

2012 STATE LEGISLATIVE CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

GENERAL INFORMATION

Running for: Illinois Senate Illinois House | District: 28 | Democrat Republican

Jim O'Donnell

First & Last Name

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City

State

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If offered, would you accept the support of a public-sector union?

Yes

No *Absolutely not!*

(Please provide a one-page bio with this questionnaire)

POLICY QUESTIONS

BUDGET & TAXES

Do you support/oppose any increase in taxes or fees?

Support

Oppose

Do you support/oppose repealing the 2011 income tax increase?

Support

Oppose

Do you support/oppose repealing Illinois' inheritance tax?

Support

Oppose

Do you support/oppose tax incentives for select companies that keep their business in Illinois?

Support

Oppose

Do you support/oppose the reestablishment of comprehensive public hearings on major program spending?

Support

Oppose

Do you support/oppose putting administrative agency and executive branch witnesses under oath before they testify to legislative committees?

Support

Oppose

Do you support/oppose requiring the Senate President and Speaker of the House to certify, under penalty of sanction, that the state budget appropriations bills constitute a balanced budget?

Support

Oppose

STATE EMPLOYMENT

Do you support/oppose a statewide hiring freeze, to only be waived on an individual basis by the Governor's signature?

Support

Oppose

Do you support/oppose a freeze on state employee promotions, to only be waived on an individual basis by the Governor's signature? Support Oppose

Do you support/oppose the right of public employees to strike? Support Oppose

Do you support/oppose making Illinois a right-to-work state? Support Oppose *Would have to see the legislation*

Do you support/oppose project labor agreements (PLAs), which prevent any non-union company from bidding on state work? Support Oppose

Do you support/oppose exempting school districts and local governments from the Illinois Prevailing Wage Law? Support Oppose

STATE PENSIONS

Do you support/oppose a "hard pension cap", which would establish a salary ceiling? Support Oppose

Do you support/oppose replacing the current pension system with a 401K-like plan for new and future public employees? Support Oppose

Do you support/oppose increasing existing and future public employees' contributions to the pension system? Support Oppose

Do you support/oppose prohibiting any pension benefit increase that is not fully funded when granted? Support Oppose

Do you support/oppose raising the retirement age for public employees? Support Oppose

EDUCATION

Do you support/oppose taxpayer-funded scholarships for elementary/secondary student to attend private schools? Support Oppose

Do you support/oppose per-pupil-spending of state education funds following students to whatever school parents deem best? Support Oppose *See attachment*

Do you support/oppose registration of home school students with state or local authorities? Support Oppose

Do you support/oppose the state licensing of home school parents? Support Oppose

Do you support/oppose the approval of home school curriculum by the State Board of Education? Support Oppose

Do you support/oppose lowering the compulsory school age from 7? Support Oppose

MEDICAID

Do you support/oppose a periodic re-qualification program for all Medicaid participants requiring proof of income, citizenship, and reasonable asset test? Support Oppose

Do you support/oppose suspending all discretionary grant programs related to hospitals and Medicaid? Support Oppose

Do you support/oppose a full accounting of all spending grouped in the budget as "Other Related Medicaid Services"? Support Oppose

Do you support/oppose the elimination of the Health Facilities Planning Board? Support Oppose

STATE COURTS

Do you support/oppose the elimination of one of the two separate chambers for the Illinois Supreme Court? Support Oppose

Do you support/oppose the elimination of food service and lodging at all Appellate Courthouses? Support Oppose

Do you support/oppose the election of Supreme Court Judges? Support Oppose

↳ Election might not be perfect, but I would hate to see someone like Blago or Quinn appoint someone.

GOVERNMENT REFORM

Do you support/oppose full and public financial disclosure of all sources of income for every elected official? Support Oppose

Do you support/oppose repealing the contribution limits imposed under recent changes to the Illinois Campaign Finance laws? Support Oppose

Do you support/oppose General Assembly leadership PACs being subject to the same campaign finance rules as all other PACs? Support Oppose

Do you support/oppose term limits for General Assembly presiding officers and legislative leaders? Support Oppose

Do you support/oppose a ban on all outside employment for state constitutional officers, including the Speaker of the House and Senate President? Support Oppose

Do you support/oppose a prohibition on pensions and healthcare benefits for "part-time" elected officials statewide? Support Oppose

