



# Candidate Questionnaire

## TEMPLATE



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## Introduction

A candidate questionnaire is a great tool to help the disability community learn more about candidates, and specifically how the candidates would address issues that impact people with disabilities. Questionnaires also educate the candidates and make them more aware of the issues that are important to the disability community.

### How to Use This Candidate Questionnaire Template

This Candidate Questionnaire Template includes a variety of questions addressing topics that are important to the disability community. Here are some tips on using this document to develop your own candidate questionnaire:

- Select only 10-15 questions for your candidate questionnaire. The questionnaire should be comprehensive enough to cover issues that voters care about, but not so long that the candidate is unlikely to complete it.
- Some questions are more appropriate to federal-level candidates versus state or local candidates.
- If you send your questionnaire to one candidate, you must also send it to all candidates in that race to remain nonpartisan. You must also conduct equal outreach and follow-up to all candidates.
- Try to get in direct contact with someone who works on the candidate's campaign. If that is not possible, try sending the questionnaire through multiple communication channels (email and social media). You can also encourage advocates in your network to reach out and ask the candidate to respond to the questionnaire. Having multiple people tweet at the candidate can be effective.
- When candidates complete the questionnaire, publish the results exactly as is and **share those responses with AAPD and the REV UP Campaign at [programs@aapd.com](mailto:programs@aapd.com)** – we will post them as well.

### Can 501(c)(3) Nonprofit Organizations Send Out a Candidate Questionnaire?

**Yes!** While 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations must remain nonpartisan, they can create and share candidate questionnaires. There are two main requirements for nonprofits that issue questionnaires:

- 1) You must send the questionnaire to all candidates running in a particular election and you must conduct an equal amount of outreach with all candidates. Whether or not a candidate responds is their decision and will not affect your 501(c)(3) status.
- 2) Responses to candidate questionnaires must be published exactly as submitted by the candidate, without any edits, abbreviations, or commentary.

You can learn more about nonprofits and political campaigns from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) – [watch a webinar](#) or [read the PDF course](#).



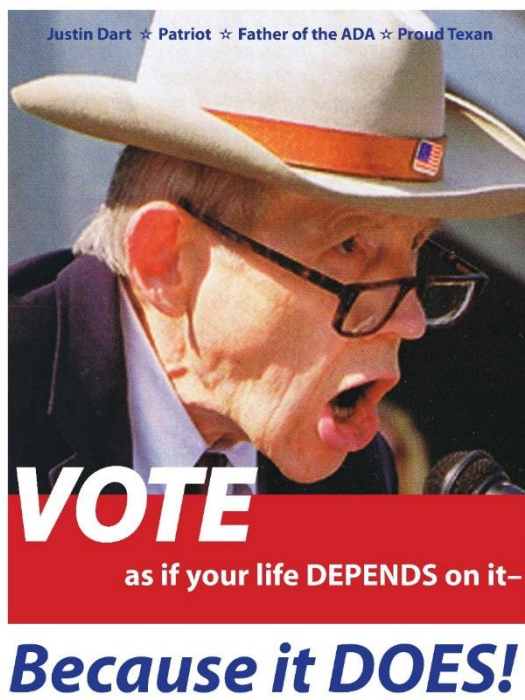
### Questionnaires Referenced to Develop this Questionnaire Template:

We are grateful to the disability organizations that shared their candidate questionnaires to help us develop this template. Thank you!

- [2016 REV UP Presidential Candidate Questionnaire](#) – AAPD and NCIL
- [2017 NJ Gubernatorial Candidate Questionnaire](#) – Alliance Center for Independence and REV UP NJ
- [Texas Disability Issues Forum](#) – REV UP TX
- [2017 Candidate Forum on Disability Issues](#) – ARISE
- [2017 Disability Candidates Forum: Illinois Governor's Race](#) – Access Living

### About the REV UP Campaign

The [REV UP Campaign](#), launched by the [American Association of People with Disabilities](#) (AAPD) in 2016, is a nonpartisan initiative that coordinates with national, state, and local disability organizations to increase the political power of the disability community while also engaging candidates and the media on disability issues. The Campaign focuses on voter registration, education, access, and engagement. REV UP stands for *Register! Educate! Vote! Use your Power!*



*Photo of Justin Dart with text: "VOTE as if your life depends on it - Because it DOES!"*

## Community Integration

The vast majority of Americans with disabilities and older Americans prefer home- and community-based services that allow them to live independently in their communities; however, states and insurance providers of long-term services and supports (LTSS) still restrict access to community-based services. Without these services, people with disabilities may end up in institutions that deprive them of their fundamental freedoms and cut their lives short. This reliance on institutional placement is also far more expensive than prioritizing services in the community.

