



**National Nurses United
2018 Maine Candidate Questionnaire**

Thank you for taking time to fill out this questionnaire. In order to better inform our membership about the candidates for offices in the State of Maine, the Maine State Nurses Association/National Nurses United requests candidates seeking endorsement to respond to the following questionnaire. Please use additional paper to complete any questions.

NAME:

OFFICE: **Governor, State of Maine**

ADDRESS:

PHONE:

EMAIL:

CAMPAIGN MANAGER:

PHONE:

CURRENT OFFICE (if applicable)

Candidate Background:

1. Briefly describe your top priorities and the policy areas that will be of most interest to you if you are elected.
2. Briefly describe your background, work history, education, and prior public service.
3. Have you failed to vote in any elections in the past five years? If so, why?
4. Please describe your membership, work or experience with labor unions.
5. Please list the organizations to which you belong.
6. Have you ever been endorsed by a labor union?
7. What endorsements have you received for your current race?

Healthcare

1. Currently 28 million Americans, including over 100,000 Maine residents, have no health insurance and tens of millions more across the country have inadequate insurance with high co-pays and deductibles that prevent them from seeking care. While this is an improvement from the number of uninsured people in the state before the passage of the Affordable Care Act and will undoubtedly improve further when the expansion of Medicaid in Maine is implemented pursuant to the recent ballot referendum, that anyone is unable to seek the care that they need is unacceptable to the state's registered nurses. President Trump and Congressional Republicans are continuing to seek to make a bad situation much worse by passing new federal legislation that will deny care to an additional 22 million people, including those in Maine dependent on Medicaid and the ACA exchanges. But even without these Republican proposed changes, the US still ranks poorly among industrial nations in a large number of health indicators, despite paying more per capita than most other OECD countries. Do you believe that health care is a human right? Are you in favor of a publicly-administered, single-payer universal health care system? Will you champion legislation to implement such a plan in the State of Maine?
2. The financial imperatives transforming the health care industry increasingly undermine the ability of clinicians to make health care decisions based strictly on the needs of their patients. This includes a pervasive practice by hospitals not to have on shift at all times a sufficient number of registered nurses taking care of patients, a practice which is dangerous for patients and studies show increases morbidity and mortality rates among hospital patients. Another manifestation of this problem is long emergency room wait times, according to the US federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services; one clear cause of this is understaffing in the ERs and other units of the hospitals. What steps would you pursue to protect and improve the quality of patient care in Maine hospitals and clinics? Do you support mandatory, minimum nurse-to-patient ratios in acute-care and critical access hospitals? Do you support measures to limit unsafe, premature discharges of patients or transfers from hospitals to nursing homes or other sub-acute facilities? Do you support legislation to enact new protections for hospital patients warehoused in "observation status" with fewer protections accorded other patients?
3. About 46% of Maine residents live in rural areas with with a fragile health care delivery system. Critical access hospitals throughout these rural counties have been discontinuing services such as labor and delivery and specialty care leaving patients no choice to travel long distances or delay treatment. The elimination of services are made by hospitals and hospital systems without any public input, public health conversation, or impact study. Would you support and would you advocate for legislation that regulates closures and the elimination of services in areas where there is no other alternative for patients?
4. Expansion in the use of telehealth services (the use of electronic information and telecommunications technologies to support long-distance clinical health care, patient and professional health-related education, public health and health administration) continues to proliferate. In order properly to assess a patient, a registered nurse must see, touch, feel and even smell the patient. Each of these elements can indicate subtle changes in a patient's condition, which are vital to the proper assessment and diagnosis of patients and the overall

provision of quality patient care. Do you believe that that government should assess and study telehealth services before any expansion is implemented to ensure that patients get quality care?

Nursing Practice

1. There are specific differences in the scope of practice of RNs and LPNs which define which personnel do what relative to caring for patients. The differences in scope of practice are based upon education and knowledge of the practitioner and state licensing requirements. The health care industry often tries to save money by blurring the lines between different clinicians' scopes of practice. Do you support protecting patients by opposing attempts to undermine the RN scope of practice?
2. Do you believe that prescription drugs should be administered through an appropriately trained and licensed provider or do you believe that people, including unlicensed personnel, can be trained to safely and properly administer some prescription drugs?
3. Nurses have some of the highest rates of work-related, musculoskeletal injuries of any occupation. Do you support legislation that would require that hospitals institute and utilize lift teams and lift equipment, and that also protects the rights of nurses to speak out regarding unsafe patient care practices?
4. The rates of workplace violence in health care settings have risen to epidemic proportions. The Bureau of Labor Statistics showed that 48% of all non-fatal injuries from occupational assaults and violent acts occurred in healthcare and social service settings. Healthcare workers specifically are five times more likely, than all other major industries combined, to be the victim of assault. Thus far, California is the only state to have passed comprehensive workplace violence prevention legislation to protect registered nurses and other healthcare workers. In order to be effective, such a standard must mandate that every hospital develops a workplace violence prevention plan in conjunction with registered nurses that is unique to the needs of each unit, and is in effect at all times in every unit. It must include hazard identification and correction procedures, annual program evaluation, in-person training for all employees and sufficient staffing to respond to workplace violence incidents. Do you support the creation of a comprehensive workplace violence prevention standard for healthcare workers in Maine?

