

**PA STATE LEGISLATIVE 2022 QUESTIONNAIRE**

**FOR PHILLY NEIGHBORHOOD NETWORKS**

Prepared by: Pamela A. DeLissio Phone/Email: 215-808-9167/Pam@ElectPam.com

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**CANDIDATE CERTIFICATION**

Candidate Name: Pamela A. DeLissio

Office Sought: STATE REPRESENTATIVE

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: Pamela A. DeLissio Date: 2.16.2022

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

**Gloria Gilman: gmgilman@gmail.com**

**and**

**Stan Shapiro: shapsj@comcast.net**

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## 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?

**First elected in 2010, I am serving in my 6th term as state representative for the 194th.**

2. If you have previously held a government office:

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

**Redistricting Reform; House Rules Reform; Single Payer Healthcare**

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

**Health Committee - 10 years**

**Aging and Older Adult Services Committee - 10 years**

**Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee - 9 years**

**State Government Committee - 6 years**

**Human Services Committee - 4 years**

**Children & Youth Committee - 5 years (appointed minority chair this session)**

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.

**Not yet available**

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

**This cycle, I have received endorsements from PA-NOW.**

**In prior cycles I have received endorsements from unions such as AFL-CIO, AFSCME District Councils 33, 47, & 88. I have also received endorsements from PA Sierra Club, Ceasefire PA, Planned Parenthood, PSEA: PACE and Humane PA, Pennsylvania State Nurses Association, NASW-PA, UFCW, Liberty City LGBTQ Democratic Club, SEIU-32BJ, SEIU 668, Keystone Progress, Farmers PAC, AFSCME Council 13, APSCUF/CAP, Montgomery County Women**

**Democratic Initiative, Represent PA, Clean Water Action, Conservation Voters. T**

**This list is not exhaustive, and I have not sought all endorsements in all previous election cycles.**

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

**I am committed to my reelection- fundraising goals and strategies are considered sensitive information and not publicly disseminated.**

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

8. What is your sexual orientation?

9. What is your racial, ethnic identity?

## **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.

- **My three highest priorities are, in no particular order:**
  - **The expansion of voting rights.**
    - **Creation of an independent redistricting commission so that elected officials do not pick their voters**
    - **Defending the right to vote by mail to ensure easy access to voting**
  - **Single payer Healthcare**
    - **Healthcare is a human right**
    - **I will be reintroducing my Pennsylvania Health Care Plan. This will be the 3rd time I have introduced this legislation. The ACA did not go far enough to ensure health equity and is an insurance driven product.**
  - **Fair Funding for Basic Education**
    - **The entire appropriation for this line item in the budget must go through the fair funding formula to achieve true equitable funding**

## II. Education

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

**I believe that education must be made as accessible as possible. Ideally community colleges offer career ladders to citizens for certificate programs through degree programs. Additionally, community colleges should have partnerships with 4 year post-secondary institutions to ensure that no credits are lost if a student transfers.**

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

**Limited**

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

**Funding education is always a sound investment in our future. As a supporter of the Basic Education Fair Funding Formula, the variables in that formula are sufficient to achieve equitable funding if 100% of the appropriation went through the formula. In 2015 when the formula was proposed, I spent significant time to understand why this proposed formula was different from the ones previously instituted over the past 4 decades. It was clear that this formula included variables that had not been previously considered.**

**I wrote an article in February 2019 regarding this topic:**

**<https://nwlocalpaper.com/unfinished-business-school-funding-for-all>**

- 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?

**The legislation that created charter schools dates to 1997. There have been attempts, none successful, to pass legislation identified as charter reform. The current methodology used to pay for special education students, in particular, is in need of reform as is the manner in which school districts are charged for cyber school.**

**Charter schools should not be expanded at this time, until charter school reform can be implemented. Many school districts have begun to offer their own cyber school at a much reduced cost. School districts have also been evaluating their curricula and programming to ensure that they can compete with charter schools. Unfortunately, the experiment that was the original charter school intent was never implemented in that manner.**

## III. Budget and Taxes

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

**The devil is in the details, that being said, conceptually I am in favor of a graduated tax.**

**I also support commercial and residential taxes being taxed at different rates.**

- 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 the Governor's proposed decrease of the CNIT to 4.99%.**

**I have been a supporter of combined reporting, otherwise known as closing the Delaware loophole.**

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

**A graduated tax versus the current flat tax. The personal income tax has been at 3.07% since 2004. A modest increase would be acceptable.**

- 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?

