



Archdiocese of Philadelphia
CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE: 2016 GENERAL ELECTION
U.S. House of Representatives
Pennsylvania State Senate and House of Representatives

This Candidate Questionnaire was prepared by the Pennsylvania Catholic Conference (PCC) and distributed by the Archdiocese of Philadelphia Office for Communications.

Candidates were surveyed on a range of topics of interest to Catholic voters, and their responses are being published without comment by the Archdiocese. The Archdiocese expresses no preference for any particular response to any question. The Archdiocese does not endorse or oppose any candidate for political office, nor does it intervene in political campaigns in any way.

The Archdiocese urges voters to become fully informed about candidates' positions. The qualifications of candidates for public office cannot be fully assessed by reference to this or any other single candidate questionnaire. Voters are therefore encouraged to obtain as much information about candidates for public office from as many sources as possible. To learn about your legislative district or to locate your polling place, contact your County Board Elections.

ELECTION DAY IS TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2016.
POLLS ARE OPEN FROM 7:00 A.M. TO 8:00 P.M.

Please make every effort to vote.

Any politics of human dignity must seriously address issues of racism, poverty, hunger, employment, education, housing, and health care. Therefore, Catholics should eagerly involve themselves as advocates for the weak and marginalized in all these areas ... *But being 'right' in such matters can never excuse a wrong choice regarding direct attacks on innocent human life.* Indeed, the failure to protect and defend life in its most vulnerable stages renders suspect any claims to the 'rightness' of positions in other matters affecting the poorest and least powerful of the human community. If we understand the human person as the 'temple of the Holy Spirit' – the living house of God – then these latter issues fall logically into place as the crossbeams and walls of that house. *All direct attacks on innocent human life, such as abortion and euthanasia, strike at the house's foundation.* These directly and immediately violate the human person's most fundamental right – the right to life. – From *Living the Gospel of Life*, No. 22 with original emphasis (Pastoral Statement of the U.S. Catholic Bishops, 1998).



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U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Candidates Responding

District—Candidate (Party)

6 — Ryan A. Costello (Republican)

7 — Patrick Meehan (Republican)

8 — Brian Fitzpatrick (Republican)

All other candidates did not respond.

1. What is your position on providing a federal tax credit to businesses that donate to scholarship organizations that provide scholarships for low-income students at private and religious schools in grades kindergarten through 12?

6 — Ryan A. Costello (R): Support

7 — Patrick Meehan (R): Support

8 — Brian Fitzpatrick (R): Support

2. Which statement reflects your position most accurately?

a. I support legalized abortion.

b. I oppose legalized abortion in all circumstances.

c. I oppose legalized abortion, except when the life of the mother is in danger or the pregnancy is a result of rape or incest.

6 — Ryan A. Costello (R): (c.) I oppose legalized abortion, except when the life of the mother is in danger or the pregnancy is a result of rape or incest.

7 — Patrick Meehan (R): (c.) I oppose legalized abortion, except when the life of the mother is in danger or the pregnancy is a result of rape or incest.

8 — Brian Fitzpatrick (R): (c.) I oppose legalized abortion, except when the life of the mother is in danger or the pregnancy is a result of rape or incest. **Comments:** I am opposed to labels and believe we must support increased funding for women's health.



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3. What is your position on legislation that would permit undocumented immigrants who have lived in the United States for a number of years, have worked and built equities in our country and who do not have criminal records to register with the government and take steps to earn legal status?

6 — Ryan A. Costello (R): Comments: The U.S. is the most generous and compassionate nation on the face of the Earth. I believe we need to continue to show respect and compassion to our fellow citizens. However, we must also deal with the reality that there are a lot of people in this world who wish to do us harm and there are entities out there who seek to exploit other humans for profit or political gain. We must secure our borders and recognize those who respected our immigration process while simultaneously working with those who broke the law in a humane and realistic manner.

7 — Patrick Meehan (R): Comments: I do not support amnesty. There should be penalties for breaking the law and certain restitutions would need to be made before allowing illegal immigrants to begin the naturalization process.

8 — Brian Fitzpatrick (R): Support

4. What is your position on efforts to pass legislation (i.e., the Federal Employment Non-Discrimination Act) that would make sexual orientation and gender identity or expression protected classes that are equivalent to other protected classes (e.g., race, religion, sex, etc.)?