- If elected, will you support the Disability Integration Act (currently S.910/H.R.2472) – bipartisan civil rights legislation that establishes in statute the right of Americans with long-term services and supports (LTSS) disabilities to receive services and supports in the community and be integrated into society – and sign this or similar civil rights legislation into law? *[Federal-level candidates]*
- What investments will you make in expanding long-term services and supports for people with disabilities?
- In the *Olmstead v. L.C.* (1999) decision, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that states are required to eliminate unnecessary segregation of persons with disabilities and ensure that persons with disabilities receive services in the most integrated setting appropriate to their needs. Do you feel the state is doing what it can do to fully implement this ruling? If not, what measures does [STATE] need to take?
- There were approximately 3.2 million individuals served by Medicaid Home- and Community-Based Waivers in FY 2014. However, as of 2016, there are approximately 656,195 children, young adults, adults, and seniors with disabilities waiting an average of 23 months for services in their communities. What steps would you take to eliminate the current waiting lists for home and community services in [STATE]?  
*[Source: [Kaiser Family Foundation](#)]*
- Many people wait over 12 years to receive services in their community, yet there is no wait to enter nursing homes or other institutions. Would you support creating a plan to eliminate the institutional bias in the funding of long-term services and supports (LTSS)? If so, how?
- Some analysts predict a critical shortage of community attendants to provide services to seniors and people with disabilities who are living in their homes. What steps would you take to alleviate such a crisis?

- Many believe that the current base wage of \$        per hour in [STATE] is a major reason for the growing shortage of personal care aides (PCAs, also known as community attendants) as well as their high turnover rate. What would you do to help raise wages and benefits for PCAs?  
*[The mean hourly wage for personal care aides nationally is \$10.92. The [Bureau of Labor Statistics](#) provides further wage information by state.]*
- What do you think [STATE] should do to assist families and caregivers of people with disabilities?
- After many years of work by the disability community to implement the Supreme Court's decision in *Olmstead v. L.C.* (1999) so people can live in the community rather than institutions, we now face a backlash from pro-institution advocates. Where do you stand on this issue? Will you close state-run institutions and put funding towards home- and community-based services? How would you invest in the disability supports workforce, long-term care supports and services, workforce development, and housing to expand opportunities and resources for self-directed, community-based living? How would you ensure adequate revenue to fund these investments?
- As Governor, how would you address the shortage of consumer-directed, as opposed to agency-directed, supports for adults with developmental disabilities? *[Gubernatorial candidates]*
- Money Follows the Person (MFP), a federal program that granted funding to states for the transition of people with disabilities of all ages from nursing homes and other institutions to community settings, has been eliminated. Do you support appropriating funding for a new federal MFP program? If this funding is not appropriated, do you support other state/federal funding for services and supports that will transition people with disabilities of all ages from nursing facilities and other institutions into community settings? *[Federal-level candidates]*
- The EMPOWER Care Act (S.2227 and H.R.5306) would fund and extend the Money Follows the Person (MFP) program to support people with disabilities in transitioning out of institutions and back into the community. Do you support the EMPOWER Care Act? Why or why not? *[Federal-level candidates]*
- Do you support or oppose proposals to block grant Medicaid spending or convert funding to a per capita cap system in [STATE]? What Medicaid services in [STATE], if any, would you seek to eliminate under a block grant or per capita spending system?
- Medicaid Managed Care, which integrates acute and long-term services and supports (LTSS), is growing in states throughout the country. Do you support including requirements and accountable measures for acute and long-term services and supports in these managed care contracts to assure community integration of people with disabilities of all ages?

