

## 2024 Congressional Questionnaire

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### CANDIDATE CERTIFICATION

Candidate Name: Nikil Saval

Office Sought: First Senate District of Pennsylvania

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:

**Please complete, sign and return this form via email in PDF format to  
[info@phillynn.org](mailto:info@phillynn.org)**

**and mail or email a copy of the signature page to**

**Gloria Gilman  
121 South Broad Street Suite 1710  
Philadelphia, PA 19107  
215-601-2197  
[gmgilman@gmail.com](mailto:gmgilman@gmail.com)**

I. **BACKGROUND** *Please note: answers to questions 7-9 are optional.*

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

Senator for the First District of Pennsylvania

2. If you have previously held a government office:

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

My primary issues have been housing justice, climate justice, and criminal legal system reform. I am recognized as the statewide leader on housing after passing the nationally acclaimed Whole-Home Repairs program. I am a leader in the fight for a Green New Deal and climate justice initiatives throughout the state, as well as advocating for a just transition for our workers. In the Senate, I have voted against bills that would increase incarceration rates throughout Pennsylvania, creating a litmus test that mandates a no vote on bills that increase sentences, duplicate crimes, harm one's chances at getting parole, or impose mandatory minimums.

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

Chair of the Housing and Urban Affairs Committee

Chair of the Philadelphia Senate Delegation

Appropriations Committee

Judiciary Committee

Energy and Environmental Resources Committee




Intergovernmental Operations

Aging and Youth Committee (previously)

Communication and Technology Committee (previously)

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.

-  2024 Platform Summary\_Sen Saval
-  NikilSaval Primary Palm Card 1\_v2.pdf
-  Logos With Disclaimer
- [nikilsaval.com](http://nikilsaval.com)

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

I am proud to have earned the support of the following elected officials:

- Philadelphia Council President Kenyatta Johnson
- Philadelphia Council Member Mark Squilla
- Philadelphia Council Member Rue Landau
- Philadelphia Council Member Kendra Brooks
- Philadelphia Council Member Nic O'Rourke
- PA Governor Josh Shapiro
- US Senator John Fetterman
- PA St. Rep. Rick Krajewski
- PA St. Rep. Liz Fiedler
- PA St. Senator Vincent Hughes

I am proud to have earned the support of the following organizations.

- Working Families Party
- Philadelphia Democratic Ward 1
- Philadelphia Democratic Ward 39A
- Green New Deal Network
- Amistad Movement Power
- UNITE HERE Local 274
- UNITE HERE Local 634
- Teamsters Local 623
- Philadelphia Carpenters
- SEIU 32BJ
- SEIU 668
- SEIU Healthcare
- Workers United/Joint Board (SEIU)
- Laborers District Council Philadelphia
- IUOE Local 542
- UFCW 1776

I am actively pursuing the endorsement of numerous other organizations and elected officials. In addition to the endorsements listed above, I have earned additional endorsements from organizations and elected officials that are awaiting public announcement.

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

In order to win re-election, we expect to launch a significant grassroots field operation to knock approximately 100k doors throughout the district. We plan to deploy a strategic communications campaign that will include mail and digital, and it could potentially include

television. Finally, we will rely on the support of community and ward leaders to mobilize and support our re-election.

I have raised \$67,000 this year and have approximately \$119,000 Cash on Hand. I intend to raise an additional \$610,000 this year to counter a potentially well-funded, conservative challenge.

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

Male

8. What is your sexual orientation?

Heterosexual

9. What is your racial, ethnic identity?

South Asian

## **II. 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 so state.**

### **A. Income and Wealth Inequality, and Benefit Programs.**

1) What is your position on the rate of the estate tax, and to whom it should apply?

The federal estate tax has too high of a threshold, not kicking in until a married couple has assets totaling over \$24 million. Similarly, Pennsylvania should increase its inheritance tax on those inheriting more than \$1 million from their parents, and those inheriting more than \$500,000 for any other relational inheritance.

2) How, if at all, should the personal income tax be modified?

I have been vocal in my support for the Fair Share Tax Plan written by the Keystone Research Center. This would lower taxes for over 80% of

Pennsylvanians and make the wealthiest residents of the Commonwealth pay a higher rate — but one that is still lower than the highest rates in New Jersey and New York.

3) Would you impose a tax on stock and bond transactions? If so, at what rate?

