

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

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CANDIDATE CERTIFICATION

Candidate Name: Anthony Hardy Williams

Office Sought: PA State Senate - 8th District

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: 2-25-22

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? I was elected to the Pennsylvania House of Representatives in 1988. I have served in the Pennsylvania Senate since my election in 1998.
2. If you have previously held a government office:
 - a. What are the primary issue areas in which you were involved? Throughout my career, I have focused on a variety of issues including violence reduction, equity in education, workforce development, environmental remediation, and community development.
 - b. What committees, caucuses or working groups have you served on? I have served on a number of committees. I am most proud of my service on the following Senate Committees: Education, Environmental Resources and Energy, State Government and Intergovernmental Operations. Those committees provided platforms necessary to advance priorities for the people I serve.
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.)
4. Please provide copies of all your significant campaign materials, including position papers, advertisement copy, and flyers.
5. What, if any, endorsements have you received? What others are you seeking?

Teamsters 830, Teamsters district council 53, AFSCME DC 88, Councilman Kenyatta Johnson, Representative Jordan Harris, Representative Regina Young, Representative Joanna McClinton. I am seeking various other political organization endorsements including the Democratic Party endorsements for Philadelphia and Delaware Counties.

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

We have created an aggressive, modern, targeted campaign that is centered around a volunteer-driven field program, multiple channels of data-driven communications, a robust fundraising program, and a track record of accomplishments for the constituents I represent.

In every election I've ever run, I've put a priority on field and direct voter contact. I believe there is no substitute for personal communications and, even in this era of COVID-19, there are still ways to connect with people on a personal level. We will rely on an army of volunteers from across the district that we've assembled over the years. Our field program

will be professionally run and based on targeted voter data and available models to make sure we're maximizing the efficiency and effectiveness of the days and weeks between now and Election Day.

I will communicate my positive accomplishments in office as well as my vision for the future through a paid communications program that allows us to contact voters throughout the district.

7. What, if any, genders, do you identify with? **Male**
8. What is your sexual orientation? **Heterosexual**
9. What is your racial, ethnic identity? **African-American**

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.

Securing dedicated state funding to support community based gun violence prevention and intervention initiatives, along with critical mental health resources.

Working to bring more funding, transparency and equity to the Pennsylvania school funding formula to ensure that students in Philadelphia and Delaware Counties, and across the Commonwealth, get the public education they deserve and the education we are required to provide.

Working to reform the justice system in a way that incentivizes productive behavior and provides resources necessary to re-enter society and to be stable through opportunities for gainful employment and mental health support.

II. Education

- 1) Do you believe public college, or community college, should be tuition free? **Yes. Education is the foundation for so many opportunities that propel people**

forward in life and we should do everything possible to support growth throughout our communities.

- 2) **What role do you believe standardized tests should play in evaluating teachers, schools and students, if any? Standardized tests can provide important data about how students learn and achieve, but they are not an accurate reflection of how teachers perform. This reality is compounded by the significant challenges many students and families face as it relates to poverty and generations of inequitable funding for education.**

- 3) **What factors do you believe should be considered in determining *overall levels* of school funding in the Commonwealth, and funding *per school district*? All education funding should go through the fair funding formula. The formula accounts for actual student needs and district composition. And, because the Commonwealth is constitutionally required to provide a fair and efficient system of public education, we should consider increased investment in schools that have been historically underfunded.**

- 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 support public charter schools that serve students well. We should invest in all forms of public education and require all schools to be assessed by the same performance and achievement standards. Robust oversight of our public education system will enable district leadership to adapt to dynamic student needs. Public education should provide fundamental skills and prepare students for productive futures.**

III. Budget and Taxes

- 1) **Do you support a Constitutional Amendment to permit progressive taxation in PA, in whole or part? Yes, progressive taxation would provide the means for Pennsylvania to reduce taxes for working families that desperately need relief.**

- 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 reforming the tax to eliminate the opportunity for businesses to avoid contributing to Pennsylvania's general fund as a result of bad policy (repeal of the Capital Stock and Franchise Tax) and the ability to register profits in another state ("Delaware Loophole"). The lost revenue has reduced Pennsylvania's ability to provide critical social services and educational opportunities.**

- 3) **What changes, if any, would you support in the personal income tax? I support reducing the amount of taxes struggling families and individuals have to pay.**

- 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.**
- 5) Do you support full elimination of the Delaware loophole? **Yes. The significant revenue lost because of the loophole means that Pennsylvania is placed at a disadvantage when it comes to providing the social services families need to survive.**
- 6) Do you support a tax on fracking, and at what level? **Yes. While a tax would generate needed revenue for Pennsylvania, it would also generate the resources necessary to protect workers in the industry and families that are impacted by development.**
- 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 support the program to the extent that it incentivizes development in blighted and neglected areas. And, I do not support tax incentives when planned development effectively eliminates the possibility for small business owners and longterm residents to sustain their existence in changing 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. I firmly believe in a woman's right to choose. I will continue to support women as they struggle to maintain autonomy over their bodies and access to competent reproductive health resources.**
- 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? **I would certainly support legislation to enshrine reproductive health protections in state law.**
- 3) Would you support proposals to ensure that women and men working in the Commonwealth receive equal pay for equal work? **Yes. Each year I stand with workers across Pennsylvania to demand equal pay for equal work.**