**I have not reviewed this plan**

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

**I support combined reporting - otherwise known as closing the Delaware loophole**

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

**During my time in office, I have prime sponsored legislation for a severance tax on natural gas. The impact fee was not an efficient way to generate revenue from this natural resource.**

- 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 have met with researchers at the Mercatus Center who have thoughtful and interesting views on such incentives. They maintain that in the long run these incentives do not produce meaningful economic growth. Each budget year I have been known to ask for the total number of tax credits being made available and try to help my constituents understand that a tax credit generally means tax revenue that is not coming into the general fund and therefore, not subject to debate and the will of the legislature.**

#### 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?

**A woman's right to her own autonomy is sacrosanct. Regardless of an individuals' position on abortion, that ultimate right to choose should always be with the woman. You should have heard my speech in caucus a few years back – it basically started If men could get pregnant...**

- 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?

**The legislature should pass abortion protections within the state to ensure that women in our commonwealth have the same freedoms regardless of the SCOTUS's decision.**

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

**A simple concept, equal pay for equal work. I have decades of experience having to advocate for myself in male dominated spaces. Having the laws on my side would've helped.**

#### VI. Children and Families

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

**In lieu of requiring businesses to offer a modest amount of PTO, establishing a system similar to the ability to collect unemployment may be a solution. In that scenario businesses would be required to also pay into the fund and the eligibility requirements would ensure fair access to PTO. Businesses of course, would be able to offer PTO above and beyond. Paid family leave could be handled in the same manner.**

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

**This is a laudable goal that I support. There is a serious question in how this can be done. Studies have shown that direct grant infusions like the federal child tax credit have had powerful positive effects on the quality of childcare.**

**A similar state child tax credit is also a possibility to supplement or take the place of if the BBB legislation is not signed into law.**

## **VII. Environment**

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

**I am currently working on an amendment for the 100% renewable energy legislation that has been introduced the past several sessions. I have been concerned that the language to transition fossil fuel workers to renewable energy has been insufficient to ensure a just transition. A ban on fracking can only be considered with a sufficient offramp for the communities, men, women, and children that are supported by it.**

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

**I have been a proponent of this ban and personally utilize reusable bags at the market and other locations. Have for years and years.**

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

**Definitely pros and cons that I remember from a few years back- perhaps during Mayor Nutter's term. I have certainly heard the debates in the house regarding the sale of other utilities such as sewer and water authorities. The concern is always that privatization of utilities can be a short-term solution for a long term problem.**

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

**The RGGI is a great first step in minimizing our carbon footprint**

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

***Not familiar with the criteria that is currently used.***

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

**The permitting process of the DEP and EPA should be strong enough to ensure environmental justice. It is appalling how the staff of our DEP has been eroded over the past 2 decades.**

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

**To fix many of these issues that many of my constituents feel strongly about, we need to understand the root cause as to how and why real policies that can move us forward Do not see the light of day.**

**As always, it is a matter of priorities and political will. One reason I spend much time and energy on redistricting reform and reforming the House rules. Ensuring non-gerrymandered districts for senate and house seats will produce more competitive races and candidates more willing to find that all-necessary middle ground.**

**PA rates a score of zero by FairVote.org for the rules that govern our general assembly. I have worked with the Government Reform Caucus and now the PA One Caucus to advocate and strategize for the necessary rules changes that will make a significant difference in which bills make it out of committee and are voted on the floor.**

**My article on this topic from November 2020 can be found at this link:**  
<https://www.pahouse.com/DeLissio/News/?id=117333>

## **VIII. Criminal Justice**

- 1) Should stop and frisk be limited or outlawed?

**The implementation of stop and frisk factually leads to a disproportionate number of black and brown people being stopped by local law enforcement. I have heard opinions on both sides of this matter and would need additional discussion and data.**

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

**As the minority chair of the Children & Youth committee, I have had several discussions with my majority counterpart on this topic. I believe that legislation regarding youth and the juvenile justice system should come to our committee versus the Judiciary Committee as we would be viewing this through a different lens- that these are children and not criminals. I have reviewed the recently issued Juvenile Justice Task Force Report and was somewhat appalled at the language the report uses- e.g. - how do we protect our communities from juvenile delinquents; when in fact we should be asking where and how as a society did we fail these children.**

3) Should marijuana be fully legalized?