Yes, I would impose a 0.1% tax on financial transactions that happen outside of a tax-sheltered retirement account.

4) Would you support a wealth tax?

Yes.

5) To what level and by what date would you raise the minimum wage to ensure it provides a sustainable living wage?

The minimum wage should be immediately raised to \$15 an hour with a pathway to \$22 an hour by 2030.

6) Would you support a single-payer health care system or seek to improve Obamacare, and if the latter, how?

I am a longtime advocate for the adoption of Medicare For All, a single-payer system, throughout the United States.

7) Would you support universal child care, and/or universal pre-K to reduce poverty?

Yes.

8) Would you support making the choice of union membership less onerous by, among other things, requiring certification of unions based upon a card-check alone, easing union organizers' access to the workplace, and barring mandatory attendance by workers at employer anti-union meetings?

Yes.

9) What you break up or nationalize the big banks?

I support Lina Khan and the FTC's antitrust efforts to limit the power of large financial institutions. In Pennsylvania I support more powerful public

banking institutions to fund green energy, infrastructure, and other public works.

10) How, if at all, would you modify the Federal Reserve system?

I do not know enough to have an informed opinion on this topic, but I do think the Fed should work as diligently toward its mandate for full employment as it does capitalizing financial institutions and attempting to tame inflation.

## **B. Campaign Finance and Voting Rights.**

1) Would you support a publicly financed system of campaign financing for Congressional campaigns?

Yes.

2) Would you support complete transparency regarding the funding of campaigns, including disclosure of all spending by wealthy donors?

Yes.

3) Would you impose a cap on spending by Super-PACs, advocacy groups and lobbyists?

Yes.

4) Would you support a Constitutional Amendment establishing that corporations are not people and do not have the rights of citizens, such as free speech or religion?

Yes. I would support a Constitutional Amendment doing this and repealing the entire Citizens United decision.

5) What reforms would you support to make it easier to vote in Federal elections? (e.g., early voting, same day registration, a federal Holiday on Election Day, federal standards for voting rights, counting of votes, and redistricting by states, a Constitutional Amendment establishing the right to vote, restoration of the Voting Rights Act to its original scope)?

First, we need to reinstate all provisions of the Voting Rights Act, including Section 4, which have been gutted by the Supreme Court in recent years.

Election Day should be a holiday in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, voting by mail should continue to be an option for all voters who wish to use that method to cast their ballots, and independent commissions should draw Congressional districts in all 50 states.

**C. Climate Change. Would you support:**

1) A tax on carbon?

Yes.

2) A full or partial ban on offshore drilling?

Yes. Full ban and compensation for workers during a just transition.

3) A ban, or other limitation, on fracking?

Yes. Full ban and compensation for workers during a just transition.

4) A ban on mountaintop removal?

Yes.

5) Raising petroleum fuel economy standards to 65 miles per gallon?

Yes.

6) Legislation requiring 100% clean energy by a date certain and the funding needed to make it a reality?

Yes. I am a cosponsor of legislation to do this in Pennsylvania.

7) Banning new nuclear plants and enacting plans for the ultimate shutdown of existing ones?

No.

**D. Immigration. Do you believe we should:**

1) Provide a path toward citizenship for the millions of residents who are here without papers?

Yes.

2) Allow undocumented residents to buy health insurance under Obamacare?

Yes.

3) Provide humanitarian parole to return unjustly deported immigrants and unify broken families?

Yes.

4) End the dumping of Central American immigrants in dangerous locations in their home countries?

Yes.

**E. Racial Justice. Do you believe the federal government should:**

1) Demilitarize local police forces?

We need to limit the amount of military style weapons that are sold to police departments, and require officers to use deescalation techniques that limit the use of deadly force.

2) Provide incentives, or mandates, to:

a. increase diversity in local police forces?

Yes.

b. require police to use body cameras?

Yes.

c. replace police as the first or sole responders to incidents not involving the threat by purported offenders of violent force?

Yes.



3) Abolish minimum sentencing?

Yes. I created a litmus test for my own votes that requires a no vote whenever a bill would impose mandatory minimum sentences. I also support abolishing mandatory minimums across the Commonwealth.

4) Decriminalize possession of marijuana or other controlled substances?

Yes.

5) Ban private prisons?

Yes.

6) Ban the box that requires job applicants to declare prior arrests?