## Criminal Justice and Violence

People with disabilities are more likely than nondisabled people to be the victims of crime. From 2011 to 2015, the rate of violent victimization against people with disabilities was at least 2.5 times the rate for those without disabilities, according to the [Bureau of Justice Statistics](#).

- Persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities experience sexual assault at much higher rates than the rest of the population, and are often targeted specifically because of their disabilities. What steps will you take to address the sexual assault of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities?
- What steps will you take to reduce the risk of crimes committed against people with disabilities?
- What steps will you take to prosecute those who have committed crimes against people with disabilities?
- Would you direct the Attorney General's office to work more closely with disability agencies on training and prevention?
- How will you ensure state law enforcement is trained to appropriately interact with disabled citizens – including people who may be non-verbal, who use a communication device, or who are Deaf – to prevent unnecessary incarcerations and injuries?
- How would you direct resources to support people with disabilities and Deaf people who experience sexual and/or domestic violence?
- What steps would you take to address the overwhelming school-to-prison pipeline for students with disabilities?
- How would you ensure that prisoners with disabilities are fully accounted for and provided with appropriate accommodations? For instance, sign language interpreters for Deaf prisoners, or access to telecommunications relay services formatting external phone calls?



## Education

Due to the enactment and implementation of a key civil rights law, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), high school graduation rates for people with disabilities have increased 45% since 1995, with an associated decrease in dropout rates. Similarly, enrollment in college has doubled for students with disabilities. Nevertheless, local school districts struggle to serve students with disabilities, and those seeking higher education continue to face enormous barriers to success.

- What steps will you take to ensure that the education system in [STATE] meets the needs of all children, including those with disabilities?

## Curriculum and Transition

In some localities, students with disabilities are not taught the challenging curriculum available to students without disabilities.

- How would you ensure that students with disabilities have the same access to ambitious educational opportunities that other students have?
- How would you increase the number of high school graduates with disabilities and what would you do to ensure more college graduates with disabilities secure employment in the private sector?
- How would you ensure that students with disabilities have the same access to ambitious educational opportunities that other students have, including tracking of developmental milestones are comparable to their peers without disabilities?
- Alice Cogswell and Anne Sullivan Macy Act would amend the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to require a state to identify, evaluate, and provide special education and related services to children who have visual or hearing disabilities (or both). If elected, would you support the Alice Cogswell and Anne Sullivan Macy Act? *[Federal-level candidates]*

## Eliminating Bullying and the Use of Restraints or Seclusion

Bullying of students with disabilities is a long-standing problem, as is the use of restraints and seclusion when disciplining students with disabilities.

- Do you support amending the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) to protect young students with disabilities from bullying and the use of restraints and seclusion? *[Federal-level candidates]*



- Would you require state educational agencies and local school systems to report incidents of bullying and the use of restraints and seclusion, and to provide interventions to reduce bullying and the use of restraints and seclusion?
- Exclusionary discipline practices, such as suspension and expulsion, have long had a disproportionate impact on students with disabilities. Will you support efforts for in-school, restorative behavior interventions in place of seclusion, restraint, and exclusionary discipline practices?

### Educational Inclusion of People with Disabilities

Students with disabilities frequently lack access to the general education classroom.

- What steps will you take to expand access to the general education classroom and achieve broader inclusion for students with disabilities?
- State and federal law provides that students with disabilities have a right to a free, appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment. Do you support or oppose increased funding to ensure that [STATE] public schools and teachers have the resources and training necessary to meet the diverse needs of students with disabilities?
- Currently, school inclusion for people with disabilities varies by school district. What would you do to ensure that [STATE] follows the laws as specified in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to provide a free and appropriate public education, so that all students can achieve their full potential?
- As more federal funding moves from the public school system to charter schools, how will you hold charter schools accountable for providing full access to students with disabilities, in compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)?  
*[Federal-level candidates]*



## Emergency Preparedness

People with disabilities account for nearly 20% of the population of the United States and are more likely to lose their homes, have property damage, or die as the result of disasters. They are also more likely to be separated from their family members, overlooked by relief volunteers, and suffer injuries or health-related complications. Emergency management officials must plan for and respond to people with disabilities equally and as effectively as they do for the entire community.

- If elected, what will you do to ensure that people with disabilities are included in the planning and implementation of emergency preparedness efforts on the state, county, and local levels?