VI. Children and Families

- 1) Should the state require businesses to provide paid family leave? **Yes. A family's financial stability should not be jeopardized because a loved one is ill. No one should have to choose between caring for a sick loved one and going to work.**
- 2) Should the state provide universal availability of affordable childcare? If yes, how would you achieve this? **Yes. Pennsylvania can make childcare affordable for working families by increasing subsidies and income limits to allow more families to qualify for assistance.**

VII. Environment

- 1) Do you support a ban on fracking in whole or part? Explain. **I believe there should be significantly more oversight as it relates to fracking. Everyone deserves to have access to clean air and water. I will not support development that jeopardizes that right.**
- 2) Would you support banning the use of single-use plastic bags? **Yes.**
- 3) Do you think Philadelphia should be compelled or induced to sell PGW? **No. Many working families are already struggling to pay their bills, and we should not allow a for-profit entity to pursue additional rate increases.**
- 4) What measures would you support to move PA off its reliance on fossil fuels and expand use of renewable energy sources? **I will continue to promote investment in clean energy infrastructure. This investment will create sustainable jobs and provide an opportunity to remediate some of the devastation the communities I represent have suffered.**
- 5) What criteria would you use in making appointments to the P.U.C.? **It is important for appointees to demonstrate a commitment to protecting vulnerable communities from environmental racism and to promoting increased access to utilities through policies to address affordability.**
- 6) What steps would you take to ensure environmental justice in the placement and remediation of structures that pollute? **I will continue to demand hearings in the Pennsylvania Senate and oversight by the executive agencies charged with monitoring remediation. I will also continue to engage my neighbors and connect with stakeholders to ensure that I am equipped with the community perspective as I advance public policy.**
- 7) What, if any, other measures would you support to preserve or improve our environment? (water issues, park preservation, detoxification of school buildings, etc.) **I will continue to work with allies to reduce carbon**

emissions in Pennsylvania. I have supported Governor Wolf's plan to join the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, which would reduce greenhouse gas emissions and support job creation in renewable energy. I will also continue working to detoxify our public schools so that students and staff have safe, healthy places to learn and work.

VIII. Criminal Justice

- 1) Should stop and frisk be limited or outlawed? **Outlawed. People of color have been disproportionately targeted and victimized by this practice.**
- 2) How would you deal with the problem of mass incarceration of minorities, particularly minority youth? **We must invest in programming that provides direct pathways to opportunities that lead to sustainable futures. This is why I fought for millions in violence prevention and intervention grants that enable community-based nonprofits to engage youth and young adults where they are. The programming ranges from after-school enrichment programs to dispute resolution and mental health treatment to workforce development. These diversion programs and support initiatives give young people a chance to thrive in their communities.**
- 3) Should marijuana be fully legalized? **Yes.**
- 4) Should privately-owned prisons be permitted in Pennsylvania? **No.**
- 5) Should we ban the box in Pennsylvania? **Yes.**
- 6) Should PA continue to build new prisons? **No.**
- 7) Should PA begin to close prisons? Explain. **We must continue our work to reduce prison populations by releasing non-violent offenders. That reduction in prison population should lead to prison closures.**
- 8) Do you support an end to the death penalty? **Yes.**

9) When if ever, should a juvenile be tried as an adult? **Juveniles should not be tried as adults.**

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? **We need continued and increased investment in our communities, schools, recreation centers, mental health services, workforce development and sustainable housing. A combination of these and other services can provide support for people who cannot see a path forward.**

IX. Campaign Finance Reform

Would you support legislation to provide public financing for state and local election campaigns? **Yes. Anyone should have the opportunity to seek public office.**

X. Labor

1) Would you support legislation to strengthen protection for workers trying to form or join a union? **Yes. I will continue to support those who are organizing to advance their collective interests and those unions that represent the people I have the privilege of serving. I will continue listening to underrepresented workers and passionate union leaders to advance dialogue that ultimately improves the quality of life for people across Pennsylvania. This particular work is one of the greatest honors of occupying this space of influence.**

2) Should the minimum wage be increased? If so, to what level and should the increase be indexed to inflation? **Yes. The minimum wage must be increased, and I support efforts to raise the minimum wage to \$15 per hour. However, I believe the wage should be higher than that. We need to shift the conversation from discussion of a minimum to discussion of a family-sustaining wage. We have to do everything we can to eradicate the concept of "working poor."**

3) Do you believe that Philadelphia and other municipalities should continue to be preempted from increasing the minimum wage on their own? **No.**

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.**

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? **I will**

continue the work of building direct pipelines to the major corporations that operate in Philadelphia. That staggering statistic is also why I created the Diversity Apprenticeship Program to help people of color obtain high-paying union jobs. These and other educational and workforce development opportunities will help reduce the poverty rate.

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. I will continue to support efforts to combat voter suppression and to bolster voter engagement and access to the ballot. I have also partnered with Fair Districts PA, the League of Women Voters, Committee of Seventy, Common Cause and other organizations to end gerrymandering in Pennsylvania.**

XII. Public Health

- 1) Would you support state legislation to create a single-payer system in PA? **Yes. Everyone should have access to quality health care in Pennsylvania.**
- 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? **I would require much greater oversight. Disparities go unaddressed when we do not require health departments to focus on equity and access in developing their policies and delivering services.**

XIV. Housing

- 1) How would you deal with the growing affordable housing gap in PA, both in the homeownership and rental markets? **I support additional subsidies to make quality housing affordable. And, the issue of affordability would be partially addressed through our work to reduce poverty and pay people a family-sustaining wage.**
- 2) Would you support a mandate requiring landlords to show good cause for evictions? **Yes.**