe paid family leave is a necessity and it is a disgrace we are the only major country in the world to not guarantee paid family leave.

- 2) Should the state provide universal availability of affordable childcare? If yes, how would you achieve this?

Yes. The state should provide high quality childcare at all ages across the state. The child-care workers also must be paid at least \$15/hr and have the right to form a union. We would achieve this through a wealth tax, forcing corporations to pay their fair share, and a tax on the fossil fuel industry.

VII. Environment

1) Do you support a ban on fracking in whole or part? Explain.

I support a full ban on fracking. Numerous studies have found that the process of fracking pollutes the air, earth and water in communities around fracking sites. These chemicals can cause asthma, severe headaches, childhood leukemia, birth defects, and cancer. There is little to no accountability for drilling companies to report these chemicals to communities, or to remediate or clean up the land, air, or water when fracking inevitably releases toxic and hazardous waste.

2) Would you support banning the use of single-use plastic bags?

Yes, I support policies that reduce our collective impact on the environment, and specifically policies that put the burden on corporations and not the individual.

3) Do you think Philadelphia should be compelled or induced to sell PGW?

No, I believe privatizing our water and gas systems would be a huge mistake. We cannot trust profit driven businesses to provide quality service, this service must be the responsibility of the local government.

4) What measures would you support to move PA off its reliance on fossil fuels and expand use of renewable energy sources?

I support legislation, such as Rabb's HB1425 that charts a path towards 100% renewable energy by 2050. I would also support legislation that would establish an entity similar to Massachusetts's Clean Energy Center, that would support strategic efforts to unite the state's utilities around shared goals working towards energy efficiency and renewable energy sources.

5) What criteria would you use in making appointments to the P.U.C.?

Most importantly, I think that we should be making appointments to the Pennsylvania Utility Commission of people who are interested in shifting the conversation away from a focus on markets and profit, and instead towards a performance-based model that prioritizes the needs of everyday Philadelphians.

6) What steps would you take to ensure environmental justice in the placement and remediation of structures that pollute?

Black and brown communities, and working-class and poor communities always suffer the most at the hands of environmental degradation and toxicity. I support the establishment of a climate equity fund that would redirect funds from benefits experienced from this transition and

taxes on fossil fuel corporations towards vulnerable communities. Furthermore, I support complete community control over any sites or structures that are remediated.

7) What, if any, other measures would you support to preserve or improve our environment? (water issues, park preservation, detoxification of school buildings, etc.)

Additional aspects of our vision for a Green New Deal are the following:

- *Expand access to public transit by increasing frequency of service, lowering the price to \$1 per ride, and investing in a transition to electric vehicles for all public transit by 2030.*
- *Demand we clean up every toxic site in Philadelphia left by fossil fuels and increase funding for community green space to return toxic industrial spaces to community controlled public lands.*
- *Support a just transition for workers by investing funds in training for renewable energy industries and ensuring those jobs are good union jobs. We also support the creation of a pension fund for workers who are transitioning out of the fossil fuel industry and will not pursue training.*
- *Support urban agriculture and expanding community gardens and farms which can be centers of community resilience where Philadelphians care for each other and the natural world.*
- *Support a full and fair funding formula for our public schools, libraries, and rec centers that remediates all building from toxic lead and asbestos and implementing green technologies for heating and cooling buildings.*

VIII. Criminal Justice

1) Should stop and frisk be limited or outlawed?

Stop and Frisk is unconstitutional and should be outlawed.

2) How would you deal with the problem of mass incarceration of minorities, particularly minority youth?

I would invest in diversion programs and alternate paths for youth that come in contact with the criminal justice system. I would invest in afterschool programs and community centers that provide spaces for our youth to exist and thrive without fear of police profiling. I also support exonerating every person incarcerated for a crime related to marijuana.

In my first term in office, I have invested in important community and recreational centers that serve as safe and accessible spaces for youth. Specifically, I have redirected \$25,000 towards the Kingsessing Rec Center, \$60,000 for the Kingsessing Library, \$99,500 for the Woodlands Cemetery and \$250,000 for the Woodlands Park. I will continue to support community institutions in receiving state funding.