## Employment

People with disabilities experience one of the highest rates of unemployment of any underserved group. According to the [Office of Disability Employment Policy](#) (ODEP) within the U.S. Department of Labor, the national labor force participation rate for people with disabilities is more than three times lower than that of people without disabilities (20.4% versus 67.8%) as of January 2018.

(See the [2017 Annual Disability Statistics Compendium](#), page 23, for state data on disability employment.)

### Unemployment Rate

People with disabilities historically have higher rates of unemployment compared to people without disabilities.

- Currently, the unemployment rate in [STATE] is approximately % among people with disabilities. If elected, what efforts would you pursue to hire qualified individuals with disabilities and encourage hiring within the private sector?
- Despite the protections of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the unemployment rate of people with disabilities continues to be much higher than that of people without disabilities. What actions would you take to address this?

### Rehabilitation Act

Although legislation such as the Rehabilitation Act has served to advance and expand opportunities for people with disabilities in the workforce, many barriers must still be considered and overcome before employment rates for people with disabilities are comparable to those of people without disabilities.

- What will you do to strengthen Section 501 of the Rehabilitation Act and ensure the Federal government is a model employer of people with disabilities? *[Federal-level candidates]*
- How will you ensure the provisions under Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act will be fully enforced by the Department of Labor and that federal contractors will meet their affirmative action obligations under the law? *[Federal-level candidates]*

## Fair Wages

Many people with disabilities are underemployed. Despite similar education, people with disabilities who are working earn less on average than workers without disabilities. In 2016, the median earnings of people with disabilities was \$22,047, about two-thirds of the median earnings of people without disabilities, \$32,479 (Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Disability Statistics and Demographics, [2017 Annual Disability Statistics Compendium](#)). Furthermore, the 1937 Section 14c provision of the Fair Labor Standards Act authorizes employers to pay sub-minimum wages to workers with disabilities.

- Do you plan to phase out Section 14c of the Fair Labor Standards Act? *[Federal-level candidates]*
- Segregated programs, such as pre-employment services and sheltered workshops, often pay sub-minimum wage to people with disabilities who want to work in competitive, integrated settings. What steps would you take to enable people with disabilities to move from segregated employment to community-integrated employment of their choice?
- Supported employment (sometimes referred as “Employment First”) assists people with severe disabilities by providing individualized supports that enable them to choose the kind of job they want and become successful members of the workforce. How will you expand supported employment services to people with disabilities?
- How do you plan to build an infrastructure that addresses the underemployment and wage gaps experienced by people with disabilities?

## Entrepreneurship

Opening doors for entrepreneurs and small business owners with disabilities is vital to addressing employment in our community overall. We need new opportunities for people with disabilities to start their own businesses and compete for government contracts.

- How do you plan to ensure that people with disabilities can open and sustain small businesses?
- How will you include business owners with disabilities in the competition to obtain government contracts?



## Transition for Youth with Disabilities

Youth with disabilities often find themselves distanced from opportunities to learn job skills through work in their formative years, leading to unemployment and underemployment throughout their lives.

- How do you plan to engage youth with disabilities in pre-employment opportunities that will lead to successful transitions from school to work and/or higher education?
- How would you reform the public workforce system to ensure that people with disabilities, especially youth, are fully integrated into the development of regional economies?

## Ensuring Appropriate Flexibility in Public Programs to Support People with Disabilities in the Workforce

Federal and state expenditures combined for working age people with disabilities are primarily focused on income benefits (e.g. SSI and SSDI) and healthcare (Medicaid and Medicare), with a small amount going towards education, training, and employment programs for people with disabilities.

- As of February 2018, there were nearly 6 million adults and children with disabilities receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and nearly 10.4 million people receiving Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI). How would you reform these federal income support programs so people with disabilities can continue to receive income supports while transitioning back to employment? *[Federal-level candidates]*  
*[Source: [Social Security Administration](#)]*
- Medicaid eligibility and programmatic requirements now create barriers for individuals with disabilities seeking to enter or return to the workplace because they cannot access needed supports such as personal care attendants, power wheelchairs, complex rehabilitation technology, other rehabilitation devices and services, home- and community-based services, medical supplies, and therapies. Do you support initiatives that would allow workers with disabilities to continue to work past age 65, maintain their eligibility from state to state, and carry their Medicaid benefits into private employment settings? How would you work with the private sector to address the critical independent living supports that many private insurance programs do not cover for people with disabilities?