6 — Ryan A. Costello (R): Comments: I am opposed to discrimination of any kind.

7 — Patrick Meehan (R): Comments: I oppose discrimination. I would have to view any proposed legislation to ensure it protects everyone's constitutional rights.

8 — Brian Fitzpatrick (R): Support. **Comments:** I believe that all citizens deserve to live in a country that does not discriminate against them regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation or sexual identity. I also believe religious institutions and religious schools should be free from government mandates on religious beliefs.

5. What is your position on increasing Medicaid reimbursement rates as a means to provide greater access to care for Medicaid-covered individuals?

6 — Ryan A. Costello (R): Comments: I support efforts to provide greater access to quality health care for all Americans, especially for those individuals most in need. However, I would need to review the specifics and better understand any proposal to increase Medicaid reimbursement rates, in particular, with respect to how such increases would be distributed and



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justified given the demand and need for care. Until I see the specifics of such a proposal, it is difficult to identify a “SUPPORT/OPPOSE” position to this question.

7 — Patrick Meehan (R): Comments: I support ensuring states have the flexibility to set Medicaid provider reimbursement rates that ensure the state’s residents have access to necessary primary and specialty care.

8 — Brian Fitzpatrick (R): Support

PENNSYLVANIA GENERAL ASSEMBLY
STATE SENATE

No candidates responded.

PENNSYLVANIA GENERAL ASSEMBLY
STATE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Candidates Responding

District—Candidate (Party)

- 18 — Gene DiGirolamo (Republican)
- 53 — Robert W. Godshall. (Republican)
- 145 — Craig Staats (Republican)
- 147 — Marcy Toepel (Republican)
- 155 — Becky Corbin (Republican)
- 155 — James Burns (Democrat)
- 161 — Patricia Rodgers Morrisette (Republican)
- 163 — Jamie Santora (Republican)
- 166 — Jim Knapp (Republican)
- 168 — Chris Quinn (Republican)
- 178 — Scott Petri (Republican)



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1. What is your position on increased funding for Educational Improvement Tax Credits (EITC) and Opportunity Scholarship Tax Credits (OSTC) where the state budget includes an increase in public school funding?

18 — Gene DiGirolamo (R): Support

53 — Robert W. Godshall. (R): Support. **Comments:** I have been a strong supporter of EITC and OSTC and have always voted for these programs.

145 — Craig Staats (R): Support

147 — Marcy Toepel (R): Support

155 — Becky Corbin (R): Support

155 — James Burns (D): Support

161 — Patricia Rodgers Morrisette (R): Support. **Comments:** I am very active in my local church, Saint John Chrysostom, where I serve as a Eucharistic Minister. I have also been very active in our local CYO organization as a coach and was active in our local home and school association. If elected, I would strongly support increased funding for Educational Improvement Tax Credits and Opportunity Scholarship Tax Credits, which help defray the cost of tuition for many families who want to send their children to Catholic schools but may not have the economic resources to do so.

163 — Jamie Santora (R): Support. **Comments:** I worked closely with Representative Mike Christiana and Speaker of the House Mike Turzai to champion increase the Earned Income Tax Credit by \$25 million. I also championed changes to the law to improve the program. For example, the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development must accept donors into the program on a first-come, first-served basis. I also championed a change to the program to ensure that the program can no longer be held hostage during potential state budget impasses. As a result, the program, which is a tax credit, can no longer be held up during budget negotiations that extend beyond the beginning of the new fiscal year.

165 — Alex Charlton (R): Support. **Comments:** I strongly support our Catholic schools. As a state legislator, I would support increased funding for the Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) program, as well as the creation of the Opportunity Scholarship Tax Credit program. These programs are important in providing funding for students who wish to attend private and parochial schools without impacting revenues available for our K-12 public schools.

166 — Jim Knapp (R): Support

168 — Chris Quinn (R): Support. **Comments:** I believe the EITC and OSTC are excellent programs that offer expanded educational opportunities for students and their families. I would support increasing funding for both programs.

178 — Scott Petri (R): **Comments:** I have voted in support of this initiative as Representative.



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2. Which statement reflects your position most accurately?