I have also introduced a bill into the State House that would allow minors to access their Birth Certificates. Through my work with YEAHPhilly, I learned that often minors are unable to get IDs, licenses, employment, or even register for school without this important document. This is a mass incarceration issue because it prohibits minors from accessing necessary resources such as an ID, employment, or sometimes even school registration.

3) Should marijuana be fully legalized?

Yes, marijuana is already de facto legal for white people, it is time we legalized marijuana for everyone else.

4) Should privately-owned prisons be permitted in Pennsylvania?

No, prisons should not be driven by profit.

5) Should we ban the box in Pennsylvania?

Yes. It is cruel punishment that does not have any role in rehabilitation.

6) Should PA continue to build new prisons?

No.

7) Should PA begin to close prisons? Explain.

Yes, we should immediately close all private prisons and work towards lowering prison populations and closing prisons as we continue to free people from our unjust system of mass incarceration.

8) Do you support an end to the death penalty?

Yes, we must end the death penalty.

9) When if ever, should a juvenile be tried as an adult?

A juvenile should never be tried as an adult. In no world does a prison sentence help a child on a path to rehabilitation and personal growth.

10) As a general matter, what do you think the state can do to reduce the murder rate in Philadelphia, while maintaining respect for civil liberties and the overall need for decarceration of our city?

I believe the state can invest in the well-being of its citizens through robust social programs including medicare for all, a green new deal, and a minimum wage of at least \$15/hr. We know that crime and violence are a result of poverty and marginalization, and to address violence in our city we must address the racial and class disparities in our neighborhoods.

IX. Campaign Finance Reform

Would you support legislation to provide public financing for state and local election campaigns?

Yes.

X. Labor

- 1) Would you support legislation to strengthen protection for workers trying to form or join a union?

Yes, all workers ought to have the right to join a union.

- 2) Should the minimum wage be increased? If so, to what level and should the increase be indexed to inflation?

The minimum wage must be increased to at least \$15/hr. I believe the minimum wage should be tied to cost of living expenses or productivity. It is unjust that our rent should go up while our wages do not.

- 3) Do you believe that Philadelphia and other municipalities should continue to be pre-empted from increasing the minimum wage on their own?

No, I believe that Philadelphia should be able to set its own minimum wage. I support a state-wide minimum wage of at least \$15/hr, and also know that Philadelphia is in dire need of a raise and if we cannot get it passed state-wide we should be able to raise the wage locally to account for cost of living in Philadelphia.

- 4) Do you support privatization of retail liquor sales in Pennsylvania? Are there any other services that you believe should be considered for privatization?

No, I do not believe in privatizing liquor sales or privatizing any other major sector that is under state jurisdiction. Without a doubt, privatizing liquor sales would lead to more stores with poorly paid workers and less oversight of the distribution of liquor across our state. In general, privatization of any services leads to decreased worker safety and increased exploitation, higher burden on consumers, and (especially because of the Delaware and other corporate tax loopholes), a reduction in investments and money that can be redistributed into our communities.

- 5) Philadelphia remains the most impoverished major city and about 75% of our residents lack bachelor's degrees. What policies would you implement to ensure that decent, high-paying jobs created here are accessible to the majority of our population, not just the relatively well-educated and already well off?

Philadelphia is home to some of the greatest institutions in the country, yet they are not accessible to the majority of our people. It begins with ensuring our children's public schools are fully funded, and our public colleges and universities must be affordable for the people that live

here, which is why I support making all public colleges and universities in Pennsylvania tuition free. I also support expanding access to trades schools and technical training.

We also see the cost of living rising exponentially in many of our neighborhoods while the minimum wage is still at \$7.25/hr. If the cost of living is going to rise, we must require wages that reflect those costs. I support raising the minimum wage immediately to at least \$15/hr, and linking the minimum wage with cost of living or productivity so it goes up regularly every year. I will also advocate to repeal the pre-emption law that does not allow Philadelphia to set its own minimum wage along with other crucial issues we do not currently control.