## Enforcement of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 is a landmark civil rights law that prohibits discrimination based on disability. It also requires government buildings, businesses, and other places of public accommodation to be accessible to people with disabilities. Unfortunately, nearly three decades after the ADA was signed into law, people with disabilities continue to experience discrimination and accessibility barriers.

- Even though the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) passed in 1990, people with disabilities still face accessibility barriers (including inaccessible stores, broken elevators, and lax enforcement of snow removal laws). What will you do to fight discrimination and enforce the ADA?
- As Governor, what would you do to protect people with disabilities in [STATE] from any rollback of rights that the federal executive and legislative branches may wish to implement? *[Gubernatorial candidates]*
- Bills like H.R. 620, the ADA Education and Reform Act, would require specific notification procedures that delay the process of fixing accessibility barriers, place the responsibility of identifying barriers on individuals with disabilities, and allow businesses to take a “wait and see” approach to compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Do you support or oppose ADA notifications bills like H.R. 620? *[Federal-level candidates]*
- As written, the ADA does not allow for monetary damages in cases where businesses are sued for being inaccessible. States that have state laws allowing for monetary damages have seen an increase in “drive-by” lawsuits where a handful of unscrupulous lawyers submit hundreds of ADA violations on small businesses. Do you support or oppose monetary damages on ADA violations in [STATE]?



## Funding for Programs and Services

Our nation's economic security and prosperity depend on our ability to make sound decisions about the allocation of public resources. Budget decisions determine our ability to educate our children, have a healthy population, protect those who are vulnerable, invest in the building blocks of a successful society, and pay for these investments in a sustainable and equitable manner.

Budgets are moral documents. How a government chooses to raise and spend its money says a lot about its values. Both tax and spending decisions have immediate and lasting impacts on families and communities, including people with disabilities. Federal, state, and local budgets have a direct impact on all of the issues that people with disabilities care about. Programs and services for people with disabilities cannot be fully implemented without the appropriate amount of funding.

- Centers for Independent Living (CILs) are community-based, cross-disability, nonprofit organizations that are designed and operated by people with disabilities. CILs are unique in that they operate according to a strict philosophy of consumer control, wherein people with all types of disabilities directly govern and staff the organization. Would you support additional funding for the # CILs in [STATE] in order to meet the increased demand for services from these vital community resources?
- What is your plan to measure and ensure quality of services coming from the [STATE] Department of Human Services, the Department on Aging, the Department of Health and Family Services, and other agencies serving people with disabilities?
- Will you commit to working with the disability community to prioritize access for people with disabilities in the construction and renovation of buildings that receive government funding?



## Healthcare

People with disabilities rely on both public and private insurance options to obtain coverage to meet their healthcare needs. Access to affordable, comprehensive healthcare coverage is essential for people with disabilities to live independently and maximize their quality of life. Unfortunately, many people with disabilities continue to lack access to the services and supports they need. In addition, despite existing legal protections, people with disabilities are subject to discrimination in both the financing and provision of healthcare services.

- What will you do to address discrimination in the financing and provision of healthcare services to people with disabilities? Will you make enforcement of existing healthcare nondiscrimination protections for people with disabilities a priority?
- How will you work to expand access to affordable, comprehensive healthcare coverage for people with disabilities?
- If elected, would you support or oppose legislation prohibiting insurance companies conducting business in [STATE] from denying coverage to people with pre-existing conditions?
- What steps should [STATE] take to ensure that people with disabilities have access to, and are informed of, new innovations in assistive technology and durable medical equipment?
- The economic costs of living with a disability can be very high, even astronomical. Even with health coverage, out-of-pocket costs can be devastating. In fact, the most common cause of bankruptcy in our country is medical expenditures. Restrictive formularies and annual caps on services such as speech, physical, and occupational therapy are often the cause. What is your plan to help people with significant out-of-pocket costs that insurance will not cover?
- Do you support or oppose legislation that would legalize assisted suicide in [STATE]?