Do you support/oppose the public election of House and Senate committee chairs by their membership? Support Oppose

Do you support/oppose a mandate that any bill with 5+ sponsors be entitled to a public hearing? Support Oppose

Do you support/oppose civil or criminal sanctions against legislators who lie about legislation during committee hearings or floor debate? Support Oppose

Do you support/oppose a requirement of 24 hour, online publication of all legislation before final passage? Support Oppose

ELECTION INTEGRITY

- Do you support/oppose the repeal of Illinois' Motor Voter program? Support Oppose
- Do you support/oppose a law requiring photo ID to vote? Support Oppose

SOCIAL POLICY

- Do you support/oppose the expanded use of eminent domain for economic development? Support Oppose
- Do you support/oppose the ban on smoking on private property? Support Oppose *See attachment*
- Do you support/oppose concealed carry? Support Oppose
- Do you support/oppose sanctuary cities and counties in Illinois? Support Oppose *See attachment*
- Do you support/oppose the use of capital punishment in Illinois? Support Oppose
- Do you support/oppose the enforcement of traffic laws by means of red light or speed cameras? Support Oppose
- Do you support/oppose the expansion of gaming in Illinois? Support Oppose
- Do you support/oppose requiring abortion clinics to be licensed under the Ambulatory Surgical Treatment Center Act? Support Oppose
- Do you support/oppose the Freedom of Choice Act (FOCA), which would eliminate all restrictions on abortion in Illinois? Support Oppose
- Do you support/oppose a state constitutional amendment defining marriage as between one man and one woman? Support Oppose
- Do you support/oppose mandatory mental health screening of pregnant/new mothers and/or children by state agencies or medical practitioners? Support Oppose *See attachment*
- Do you support/oppose the repeal of the civil unions law? Support Oppose

Jim O'Connell
Candidate Signature

1/30/12
Date

Supplementary Notes

Education

I am of the general opinion that parents/students should have a choice, and I believe that competition in the school system, just like in business, is desirable. I support lifting the cap on charter schools. I support a Chicago tuition voucher pilot program, which would allow us to examine the results to see if we should expand this program to other areas.

Social Policy

- Smoking – I would oppose a ban on smoking in one's own home. I support the existing ban on smoking in public places including bars, restaurants, bowling alleys, etc.
- Sanctuary cities – I believe it is the federal government's responsibility to enforce immigration laws, and local governments to enforce criminal laws. Given that, it is appropriate for local governments to enact community policing standards that focus on finding and arresting criminals. If the criminal then turns out to be in the country illegally, they should be turned over to immigration authorities.
- Civil unions/gay marriage - While there are a number of issues with moral implications that are the main focus of select voters, I believe our immediate focus must be on the critical task of stabilizing our state's fiscal affairs.

About Jim:

Jim has lived in Park Ridge with his wife Marty for the past 35 years. After graduating from Maine South High School, Jim received his BBA in Accounting with high honors from the University of Notre Dame and passed the Illinois CPA exam upon his first sitting. Jim and Marty are the parents of two adult sons, Bryan and Conor, who also are Maine South alumni.

Jim has a long history of community service that has centered on Park Ridge Soccer, serving as a member of the PRS Board of Directors for 17 years. Currently, he trains and assigns the local youth soccer referees. The referee program provides employment for more than 100 youths. These part time jobs develop decision-making and people management skills. Recently, Jim also initiated a referee mentor program, in which more experienced officials provide on-the-field advice and instruction to help the young referees develop.

Jim has spent the majority of his professional career in manufacturing, giving him an intimate understanding of what is needed to help the Illinois manufacturing industry flourish. Jim worked as the Operations Manager for Graco, Inc. for 16 years. After his tenure with Graco, Jim started his own company that specialized in making manufacturing companies more efficient.

Since 2000, Jim has been the Vice-President and Chief Financial Officer for Camcraft, Inc., a manufacturing firm in Hanover Park. In addition to his responsibilities in Accounting, IT, Purchasing, and Business Development, he began to be involved in government relations. He most recently served as the Vice Chairperson of the Tooling and Manufacturing Association (TMA) Government Relations Committee. Jim also currently serves as a TMA Board of Directors member. He has traveled across the United States, Europe, Japan, and China to promote the interests of Camcraft, TMA, and the manufacturing industry as a whole, and testified before the International Trade Commission in Washington, D.C., on the subject of American steel tariffs.