**Last session I met with the staff of the prime sponsor to better understand the bill. I have also hosted a town hall with guest speakers who offered differing views on the legalization of recreational cannabis. The audience that night seemed to favor full legalization.**

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

**NO and my answer is no for privately owned jails also.**

5) Should we ban the box in Pennsylvania?

**Yes**

6) Should PA continue to build new prisons?

**There has been at least one SCI shuttered in the past 5 years and a proposal to shutter another SCI. If a replacement building is necessary for the health and welfare of our incarcerated citizens and those citizens employed by the SCI I am in favor of a replacement building.**

7) Should PA begin to close prisons? Explain.

**There is still a need for prisons within PA at this time. In an idealistic world without crime, there would be no need for prison.**

**However, the programs that shrink recidivism, and allow more people to leave the prison system could certainly lead to the need for less prisons. Closing down prisons prematurely could lead to overcrowding the ones that are left, leaving incarcerated citizens and the staff who work there unnecessarily at risk.**

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

**The death penalty is morally repugnant and financially wasteful. There is no reason for it to still exist.**

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

**The decision to treat a juvenile as an adult should be done on a case by case basis.**

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?

**See root cause discussion in answer VII -7.**

**Then maybe we would see reasonable gun safety laws enacted including red flag laws.**

in lieu of taking these measures it will cost many dollars to ameliorate the trauma caused by this horrific gun violence.

Please see my video from my January 22, 2022 (my 113th town hall) on ACEs, trauma informed care and trauma informed policy.

[https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?ref=watch\\_permalink&v=528916294885740](https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?ref=watch_permalink&v=528916294885740)

## 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, In the broad sense, I am in support of strengthening protection for workers. The ability to form a union is both beneficial to the workers and to management.**

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

**The minimum wage should be increased to at least \$12 and with a gradual increase to \$15 to allow for businesses to adapt to the new standards. Tying it to inflation would prevent this from becoming a political football. Historically the prime sponsor of the minimum wage legislation has agreed to my amendment to have an effective date 180 days from when it becomes law to provide businesses ample opportunity to meet their new payroll obligation. This would not prevent businesses from implementing it sooner.**

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

**If the Cost of living within a municipality is higher than its neighbors, the municipality requires a higher minimum wage.**

**I support the ability for counties, municipalities and other local governing bodies to increase the minimum wage as they deem necessary. However, that being said, that will cause much, much confusion as folks may hold multiple jobs, in multiple locations etc. It is best done at the state level. It is my understanding that less than 2% of PA employees are actually paid at the federal minimum of \$7.25**

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

**There are not any core government services I believe that should be privatized for the benefits of Pennsylvanians. This includes the retail sale of liquor.**

- 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?

**see answer re:II-3 Fair Funding Formula see answer II-1**

## **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?

***Absolutely!* In the over 113 town halls I have hosted since first being elected, we have discussed redistricting over 50 times, with 12 of those town halls being solely focused on this topic. The reapportionment process this year was the fairest it had been in 30 years, and it still was marred by political incentives.**

**An independent commission, championed by groups like Fair Districts PA, would take power from elected officials and give it to the people, creating fairer representation. Over the past 5 years I have been closely involved with the effort to pass legislation for an independent redistricting Commission. Just ask my good friends at the northwest Philadelphia work group of Fair Districts PA.**

## **XII. Public Health**

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

**As mentioned early, I am a staunch supporter of health care for all. Here is the link to the article that I wrote in December of 2021 reminding my constituents of my interest in this topic and advising of my re-introducing the Pennsylvania Health Care Plan this year. The title of the article is Single Payer Is The Cure. This will be the 3rd time I have introduced this legislation.**

***i.* <https://www.pahouse.com/DeLissio/News/?id=121895>**

- 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?

**It is my understanding that there are sufficient opportunities for vaccinations for COVID-19. It is my further understanding from a few high school and elementary school principals that it is NOT the lack of opportunity to access vaccines but serious**

misinformation in some communities. the information as to the good that vaccines do and how necessary they are is readily available. if citizens choose not to believe this information we can only keep trying.

#### XIV. Housing

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

**Would have to give this additional thought. Zoning matters are local and the ability to include a certain percentage of truly affordable housing is within local control. I know that recently the state has funded the Housing Trust Fund, however, those dollars are a 'spit in the ocean'. Perhaps rent control legislation?**

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

**I do not know what is meant by 'good' cause.**