



**SEA/SEIU Local 1984
2020 Presidential Candidate Questionnaire**

1. Because it is well known that joining a union is the best way known to raise wages to a living wage, improve working conditions, and create family-sustaining jobs, every working American must have the right to do so. As President, what would you do to address the forces responsible for the Janus decision?

Janus was an unacceptable attack on unions in this country. And it came after unions have withstood decades and decades of attacks on their ability to stand up for their members. We have seen workers' voices systematically silenced. Our economy has been tilted towards the wealthy and away from the middle and working class because the people in power have designed our laws and policies that way. That's especially true when it comes to workers of color and women, who have historically been undervalued and excluded in the workplace. To ensure that every American has a fair shot, that has to change. As we enter a new American era, it's time for us to restore fairness and balance to our economy, so that every American can share in our country's growth.

That's why my A New Rising Tide plan for workers is aimed at doubling unionization, restoring workers' rights that have been eroded by decades of anti-worker policies from government and corporations alike, and expanding labor rights to workers who have been left out. In addition to ensuring that government workers have their bargaining rights protected, it also focuses on large financial penalties for employers who interfere with union elections and making punishments for misbehavior like misclassification real. My plan also ensures that all workers have the right to joint-employer and multiemployer bargaining, so that workers can bargain with the company that actually controls their pay and hours and can band together to bring employers to the negotiating table.

2. How will you ensure that every American can access affordable healthcare and long-term care as we continue on our path to universal healthcare?

Through my Medicare for All Who Want It plan, everyone will be able to opt in to an affordable, comprehensive public plan. This affordable public alternative will incentivize private insurers to compete on price and bring down costs. If private insurers are not able to offer something dramatically better, this public plan will create a natural glide-path to Medicare for All. Unlike plans released by some of my competitors for the Democratic nomination, my plan would not force Americans off their private insurance plan.. For example, union workers may have



bargained for a private plan at the cost of other benefits or pay, or seniors may have chosen a private plan within Medicare to have access to additional services. They shouldn't be forced to give up the plan of their choice, and under Medicare for all Who Want It, they won't be.

This will enable the elderly, people with disabilities, and other individuals who need long-term care to have access to affordable, high-quality health care. I will also ban state Medicaid programs from imposing work requirements, which hurt people with disabilities and their caregivers.

To ensure that all individuals and families receiving coverage through the marketplaces can afford quality insurance, I will strengthen the marketplaces by rolling back the current administration's attempts to undermine them. I will restore and expand cost-sharing reduction payments to health plans, which will lower deductibles and other out-of-pocket costs for millions of people. I will make premium subsidies more generous for low-income people. My plan will also extend the subsidies to more middle-income people by capping marketplace premium payments at 8.5% of income for everyone.

3. Do you support a national single payer healthcare plan? And if so, when did you first make that publicly clear? If not, please tell us what you support and why.

I support Medicare for All Who Want It and have made this clear from the beginning of the campaign. I first proposed Medicare for All Who Want It on January 23, 2019. My plan will enable America to reach universal coverage by providing an affordable public coverage option to everyone, including the currently uninsured. The public plan will provide the same essential health benefits as the plans currently available on the marketplaces and ensure that everyone has access to high-quality, comprehensive coverage, from reproductive health to mental health care.

The choice of a public plan empowers people to make their own decisions regarding the type of health care that works for them by leveling the playing field between patient and the health care system. It gives the American people a choice and trusts them to set the pace at which our country moves in a better direction on health care. This approach will be superior to trying to follow some arbitrary timetable set up Washington. If private insurers are unable to compete by offering something dramatically better, then Medicare for All Who Want It will become a natural glide-path to Medicare for All.

4. If you are elected, when will you begin to address the inequities that all working people



including communities of color, immigrants, women, LGBTQ+, and people with disabilities – face in their employment and to address reverse multi-generational poverty, exploitation, low wages and unsafe working conditions, which the most vulnerable among us face?

As President, I will prioritize addressing inequities that historically disadvantaged communities face. I will immediately begin to implement my labor plan to expand worker protections so that all people—including people of color, immigrants, women, LGBTQ+, and people with disabilities—can earn a living wage and feel safe at work.

For example, federal labor and employment law does not adequately protect farm workers or domestic workers seeking to organize. This exclusion from federal protections falls hardest on women and people of color. I will ensure that these workers are protected by labor and employment law, and that they are empowered to continue and expand the use of existing strategies, such as consumer pressure campaigns, to achieve a more dignified workplace.