- a. I support legalized abortion.
- b. I oppose legalized abortion in all circumstances.
- c. I oppose legalized abortion, except when the life of the mother is in danger or the pregnancy is a result of rape or incest.

18 — Gene DiGirolamo (R): (c.) I oppose legalized abortion, except when the life of the mother is in danger or the pregnancy is a result of rape or incest.

53 — Robert W. Godshall (R): (c.) I oppose legalized abortion, except when the life of the mother is in danger or the pregnancy is a result of rape or incest.

145 — Craig Staats (R): (c.) I oppose legalized abortion, except when the life of the mother is in danger or the pregnancy is a result of rape or incest.

147 — Marcy Toepel (R): (c.) I oppose legalized abortion, except when the life of the mother is in danger or the pregnancy is a result of rape or incest.

155 — Becky Corbin (R): (c.) I oppose legalized abortion, except when the life of the mother is in danger or the pregnancy is a result of rape or incest.

155 — James Burns (D): (c.) I oppose legalized abortion, except when the life of the mother is in danger or the pregnancy is a result of rape or incest. **Comments:** My personal position — not that of my electors — see my website, friendsofjimburns.org

161 — Patricia Rodgers Morrisette (R): (c.) I oppose legalized abortion, except when the life of the mother is in danger or the pregnancy is a result of rape or incest.

163 — Jamie Santora (R): (c.) I oppose legalized abortion, except when the life of the mother is in danger or the pregnancy is a result of rape or incest.

165 — Alex Charlton (R): (c.) I oppose legalized abortion, except when the life of the mother is in danger or the pregnancy is a result of rape or incest.

166 — Jim Knapp (R): (c.) I oppose legalized abortion, except when the life of the mother is in danger or the pregnancy is a result of rape or incest.

168 — Chris Quinn (R): (c.) I oppose legalized abortion, except when the life of the mother is in danger or the pregnancy is a result of rape or incest.

178 — Scott Petri (R): (c.) I oppose legalized abortion, except when the life of the mother is in danger or the pregnancy is a result of rape or incest.

3. What is your position on expanding the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) to provide health insurance to children in Pennsylvania who are undocumented immigrants?

18 — Gene DiGirolamo (R): Support. **Comments:** Only if they are citizens.

53 — Robert W. Godshall (R): Support



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145 — Craig Staats (R): Comments: While I believe all children should have access to health care, I have concern over undocumented immigrants being provided health insurance.

147 — Marcy Toepel (R): Oppose Comments: Clearly children who need to have care should receive it, but I oppose expanding entitlements for undocumented immigrants.

155 — Becky Corbin (R): Oppose. Comments: I believe all children should have health insurance. However, I am concerned with the cost of providing free health insurance to undocumented immigrants when we are struggling to pay for the costs of free health insurance to American children.

155 — James Burns (D): Support

161 — Patricia Rodgers Morrisette (R): Oppose. Comments: I believe all children should have health insurance. However I am concerned about the cost of providing free health insurance to undocumented immigrants when we are struggling to afford the costs to provide free health insurance to American children.

163 — Jamie Santora (R): Oppose

165 — Alex Charlton (R): Oppose. Comments: We already face significant challenges in funding health insurance for children in Pennsylvania who are legal citizens. That needs to be our top priority given the funding issues we already have.

166 — Jim Knapp (R): Oppose. Comments: I would generally be in favor of expanding CHIP but would need further clarification on how you are defining “undocumented immigrants.” No child should be without proper health care, but there must be responsibility placed on their parents’ part regarding immigration status.

168 — Chris Quinn (R): Oppose. Comments: I do not think we should expand CHIP to cover undocumented immigrants given the funding problems of the program in meeting the needs of our children who are citizens and legal immigrants. That said, I do not feel that any child should have medical care denied in the event of a medical emergency.

178 — Scott Petri (R): Comments: Of course, as a compassionate adult, I want to make certain all children receive the health care they deserve. As a Representative, I must deal with the difficult economic challenges our state faces, as well as take into account the desire of many of our citizens/taxpayers who do not believe we should expend resources on those who are not in our country legally. Further, while I believe strongly in allowing immigration to our country, all immigrants must come here through a legal process that is equal for all. Providing benefits such as this to immigrants not here legally serves as a disincentive for others to follow a lawful immigration process.