## Medicaid

Medicaid provides health coverage to over 74 million Americans, including eligible low-income adults, children, pregnant women, elderly adults, and 10 million non-elderly people with disabilities. Medicaid is administered by states and funded jointly by the state and federal government.

- How will you work to improve the Medicaid program, including ensuring access to home- and community-based services and the elimination of bias toward institutional services in the Medicaid program?

- Do you support proposals to block grant or per capita cap Medicaid spending in [STATE]? What Medicaid services, if any, would you eliminate under a block grant or per capita spending system?
- Would you advocate raising the Medicaid reimbursement rates for home nursing services?
- Medicaid Managed Care, which integrates acute and long-term services and supports (LTSS), is growing in states throughout the country. Do you support including requirements and accountable measures for acute and LTSS that assure the community integration of people with disabilities in managed care contracts in each state?
- People with disabilities are often the people most in need of quality health insurance, especially long-term services and supports (LTSS), which are only provided through Medicaid. What is your vision for healthcare in [STATE] with a view towards the needs of people with all kinds of disabilities?
- As Governor, would you openly support and advocate for a Medicaid buy-in or single-payer healthcare? *[Gubernatorial candidates]*
- Several states are planning to implement work requirements for Medicaid recipients through Section 1115 waivers. This requirement may block some low-income adults from getting Medicaid coverage if they are not working or participating in work-related activities. According to the [Center on Budget and Policy Priorities](#), “most Medicaid beneficiaries who can work are already working — nearly 8 in 10 non-disabled adults with Medicaid coverage live in working families, and most are working themselves. The vast majority of those who are not working have health conditions that prevent them from working, are taking care of their home or family (often caring for children or other family members who are ill or have a disability), or are in school.” Do you support work requirements for Medicaid recipients?

## Mental Health

- Advocates for mental health supports have pointed out that state-funded mental health programs have increasingly been at risk for budget cuts. What is your vision for stabilizing mental health funding in [STATE]?
- What steps will you take to ensure that prisoners with mental illness receive adequate treatment and are not relegated to unjustified solitary confinement and inhumane conditions?
- Do you support or oppose the abolition of involuntary psychiatric commitment and forced psychiatric treatment?
- Will you support comprehensive treatment for those who are suffering from addictions (alcohol, illicit drugs, prescription drugs, eating disorders, cutting, sex, etc.)?

## Housing

The lack of affordable, accessible housing has taken an egregious toll on the lives of people with disabilities who continue to be warehoused in nursing homes and other institutional settings.

- There is a shortage of accessible, safe, and low-income housing for people with disabilities. How would you propose to increase the inventory of this housing throughout the state?
- Landlords often reject tenants with rental subsidies, such as Section 8 and SSI. Many people with disabilities rely on subsidies and other assistance programs to live independently in the community. This discrimination against voucher holders and recipients of other subsidies unfairly narrows the housing choices available to low-income families, senior citizens, and people with disabilities, which leads to high rates of homelessness and housing vulnerability in our community. Would you support the passage of local legislation forbidding landlords from denying tenant applications solely based on the source of a tenant's legal income?
- According to estimates from [REDACTED], [STATE] has a need for approximately [REDACTED] units of supportive housing. How would you ensure that the needs of homeless people and those at risk of homelessness are addressed in a holistic, cross-agency way? How would you ensure that there is a commitment and a plan to move and keep people with disabilities out of institutions?

*[CSH collects data on the need for supporting housing in the United States. Find data for your state at <http://www.csh.org/data>.]*

## Immigration

Immigrants with disabilities deserve access to the same equal opportunity for citizenship as other immigrants.

- Disabled immigrants often face many unique barriers. What will you do to make sure that all people feel safe in their communities, free of fears of deportation and splitting families apart?
- The DREAM Act would restore protections and services under Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program. The DACA Program gives around 800,000 undocumented immigrants who came to the United States as children the opportunity to work and study in this country without the threat of deportation. DACA is critical for immigrants with disabilities. Some immigrants with disabilities are in the United States in order to receive disability related supports and care that are not available in their country of origin. If elected, would you support the DREAM Act? *[Federal-level candidates]*

## Infrastructure

Inaccessible buildings and public spaces represent a significant barrier to people with disabilities being able to participate fully in society. As new buildings are constructed and existing structures are renovated, it is imperative that accessibility be a part of the building and renovation plans. Relatedly, public spaces like sidewalks and bus stops must be maintained and clear of debris.

