

# **AFL-CIO**

## **Presidential Questionnaire**

**April 2015**

**Can you please tell us who your current key economic and labor advisers are in your campaign, and whom you intend to rely on in these areas if you are elected?**

*I, and my campaign team, have reached out to a wide range of experts and advisers to help inform development of my policy agenda. I want to hear the best ideas regardless of where they come from. We have talked with numerous economists, from Joe Stiglitz and Raj Chetty, to Alan Krueger and Heather Boushey. And we have been meeting with individual labor unions to hear directly from them about the priorities and policies that matter most to their members.*

*The bottom line is this: my door is open. I'm not interested in old playbooks. I think we're facing new economic challenges so we need fresh thinking and new approaches. And we need everyone at the table.*

*As President, I would be equally open and rely on a variety of voices, including labor. Most importantly, I would have many viewpoints at the table, and would build a team that is open and willing to work with all stakeholders.*

**What is your comprehensive approach to raising wages? What are your three most important, detailed economic policy ideas?**

*Americans have fought our way back, and now we've seen five straight years of private-sector job growth, creating 12 million jobs. But it's not enough for people to just get by—they should be able to get ahead and stay ahead. In this campaign I will offer an ambitious agenda to boost wages, address costs, and make being middle class mean something again.*

*Experience shows that policies that are good for middle-class families are good for everyone. For example, in recent months we have seen several major companies take initiative to raise wages for their workers. And many workers who would otherwise leave the workforce entirely—because they need to care for a loved one or a new child—are more likely to come back to work if they are offered paid leave: that's good both for their employers and for the economy as a whole. The labor movement has been instrumental in pushing for these positive changes for workers through collective actions, including intense public pressure even when they are not able to organize, and I applaud these efforts.*

*I believe we need to address the three fundamental factors that have driven stagnant pay and too few Americans in good jobs over recent decades. First, the deck is stacked against ordinary Americans, with an increasing share of income going to the top. We need to ensure workers share in rising productivity, raise the minimum wage, and make our tax code more progressive by closing loopholes that benefit hedge fund managers, CEOs, and corporations that shift jobs overseas, while cutting taxes for everyday Americans. We also need to defend the Federal Reserve against attempts to remove employment from its mandate. Second, we need to make*

*investments that drive job creation, productivity, and growth - including in infrastructure that will put Americans back to work, education from pre-K to college to unlock the potential of every American, and in basic research. And finally, we need to make it much easier for every American to join and stay in the labor force and find a good job by making quality child care more affordable, and ensuring America is no longer the only developed nation without paid leave, and ensuring that workers are provided with fair schedules, fair wages and overtime pay. That's how we will create a full employment economy with a tight labor market that drives rising pay for workers, gives every worker pathways to good jobs, and ensures everyday Americans share in the rewards—not just those at the top. I will put forward detailed proposals on each of these fronts in the coming months.*

*And throughout all of this, we need to strengthen union's ability to organize and collectively bargain. The great American middle class was built in large part by workers exercising their right to organize and bargain for higher wages and better conditions. When more workers were in unions, more workers were in the middle class and their wages went up. And economists have said that the decline in union density is a key factor in the rise in income inequality in America. When workers have a voice on the job, we are all better off.*

**How would you ensure secure retirement for both current and future generations of workers? Should the way in which Social Security is funded be changed at all? Should there be changes to the benefit structure? If yes to either, in what ways? How are public and private employer-provided pension plans a vehicle for retirement security for workers? What role would your administration play to increase access and strengthen worker pensions?**

*We owe it to our seniors and our aging workers to ensure that they can retire in dignity.*

*I believe it is critical that we continue to protect defined benefit plans that provide secure retirement benefits for workers. That's why in the Senate I supported legislation, like the Pension Protection Act. I understand the added value of fully-funded pension systems that can relieve some of the burden on Social Security funds.*

*I've fought to defend Social Security for years, including when the Bush Administration tried to privatize it. We need to keep defending it from attacks and enhance it to meet new realities. I'm especially focused on the fact that we need to improve how Social Security works for women. I also want to enhance benefits for our most vulnerable seniors.*

*We need to reject years of Republican myth-making that claims we cannot afford Social Security and that the only solution must therefore be to cut benefits. I would oppose any plan that tries to close Social Security's shortfall on the backs of the middle class, whether in terms of middle class tax increases or benefit cuts or privatizing Social Security.*

*In addition, we need a broader strategy to help Americans with their retirement security. I will have proposals on that in the weeks and months ahead.*

**What steps would you take to increase workers' bargaining power? Specifically, how would you modernize American labor law so workers and their employers could bargain collectively to raise wages?**

*The right to organize is one of our most fundamental human rights and yet this right is being chipped away at in our courts and in our political system. I believe that unions are critical to a strong American middle class. Throughout my career, I have stood with all workers as they exercise their right to organize and bargain collectively and was an original co-sponsor of the Employee Free Choice Act. I am consulting with both labor leaders and labor economists about ways the next president can best support 21<sup>st</sup> century organizing and collective bargaining.*