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4. What is your position on amending Pennsylvania’s anti-discrimination laws for housing, employment and public accommodation to include sexual orientation?

- a. They should include “sexual orientation” and “gender identity or expression” as protected classes, no exceptions.
- b. They should contain specific provisions to protect the religious liberties of religious institutions and the rights of conscience of business owners.
- c. No change is necessary.

18 — Gene DiGirolamo (R): (b.) They should contain specific provisions to protect the religious liberties of religious institutions and the rights of conscience of business owners.

53 — Robert W. Godshall. (R): (b.) **Comments:** They should contain specific provisions to protect the religious liberties of religious institutions and the rights of business owners.

145 — Craig Staats (R): (c.) No change is necessary.

147 — Marcy Toepel (R): (b.) They should contain specific provisions to protect the religious liberties of religious institutions and the rights of conscience of business owners.

155 — Becky Corbin (R): (b.) They should contain specific provisions to protect the religious liberties of religious institutions and the rights of conscience of business owners.

155 — James Burns (D): (a.) They should include “sexual orientation” and “gender identity or expression” as protected classes, no exceptions.

161 — Patricia Rodgers Morrisette (R): **Comments:** I do not believe people should be discriminated against for housing, employment, or be denied service at a local business because of their sexual orientation. I do not think, however, that state government should dictate to the church its religious teachings or practices, or how they operate Catholic schools. We should continue to maintain a separation of Church and state.

163 — Jamie Santora (R): I do not believe anyone, and I think the Catholic Church would agree, should be discriminated against from housing or shopping at the business establishment of their choices because of their sexual orientation. Pennsylvania’s anti-discrimination laws for housing, employment and public accommodation should include “sexual orientation” and “gender identity or expression” as protected classes, but should contain exceptions in narrow circumstances to protect religious institutions. I support the separation of church and state and do not think the Catholic Church should be forced to change its policies to marry individuals of the same sex.

165 — Alex Charlton (R): **Comments:** I do not believe people should be subject to discrimination or denied service at businesses because of their sexual orientation. I do not believe, however, that the teachings and beliefs of the Church should be legislated or infringed upon by government. That said, Pope Francis stated, “who am I to judge a gay person of goodwill who seeks the Lord.” I agree with that statement and would hope the church would extend this inclusionary view to all people, regardless of their sexual orientation.



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166 — Jim Knapp (R): (c.) No change is necessary. **Comments:** No groups should be discriminated against, but the rights of groups should also not supersede the rights of an individual.

168 — Chris Quinn (R): Comments: I believe everyone deserves equal treatment but no one deserves special treatment. I do not think people should be discriminated against because of their sexual orientation, however I feel there should be certain limited exceptions to ensure the religious liberties of religious institutions are not infringed upon.

178 — Scott Petri (R): (b.) They should contain specific provisions to protect the religious liberties of religious institutions and the rights of conscience of business owners.

5. What is your position on increasing Medicaid reimbursement rates as a means to provide greater access to care for Medicaid-covered individuals?

18 — Gene DiGirolamo (R): Support

53 — Robert W. Godshall. (R): Support

145 — Craig Staats (R): Support. **Comments:** While supportive, I'd need to see how we would fund any expansion.

147 — Marcy Toepel (R): Support

155 — Becky Corbin (R): Support. **Comments:** I support increasing reimbursement rates provided the costs associated with this action are not passed on to business owners, subscribers, or taxpayers.

155 — James Burns (D): Support

161 — Patricia Rodgers Morrisette (R): Support. **Comments:** I support increasing reimbursements rates as long as the costs are not passed on to the business owners, subscribers or taxpayers.

163 — Jamie Santora (R): Support

165 — Alex Charlton (R): Support

166 — Jim Knapp (R): Comments: I would need more specifics before committing to an answer. I do feel that raising Medicaid reimbursement rates should be based on a large number of variables not just providing greater access.

168 — Chris Quinn (R): Support

178 — Scott Petri (R): Comments: Again, I believe in the basic tenet of this question: expanding access to care for Medicaid individuals. However, the state faces many fiscal challenges that must be addressed first before we can invest in such an expansion.