I will ensure that employers cannot retaliate against undocumented workers who want the minimum wage enforced, supports union organizing, or seeks other protections under labor and employment laws. Making those protections clear and providing full remedies for undocumented workers is important—both to protect those workers from threats like being reported to ICE and also to avoid creating downward pressure on everyone’s working conditions and pay. Furthermore, I will support legislation that provides visas for victims of labor and employment law violations who are helpful in prosecuting those violations—just as we do for victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and trafficking crimes.

Additionally, I will mandate pay transparency. Women make 80 cents for every dollar men are paid, and Black and Latina women make even less on the dollar. I will work to pass the Paycheck Fairness Act and make companies publicize the difference between how much they’re paying female and male employees. I will also strengthen anti-discrimination and anti-harassment laws. For example, I will push for the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act, so pregnant workers don’t get fired when they ask for reasonable workplace accommodations.

5. Specifically concerning immigrants, what relief can we expect you to extend to those who hold temporary protected status, what protection to the Dreamers and what clear path forward can we expect from your administration on this issue. How would you make the United States a welcoming nation to immigrants again?

We must create a pathway to citizenship for the approximately 11 million undocumented people living here, as well as institute temporary protections for Dreamers, parents of Dreamers, Temporary Protected Status and Deferred Enforced Departure holders while we wait for legislation to pass. That we have not yet gotten this done—despite the support from a majority of Americans for common sense immigration reform—shows us how broken our democracy is. That is why my first priority is to fix our democracy. After that, we can pass legislation that



reflects the will of the American people, who widely support a pathway to citizenship for undocumented immigrants who are already part of their communities.

We must also increase legal immigration. Many communities depend on immigration for their economy and will thrive with increased immigration. One way I am proposing to meet the needs of our communities is through a new place-based Community Renewal Visa as described in my ["Our Commitment to America's Heartland"](#) plan to drive economic growth in rural communities. Additionally, we need to increase USCIS personnel and resources to address the backlog of visa applications. We also need to create a system that is more flexible to the changing needs of our businesses and communities. That is why I support creating a commission that will update our visa numbers every year, in order to allow the flexibility we clearly need in our changing economy.

6. Do you support \$15.00 minimum wage, and an opportunity to join a union? If so, when did you first make that clear publicly? And if not, what is your vision of what is a living wage?

I will pass a \$15 federal minimum wage indexed to wage growth. Since May 6, 2019, I have spoken about the importance of raising the minimum wage. This is just one step we must take to make sure that the economy is working for all workers. Around 30 million workers would benefit from raising the federal minimum wage to \$15 by 2025. We also need to index the federal minimum wage to median wage growth so that moving forward, both workers and employers know with certainty what it will be in the years to come. That's why I strongly endorse the Raise the Wage Act. An important part of the Raise the Wage Act is ending the subminimum wage for disabled workers and ending the tipped minimum wage. No one in the United States should be exempted from minimum wage laws. This practice is indefensible.

I will also ensure that workers are able to unionize and negotiate for fair pay and safe working conditions and have strong overtime protections. I will impose strong, multimillion-dollar penalties that scale with company size when a company interferes with union elections; level the playing field in union elections by requiring "equal airtime on company time"; strengthen protections for workers from misclassification; guarantee gig economy workers the right to unionize; and reward companies who take the high road and allow their workers to unionize by giving them preference in federal contracting.

7. Climate change is a real and present danger to all of us and the powerful corporations are not being held responsible for the rampant pollution that contributes to it. As President, how would you hold these corporations responsible? Would you agree to work with other nations toward this goal?



In my climate plan, "[Mobilizing America: Rising to the Climate Challenge](#)" I discuss my commitment to holding corporations responsible through a carbon tax. Companies that pollute will pay based on how much they emit, and the revenue will be rebated to low- and middle-income families.

I will also work to eliminate tax subsidies for the fossil fuel industries—including the intangible drilling oil and gas deduction, excess over cost depletion, and other subsidies—and ban new leases on public lands of fossil production. I will raise royalty rates for existing leases to pay market costs. All new infrastructure, including pipelines, will be subject to a climate-positive test.

I will take the steps necessary to rejoin the Paris Agreement on my first day in office. My Administration will prepare and submit a more ambitious U.S. emission reduction goal that will challenge other countries to increase their climate change goals as well. I will pledge \$5 billion per year to identify the best ideas and shift the global debate toward a focus on scaling proven climate mitigation and adaptation strategies. I will also lead the US in bilateral negotiations with China and India and multilateral negotiations in organizations like the G7 and G20 to develop a coordinated global response to climate change.

8. Do you believe the United States can free itself from the horrible Citizens United decision, and if so, do you have a plan that would hold corporations at bay and elevate the one person one-vote doctrine for fair elections?