Yes.

7) Require that the environmental analysis for a permit for a polluting facility must consider both the disparate and cumulative environmental burden borne by a community?

Yes.

8) Provide reparations for the impact of slavery and Jim Crow on African-Americans?

Yes.

**F. Women's Rights. Do you believe the federal government should:**

1) Guarantee affordable child care for every working parent?

Yes.

2) Require employers to provide paid family leave, paid vacation and paid sick days to every American worker?

Yes.

3) End the ban on federal funding for abortion services?

Yes.

4) Enact Roe v. Wade into law nationwide?

Yes, and we should codify it in Pennsylvania as well.

**G. War and Peace. Do you think the federal government should:**

1) Use economic incentives to pressure Israel to end the War in Gaza and the occupation in both Gaza and the West Bank?

Yes. I am an outspoken advocate for a permanent ceasefire, the release of all hostages, and a clear political process for Palestinians and Israelis

2) Support a policy of reducing American military presence around the world?

Yes.

3) Repeal or modify the Patriot Act?

Repeal.

4) Bar the US from torturing prisoners under any and all circumstances?

Yes.

5) Cut the defense budget to increase spending on social service priorities at home?

Yes.

6) Close Guantanamo?

Yes.

7) Ban first use of nuclear weapons and renew arms negotiations to lower nuclear stockpiles?

Yes.

## **H. Corporate Tax Policy. Do you think we should:**

- 1) Prevent corporations that are American for all practical purposes from avoiding U.S. taxes by claiming to be a foreign company through the establishment of a post office box in a tax haven country?

Yes. And in Pennsylvania we should close the “Delaware loophole” which similarly provides tax shelter for corporations doing business in Pennsylvania.

- 2) Repeal loopholes and tax subsidies throughout the federal tax code that benefit oil, natural gas, and coal special interests?

Yes.

- 3) End the carried interest loophole?

Yes. It is beyond parody that hedge fund managers are taxed at lower rates than workers on income derived from their funds’ performances.

- 4) Reverse or modify the Trump tax bill’s corporate tax cuts, and if so, how?

Reverse completely.

## **I. Education**

- 1) What is your view of the appropriate role of testing in student and school evaluations?

Testing and evaluations are incredibly important in determining individualized, targeted instruction and schooling for our kids, and are tools for teachers need to use in order to perfect their teaching. However, these evaluations and tests are terrible indicators of how well a school or teacher is doing on the whole, and should not be used as a way to determine federal funding, teacher pay, or tenure.

- 2) How, if at all, should the federal government promote equity in school district funding?

The federal government should fund a larger share of education funding nationwide in order to decrease the burden on localities level the playing field between low wealth and high wealth districts, both of whom rely heavily on property taxes to pay for schools.

3) Do you support eradicating all student debt?

Yes. And I support making higher education free for all students.

4) What role should charter schools play in school districts and how do you believe the federal government should either promote them, restrict, or otherwise regulate them?

I support a freeze on charter expansion in Pennsylvania. Unlike proponents of charter schools calling for widespread closures of public schools in the early 2010s, I do not support closing existing schools down and destroying the school communities created at those institutions.

5) Do you support making public college tuition free? If not, do you have other proposals to reduce the cost of a college education?

Yes.

## **J. Miscellaneous**

1) How, if at all, do you think U.S. trade policy needs to change?

The United States and Pennsylvania need to make sure their trade policies protect the rights and wages of workers in America and across the globe.

2) What measures would you support to reduce youth unemployment, particularly among minorities?

3) How would you reform or repair Social Security?

Lift the cap on the wages subject to Social Security taxes, which itself would pump trillions of dollars into the Social Security trust fund over the coming decades without raising taxes on anyone making under \$170,000 a year. I would also mandate that Social Security be funded with income taxes and general funds, not the trust funds created by Congress decades ago.

4) How, if at all, would you change the filibuster?

End it. It has no Constitutional basis and no rationale connected to effective governance.

5) Do you believe the Supreme Court should be enlarged, or other measures taken to reverse the ability of the Court to permanently be in the way of progressive legislative policies.

The Court should be expanded to thirteen seats, matching the 13 circuit courts that exist now in the federal judiciary (11 numbered circuits, the DC Circuit, and the Federal Circuit). This is consistent with what the early Congressional efforts to create the federal judiciary.