- Please describe how you will improve the physical infrastructure of public spaces (condition of curb cuts and sidewalks, shoveling sidewalks in the winter, elevators, ramps, automatic doors, accessible restrooms, auditory crosswalks, information posted in multiple formats, etc.) to provide equal access to people with disabilities.

## Leadership

The disability community follows the saying “Nothing about us, without us.” We want and deserve a seat at the table when policy decisions that affect our lives and liberty are made. People with disabilities understand the unique needs and nuances of our community.

- What are you doing to make sure qualified people with disabilities will be a part of your political team and, if elected, a part of your staff?
- Cities and states struggle to meet their legal responsibilities under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other court rulings to enable people with disabilities to live independently in our communities. To help meet these needs, some cities have created a separate government office for disability issues. If elected, will you commit to creating an office or department specifically to address the needs of people with disabilities?
- What is your prior experience addressing disability issues, and how will you ensure that people with disabilities play an active role in your administration?
- The disability community lives by the South African proverb “Nothing about us, without us.” What work have you done with disability-led organizations and how would you make new investments in consumer-led organizations to further the leadership of people with disabilities and the movements for freedom and self-determination in our state?

## Technology and Communications

Accessible mainstream communication and information technologies, as well as assistive and adaptive technologies, allow people with disabilities to secure and maintain employment, participate in educational activities, and experience entertainment as readily as people without disabilities.

### Communication Access

- What will you do to ensure the accessibility of government websites and online services?
- How will you assure that emergency communication (both American Sign Language interpreting and captioning) happens for people who are Deaf and hard of hearing?
- Would you support legislation that required all public places to keep their closed captioning on in order to provide effective communication for the Deaf Community?
- Would you support laws to require sign language interpreters to be licensed in order to work professionally as an interpreter?

### The Internet of Things

The Internet of Things, including smart homes and other connected devices, has the potential to increase the independence and community integration of people with disabilities. Connected devices are being developed and released for sale at breakneck speed, but often without any accessibility or usability requirements. Universal design and accessibility features must be included in these devices in order for the Internet of Things to realize its potential to improve the quality of life of people with disabilities. Under Title II and Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act, people with disabilities have access to modifications, accommodations, and auxiliary aides or services to participate in the activities and services of both local and state government and places of public accommodation, a protection that currently does not exist on the Internet of Things.

- What will you do to ensure that people with disabilities have the same access to the Internet of Things as nondisabled individuals?

## Transportation

Access to accessible, affordable, and reliable transportation gives people with disabilities important opportunities to go to school or work, take care of their health, live where they choose, and participate in all aspects of community life. Because our nation's investments in transportation infrastructure have disproportionately favored cars and highways, those who cannot afford cars or do not drive often lack viable transportation options.

### Public Transportation

Access to public transportation is key to independence and full community participation for people with disabilities.

- What would you do to expand access to affordable and accessible transportation for people with disabilities, especially in rural areas?
- What steps should [STATE] take to increase access to public transportation currently not served by [STATE TRANSPORTATION AGENCY]?

### Transportation Network Companies

Transportation network companies (TNCs), such as Uber and Lyft, have the potential to increase transportation options for people with disabilities. Unfortunately, TNCs have discriminated against people with disabilities by refusing rides to individuals with service animals and individuals using wheelchairs.

- What will you do to ensure all people with disabilities have access to the services provided by TNCs?
- Would you require the rideshare industry to provide accessible transportation, including to passengers who use wheelchairs and power chairs, or who cannot transfer out of their chairs?

### Autonomous Vehicles

As autonomous or self-driving vehicles become part of the transportation landscape, they promise new mobility options and increased independence for people with disabilities who have been denied the benefits of a century of automotive history.

- What will you do to ensure people with disabilities are not left at the side of the road, but instead realize the maximum benefits possible as self-driving technology continues to develop and regulations are promulgated?