XI. Reforming Legislative Districts

- 1) Do you support legislation that would (1) form an independent commission, and (2) apply sound methodologies, to draw all congressional, State House, and Senate districts fairly in Pennsylvania?

Yes, democracy and representation should not be a partisan process, but an independent and fair process.

XII. Public Health

- 1) Would you support state legislation to create a single-payer system in PA?

Yes, I support single-payer healthcare in PA. Healthcare is a basic human right, and no one should worry about the bill when going to the doctor.

- 2) How would you reduce or eliminate the racial disparities in the provision of health care, in particular the distribution of lifesaving COVID vaccines and medications?

Over the past two and a half years of this pandemic, we've clearly seen the ways that COVID has disproportionately impacted Black and brown people, and working class and poor people. There are a few specific ways that I would reduce or eliminate racial disparities within the healthcare system.

- **SUSPEND MEDICAL DEBT:** *The Pennsylvania Attorney General should move aggressively to suspend all medical debt for the duration of the crisis and the recovery. No one should be burdened with medical bills during this—or any—period. All treatment for COVID-19 should be delivered free of cost.*
- **ESTABLISH PAID CARE LEAVE:** *We should immediately institute a paid care leave plan of twelve weeks in Pennsylvania. This plan should guarantee 100% of earnings for all workers making 70% or less of the state average weekly wage (SAWW).*
- **PRODUCE PRODUCTIVE EQUIPMENT:** *In lieu of the Federal Government acting on the Defense Production Act, the Governor should use emergency powers to coordinate with other states to coordinate immediate production of protective equipment for all essential workers.*
- **PUBLIC CONTROL OF HOSPITALS AND HEALTHCARE FACILITIES:** *The Governor should move to take control of any private hospitals and other facilities in order to facilitate care, and re-open recently closed facilities, such as Hahnemann Hospital, as necessary.*

- **EXPAND CHILD CARE RESOURCES:** *Most workers lack access to affordable childcare, and essential workers are affected gravely by the high cost of care. Pennsylvania should ensure that all childcare costs faced by essential workers are covered by the state.*

These policies will support all working people, but most specifically Black and brown people who are disproportionately affected by medical debt, make up a disproportionate number of our essential workers, and are more likely to live in communities where public hospitals are being closed down.

Furthermore, in my first term, I organized a vaccination canvassing program with Councilwoman Jamie Gauthier that reached out to our neighbors to provide direct resources on how to get vaccinated, information about the vaccine, and connected neighbors to my office for other resources. We focused our outreach to neighbors that we knew were being left out of the conversation, and weren't receiving the information and resources that they deserved – mainly my Black and brown neighbors. This effort underscored the ways in which organizing principles can be brought to the office of State Representative – and how we can continue to push for anti-racist distribution of resources within our communities.

XIV. Housing

- 1) **How would you deal with the growing affordable housing gap in PA, both in the homeownership and rental markets?**

We need a Homes Guarantee in PA. In West Philadelphia, we see that gentrification means rising rent, property tax and cost of living is forcing long time neighbors to leave their homes and close their businesses. This epidemic has hit Black homeowners the hardest, removing one of the opportunities Black families have to accumulate wealth in our city.

During my first term in office, I have introduced and am the prime sponsor of HB767, which would prioritize mortgage modification over the payment of municipal liens on the property, allowing families to stay in their homes longer and focus on what's best for their families.

Just this past month, along with my colleagues Rep. Fiedler and Rep. Innamorato, we introduced legislation calling for an additional \$500 million in American Rescue Plan dollars to be allocated to the Emergency Rental Assistance Program. Programs like these are vital to ensuring working families have at least a basic safety net that will support them in staying in their homes.

- 2) **Would you support a mandate requiring landlords to show good cause for evictions?**

Absolutely. No one should be evicted from their home without cause, and I support any legislation that makes it more difficult for landlords to evict people.