Our democracy should work for the interests of ordinary Americans, not corporations and special interests. I will create a small-donor matching system financed by the government, so anyone can run for office without having to go to corporations and special interests for cash. I will fight for common-sense campaign finance rules that clearly establish that corporations do not have the same political rights as people, and dollars cannot outvote human beings. I am committed to overturning Buckley v. Valeo and Citizens United, by constitutional Amendment if necessary.

One person one-vote has to start with the Electoral College. It's simple: the candidate who gets the most votes should win. States don't vote, people vote, and everyone's vote should count exactly the same. We need to abolish the Electoral College and replace it with a National Popular Vote so that every citizen has a say in electing our president. The best route to removing the Electoral College would be a constitutional amendment. Recognizing that this cannot be done overnight, I support the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact to ensure the president is chosen by the American people while we seek constitutional reform.



9. Could you please give us specific example on your labor-related activities, such as previous membership; or, if you have previously a mayor, governor, etc. talk about your contract negotiations and support of unions; if you have been in Congress or Legislatures, please talk about specific votes and bills you sponsored.

The proposals that I put forth in my labor plan are grounded in my experience as a Mayor, where I have worked directly with unions and workers to ensure a fair deal for city employees and all workers in South Bend. Over my tenure, my administration negotiated successful contracts with the South Bend Firefighters Association, Teamsters Local 364, and the Fraternal Order of Police. In January 2018, I instituted a paid parental leave policy to provide six weeks of paid leave to all South Bend City employees. In April 2018, I signed a Responsible Bidder Ordinance in South Bend to ensure that public projects are awarded to companies that pay a fair wage. In July 2018, I led the South Bend Common Council in calling on the current administration to make Honeywell keep its promise to its workers, when Honeywell chose to stop covering its retired workers' health insurance. I maintained that if Honeywell had enough money for stock buybacks, it had enough to keep its promise to its workers. Through my tenure as Mayor, I have stood with labor and with workers, and I will continue to do so as President.

10. If you are elected President of the United States, what would your policy goals be for the first 100 days and what leadership style would you bring to the position to accomplish it?

My first priority would be to reform our democracy. If we're going to meet the urgent challenges that we face, we must fix our democracy so that it works for everyone. This means reforms like ending political gerrymandering, expanding access to voting rights, and limiting the power of special interests and corporations to influence our democracy. If we can't fix these issues, we can't tackle other big issues like health care and climate change.

Next, I will immediately return and expand overtime protections to millions of workers left behind by the current Administration's weakened standard and reinstate guidance to prevent employees from being misclassified as contractors. I will appoint a Secretary of Labor and senior Department of Labor leaders who have the best interests of workers at heart and direct the Department to take a strong regulatory stand on joint employer bargaining. Additionally, I will convene Congress to pass a new Wagner Act, the Protecting the Right to Organize Act, and a \$15 federal minimum wage.

I will also take immediate action on the climate crisis we face by declaring a climate emergency and directing the EPA to initiate stricter greenhouse gas emission regulations. I will rejoin the



Paris Agreement and also convene a Pittsburgh Summit for governors, mayors, and community leaders to form commitments in the US that contribute to our global Paris commitments. I will meet with the majority and minority leaders of the House and Senate to start an ambitious and comprehensive climate bill.

In addition, I will take immediate steps to improve access to affordable health care coverage for millions of Americans and fight for women's reproductive justice. This involves working with Congress to codify abortion rights and coverage into law and reversing Trump's domestic and global gag rules that deny women access to reproductive health care and evidence-based information. I will also end Medicaid work requirements, strengthen protections for Americans with pre-existing conditions under the ACA, and work with Congress to pass laws that allow Medicare to negotiate with drug companies and cap the out-of-pocket costs for prescription drugs. And I will declare our nation's opioid and addiction crisis a National Emergency to allow critical resources to help communities with identification, treatment, and prevention.

On immigration, I will immediately end the Remain in Mexico program and Muslim ban; re-prioritize immigration enforcement to focus on actual threats to public safety; and strengthen protections for Dreamers, parents of Dreamers, TPS and DED holders.

My leadership style consists of prioritizing long-term decision-making, diversity of perspectives, and common values. My goal is to cut through the daily news cycle to focus on the long term. The leaders and partners with whom I work must have a deep commitment to the reforms we're pursuing, because changing the governing process or addressing climate change is going to take incredible persistence and courage. In addition, I strongly believe that a diversity of perspectives is what strengthens policy-making and governance, so colleagues who have different opinions must be empowered to dissent while we are considering courses of action. Finally, one of the most important things that I can do as a leader is to bring people together and inspire us to strive for our highest values. That will be my focus as President.