- What actions will you take to ensure that autonomous vehicles are developed to be accessible to all people with disabilities, especially those who use wheelchairs or other mobility devices?
- Will you support requiring autonomous vehicles to be compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and accessible to all people with disabilities?
- Would you support the disability community being a part of the planning, development, and manufacturing processes of Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) autonomous vehicles?

## Air Travel

Air travel can be complicated for everyone, but people with disabilities encounter many additional barriers. From the time we enter the airport, we are faced with obstacles that result in frequent delays and missed flights and put our dignity and safety at risk.

- People with disabilities frequently experience inaccessible facilities and equipment in airports, overly intrusive and discriminatory TSA security screenings, breakage of mobility and medical equipment, unsafe and harmful transport and transfers by airport staff, inaccessible aircraft facilities and amenities, and additional fees. Air travel can be extremely difficult – sometimes nearly impossible – for people with disabilities, including those who must travel for work. If elected, what would you do to address these issues?
- The Air Carrier Access Amendments Act of 2017 (S. 1318) would strengthen enforcement of the Air Carriers Access Act (ACAA), ensure airplanes meet broad accessibility standards, improve training for air carrier personnel, require the development of an Airline Passengers with Disabilities Bill of Rights, and create a U.S. Department of Transportation Advisory Committee on the Air Travel Needs of Passengers with Disabilities. If elected, would you support this bill? *[Federal-level candidates]*

*[Resource: [Paralyzed Veterans of America](#)]*

## Paratransit

Paratransit is a transportation service for people with disabilities, often provided by public transit agencies as a supplement to fixed-route bus and rail systems.

- People with disabilities frequently rely on paratransit (or transit) services to access the community. Currently, there are geographical gaps **[identify specific gaps in your state/community here]** in our paratransit (or transit) service that prevent people with disabilities from traveling to jobs, doctors' appointments, shopping, and community events. If elected, what would you do to work to close those service gaps and ensure adequate paratransit (or transit) service coverage?





## Voting

Americans with disabilities face many obstacles and barriers to voting, including inaccessible polling places and voting equipment, difficulty getting to polling places, and poorly-informed election officials and poll workers.

- What will you do to ensure people with disabilities have equal access to the fundamental right to vote?
- What steps would you take to ensure that people with disabilities have the same access to voting (registering and casting a ballot) as people without disabilities?
- Do you support providing or increasing funding for new, accessible voting systems to replace the first-generation accessible voting systems that have outlived their usefulness?
- Do you support Vote By Mail, No Excuse Absentee, and/or Automatic Voter Registration?
- Many people with disabilities do not have an ID. Do you support voter ID laws in [STATE]?



## Resources

### Additional REV UP Resources

- [Voter Resources Center](#)
- [State Resources and Events](#)
- [Voting Statistics](#)
- [Logos and Graphics](#)
- [National Disability Voter Registration Week Toolkit](#)
- [National Disability Voter Registration Week Social Media Toolkit](#)
- [Candidate Forum Guide](#)
- Issues Guide (*Coming soon! Check [www.aapd.com/REVUP](http://www.aapd.com/REVUP) for updates*)
- Election Accessibility Guide (*Coming soon! Check [www.aapd.com/REVUP](http://www.aapd.com/REVUP) for updates*)

### Other Useful Resources

- [Voting and Elections – USA.gov](#)  
Official voting and elections website of the United States.
- [U.S. Election Assistance Commission](#)  
The U.S. Election Assistance Commission is an independent agency of the United States government charged with developing guidance to meet the Help America Vote Act of 2002.
- **Political Campaigns and Charities**  
The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) has a guide to help nonprofit organizations determine how to legally participate in voter education and engagement activities. [Watch the webinar](#) or [read the PDF course](#).
- [SignVote](#)  
SignVote is a Deaf and Hard of Hearing community-based GOTV mobilization effort. They have resources and instructional videos in American Sign Language.
- [National Voter Registration Day](#) (*September 25, 2018*)  
National Voter Registration Day is a national holiday celebrating our democracy. It is a day of action across the country to encourage voter registration in advance of Election Day.
- [Nonprofit VOTE](#)  
Nonprofit VOTE provides tools and resources to expand the role of America's nonprofits in promoting active civic participation and democracy.