Budget and the Economy

1. Given the challenging economic times faced by state and local governments, and the disproportionate impact of budget cuts on health services, what measures do you support, if any, to raise revenues, reform the budget process, and ensure adequate health and human services?
2. A small federal tax on Wall Street's financial transactions has the potential to raise significant

revenue, which can pay for things such as free college tuition, infrastructure, health care, job creation and other measures. Such a federal tax, paid for overwhelmingly by hedge funds and other traders, would simultaneously limit reckless short-term speculation that can threaten financial stability. Research has shown that a transaction tax in the United States, starting with a 0.5% tax on stock transactions and lower rates applied to other financial transactions, including currency speculation, would raise more than \$300 billion annually. Do you support such a financial transaction tax? If yes, are you willing to speak publicly about your support for this issue so that more revenues can be raised from Wall Street special interests to create jobs and meet human needs?

3. Under what circumstances, if any, would you vote in favor of privatization (i.e., corporatization) and/or contracting out existing state services?
4. Do you support a state minimum wage of at least \$15 per hour by 2020?
5. Do you support legislation mandating free tuition at community colleges?

Collective Bargaining and Workers' Rights

1. Defined benefit pension plans are under attack and are frequently being replaced by defined contribution plans (e.g., 401-k plans). What are your views on this and what should be done to provide workers who retire with a livable pension?
2. By many measures, quality of life is worse in states with so-called right-to-work laws which allow employees, who receive the benefits of union representation, including higher wages, safer working conditions and better benefits, not to pay their fair share of the cost of representation. Long established law already permits employees who object to a union's political expenditures to withhold payment for certain union political activity. Right-to-work laws go far beyond the settled law of permitting union members to opt out of dues for politics, going directly to the heart of everything unions do in the realm of collective bargaining.
 - a) Will you oppose efforts by corporations and anti-union groups to weaken the rights of workers to organize a union and collectively bargain in Maine?
 - b) Will you oppose so-called right-to-work legislation?
3. Please answer if you support or oppose, and state your reasons why.
 - a) Efforts to make it easier for workers to join a union through employer neutrality agreements, majority sign-up or other processes that allow workers to choose free from fear or intimidation.

- b) Employers imposing furloughs, reducing employee benefits, or moving to a two-tier pension system.
 - c) Employers unilaterally imposing a collective bargaining agreement on workers instead of negotiating in good faith.
 - d) Governments banning any group of workers from engaging in any form of collective action, including the right to strike.
4. Will you support workers who are attempting to win union recognition or union contracts from recalcitrant employers by:
- (a) Honoring (refusing to cross) union picket lines? ___ Yes ___ No
1) Please tell us about any strike or picket you have supported or participated in:
 - (b) Supporting union boycotts? ___ Yes ___ No
1) Please tell us about any boycott you participated in:
 - (c) Publicly speaking or writing in support of union organizing drives and contract campaigns?
___ Yes ___ No

Please tell us about any support you have provided to organizing drives or contract fights:

5. Have you ever crossed a union picket line? ___ Yes ___ No
If yes, please explain. **Environmental Health**
1. Do you see a connection between the environment and public health? If so, please describe what role, if any, you see for the government on this issue.
 2. Nurses view with concern the social and public health impacts of climate change.
 - a) Do you agree with the scientific consensus that human-caused climate change is producing measurable negative impacts on our health and quality of life?
 - b) Do you support limiting extraction of fossil fuels?
 - c) What measures do you support to reduce the levels of CO₂, methane and other greenhouse gases? Do you support Cap-and-Trade approaches, and/or a Carbon Tax? Do you support former President Obama's Clean Power Plan?
 3. Would you support the legislation to ban fracking in Maine? Why/Why not?
 4. What other measures do you support to protect public health and ensure a clean

environment in Maine?

Women's Rights, LGBTQ Rights and Civil Rights

1. Do you support a woman's right to make her own decision regarding her reproductive health, including the right to choose an abortion?
2. Do you support measures to prohibit discrimination based on gender identity and sexual orientation in employment, housing, education, credit, public accommodations, jury service, and federally funded programs?
3. Do you support legislation that would prevent a state government agent from using public resources for civil immigration enforcement; prevents law enforcement officials from stopping, arresting or detaining an individual simply to find out immigration or citizenship status; prevent the State from creating a registry for the purpose of immigration enforcement, and prevent state law enforcement officers from being deputized as immigration officers?

Clean Money/Fair Elections

1. Corruption of the political process and clean elections are a major issue in how governments operate and in the viability of the democratic process.
 - a) What specific reforms do you favor to curb the corrosive impact of corporate lobbying and donations to electoral campaigns?
 - b) Do you support Maine's Clean Election law to publicly fund elections? Do you support small donor match public financing of candidates?
2. Are there other reforms you support that would increase voter registration and participation in elections in Maine? Automatic voter registration? Same-day voter registration? Rank choice voting?

Return completed questionnaires to:

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