



CANDIDATES QUESTIONNAIRE

Name: **Barb Anness**

Candidate for: **Michigan House of Representatives District 45**

Occupation/Current Position: **Graphic Designer**

Education: **Bachelor of Science degree in Graphic Design, cum laude
College of Design, Architecture, Art and Planning at the
University of Cincinnati.**

Qualifications/Experience:

- **Small business owner**
- **Trustee for the Rochester Community Schools Board of Education**
- **Federal Legislative Chair for Michigan PTA**

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QUESTIONS

ECONOMIC ISSUES

- 1. A package of bills (HB 328-339 and SB 4629-4640) concerning pay equity was introduced in the Michigan House and Senate committees in April, 2019. The bills address transparency regarding pay, asking job applicants about past compensation, and informing employees about equal pay laws. Do you support or oppose bringing these bills to the legislature for a vote? Please explain.**

I support the pay equity bills introduced in both the House and Senate committees here in Michigan and would also support bringing these bills to the legislature for a vote. For the past several years, each March or April, on the symbolic day that shows how far into the new year a woman's salary has to be earned to equal a man's in the previous one, I've been attending Equal Pay Day in Lansing at the Michigan state Capitol. I call my current State Representative off of the House floor and ask him to support and encourage his Republican colleague to give these important bills a hearing in their respective committees and each year NOTHING is done. Pay equity also impacts us on a larger scale, too: when businesses pay their employees equitably it improves their bottom line and the moral of their employees. Equal pay policies would also help attract top talent and when talent moves to a community for a job, they plant roots-they buy a home, rent, purchase local goods and services, and support local public schools, etc. It's a "win-win" for all of our communities but even more so in marginalized communities of color.

2. Do you support or oppose a minimum wage of \$15 an hour? Please explain.

Yes, I do support a minimum wage of \$15 an hour. The minimum wage needs to keep up with the cost of living in order for it to be meaningful. When the minimum wage falls too far below the cost of living, workers cannot keep up with the basic costs of life or save any money. Every person deserves to be able to work one full time job that allows them to live with dignity to support themselves or a family.

3. Do you support or oppose earned paid sick leave for all workers? Please explain.

Yes, I support earned paid sick leave. Pre covid-19 this issue could be looked at (by some) as a benefit to just an employee however, in this current pandemic, paid sick leave would ensure that places of business do not become points of contagion because an employee can't afford to take time off when ill. This in turn becomes a greater societal benefit when employees who know they are sick can be assured that their paid time off helps not only their workplace and their community, but doesn't negatively impact their ability to recover, too.

EDUCATION

1. What is your position on funding K-12 private or parochial/religious schools with public monies?

I am opposed to funding private and parochial/religious schools with public tax dollars. I am a product of public schools. The collective promise of and investment made in my public education helped me become the individual I am today and serving as a trustee on a public school board of education is one way I return that public investment. If I am selected to represent the Greater Rochester area I will always champion public schools. I will also always respect the right of parents to choose a private, religious, or home school education option for their own children but I will never support public tax dollars paying for that choice.

2. What is your position on providing additional funding for equitable public education to ensure that all students have access to remote learning by qualified teachers when necessary because of COVID-19 or a similar situation?

Since 2005 there's been a declining tax effort in public education here in Michigan and this correlates with increased high stakes testing and school choice. And while no one could have anticipated that Covid-19 would force learning to a remote setting for the extended amount of time that it has (in order to keep our communities safe from contagion) one thing this pandemic has done is shine a brighter spot light on the disparity in access to technology to learn and the shortage of highly qualified, certified teachers in their subject areas needed to help students during this unique time. Our state legislators should be working with our federal partners to ensure that Michigan tax dollars return to our state to address this unforeseen education crisis and how our children can all learn remotely, and in an equitable way.

GUN VIOLENCE PREVENTION

1. Extreme Risk Protection Order legislation has been proposed that would allow a judge to temporarily remove a person's firearm if presented with clear evidence from family or law enforcement that there is serious risk to the individual or others. Do you support or oppose this legislation? Please explain.

I support Extreme Risk Protection Orders (aka "Red Flag Laws") as a means to protect individuals (from self-harm) and to protect victims of domestic abuse in our communities as statistics show, they are five times more likely to die at the hands of their abuser by a fire arm when a gun is present. I will also work to ensure that our due process under this law is maintained in the courts. These laws also work

HEALTHCARE/REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

- 2. Should decisions regarding women's healthcare, including reproductive rights, be legislated by the state? Yes or no? Please explain your position.**

I support a woman's right to make her own healthcare decisions, especially around reproductive rights, without the interference of government. Body autonomy is afforded to men in our society in a way that women are not and until we have more women at the decision-making table around legislative issues that impact women's healthcare directly overreaching laws will continue to deter progress for women, their families, our communities and our country.

- 1. What is your position on health care providers, hospital systems, insurance companies, and employers refusing care or coverage based on their religious or moral beliefs?**

I believe in the separation of church and state and that every individual has a right to healthcare access or coverage that should not be denied to them based on another individual's bias toward creed, color, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion or culture.

EQUAL RIGHTS AMENDMENT

- 1. The Equal Rights Amendment has been approved by more than the 38 states needed to put it into the Constitution. Would you vote to remove the time limit on the Equal Rights Amendment to allow this to happen? Why or why not?**

It's 2020 and well-beyond time that an Equal Rights Amendment is ratified and put into our Constitution therefore, I would support removing the time limit to allow this to happen. In addition, this Amendment should be updated to expand the inclusion to gender identity as well.

ENVIRONMENT

- 1. What are your top environmental priorities?**

- Access to clean, safe drinking water is a human right and we need to stop the monetizing of our drinking water and ensure that all communities in Michigan have access to it. Also updating our water infrastructure to modern standards.
- Repeal "No Stricter Than Federal" bill: Michiganders must be the stewards of our natural environment, not the federal government.
- Mitigating the impact of climate change on Michigan's Great Lakes and shores, as well as intracoastal waterways.

- 2. What is your plan for protecting the Great Lakes and Michigan's drinking water?**

I would support the Clean Michigan Initiative, providing funding for much needed water infrastructure. Updating our infrastructure to also ensure all lead pipes are removed, up-to-date and can deliver safe drinking water to *all* Michigan communities free of hazardous toxins and materials. Continuing to clean-up and mitigate PFAS in our water and ecosystems throughout our Great Lakes state and, when necessary, holding polluters accountable for the clean-up.

By submitting this form as a candidate for state office, I certify that the answers given to this survey are either completed or reviewed by me before submission. (Name and contact information for campaign staff person

completing this form if not the candidate.) *Barb Annosa*

Date: 27 August 2020