*It is vital that we modernize basic labor standards. Worker protections and basic labor standards have failed to keep pace with changes over the past half century. We need to raise wages and reduce poverty among working families, including supporting and strengthening collective bargaining, raising the minimum wage, eradicating wage theft, ensuring that employers do not misclassify true employees as "independent contractors" to skirt their obligations, and leveling the playing field for women and people of color. I was pleased to see the President expand overtime protections this week to make overtime pay meaningful again for middle class workers. That was one important step in the right direction.*

**Please explain your trade philosophy as it related to raising wages for the American workforce. Specifically, do you support or oppose Fast Track and the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP)?**

*Following are the tests that I believe any new trade measure has to meet: First, it has to put us in a position to protect American workers, raise wages and create more good jobs at home. Second, it must also strengthen our national security. I am focused on what's going to help crack down on currency manipulation, improve labor rights, protect the environment and health, and open new opportunities for our small businesses to export overseas. And, as I warned in my book, "Hard Choices," we shouldn't be giving special rights to corporations in these agreements at the expense of workers and consumers.*

*My focus is on what is in the final trade agreement because that will directly impact the American people. We should walk away from any outcome that falls short. The goal is greater prosperity and security for American families, not trade for trade's sake.*

**What is your plan for achieving full employment? How do you define full employment? How would this plan move the economy toward good, full-time jobs that raise wages and away from contingent, part-time employment?**

*My first priority on the economy is to ensure that every American who wants one can quickly find a good job with rising pay that allows them to support their family, and afford the costs of child care, education, health care, and saving for a retirement with dignity. That's my definition of full employment and a strong economy. And I have an ambitious vision for moving in this direction.*

*I believe we need to address the three fundamental factors that have driven stagnant pay and too few Americans in good jobs over recent decades. First, the deck is stacked against ordinary Americans, with an increasing share of income going to the top. We need to strengthen labor's ability to organize and ensure workers share in rising productivity, raise the minimum wage, and make our tax code more progressive by closing loopholes that benefit hedge fund managers, CEOs, and corporations that shift jobs overseas, while cutting taxes for everyday Americans. We need to defend the Federal Reserve against attempts to remove employment from its mandate. Second, we need to make investments that drive job creation, productivity, and growth - including in infrastructure that will put Americans back to work, education from pre-K to college to unlock the potential of every American, and in basic research. And finally, we need to make it much easier for every American to join the labor force and find a good job by making quality child care more affordable, and ensuring America is no longer the only developed nation without paid leave. I will put forward detailed proposals on each of these fronts in the coming months.*

*When we do all of these things—unstacking the deck, strengthening inclusive growth, and opening pathways into the workforce--we will make progress toward full employment and higher pay for everyday working Americans. That will not only create jobs for more workers, but create good jobs that are full-time with good benefits for those who want them, and mean that fewer and fewer workers will be forced to turn to part-time, contingent work when they would rather take on more hours. And at the same time, we need to ensure that employers do not misclassify true employees as “independent contractors” or other kinds of contingent workers to skirt their obligations. I am consulting broadly, including with labor, on how we handle the implications and challenges of increasing part-time work. We need a creative strategy to protect and empower workers and families and ensure that they are not being taken advantage of.*

**How would you use minimum wage, overtime and other labor market policies, monetary policy, fiscal policy, tax policy, public investments and other structural policies to build an economy in which wages rise when workers are more productive?**

*We know that American workers are more productive than ever before but that their wages have not kept up with productivity. I have fought to raise the minimum wage for many years and will do so as President. A higher minimum wage doesn't just help those at the bottom of the pay scale, it has a ripple effect across the economy and helps millions of American workers and families. I also support state and local efforts to raise wages above the federal floor where it makes sense to do so. We also need to ensure workers have the collective bargaining power they need to fight for fair wages and decent benefits to help strengthen the middle class.*

*I was pleased to see the President expand overtime protections this week—an important step in the right direction. Experience shows that policies like boosting overtime protections that are good for middle-class families are good for everyone. These policies are pro-growth and pro-family.*

*I believe we can create an economy in which wages rise and workers are more productive by unstacking the deck, strengthening inclusive growth, and opening pathways into the workforce. And that will require an aggressive combination of approaches including public investments and other fiscal and tax policies, defending the Federal Reserve against attempts to remove*

*employment from its mandate, and structural changes in the rules of our labor markets to strengthen the hand of workers and labor.*

*In the coming months, I will be laying out additional proposals to raise wages for hardworking Americans.*

**Racism is a powerful factor in keeping wages low. How would you use legislation, your executive powers and the bully pulpit to raise wages by addressing immigration reform and mass incarceration?**

*I support comprehensive immigration reform (CIR) and a path to citizenship, not just because it's the right thing to do, but because it strengthens families, strengthens our economy, and strengthens our country. I was a strong supporter of CIR as a Senator, cosponsoring Senator Ted Kennedy's 2004 bill and supporting the Comprehensive Immigration Reform Act in 2006 and 2007. In 2003, 2005 and 2007, I cosponsored the Dream Act in the Senate. I will fight for comprehensive immigration reform and a path to citizenship for families across our country. I also support President Obama's DACA/DAPA executive actions. And if Congress continues its refusal to act, as President I would do everything possible under the law to go even further.*

*On mass incarceration, as I recently said, we have to come to terms with some hard truths about race and justice in America. We have allowed our criminal justice system to get out of balance, and recent tragedies should galvanize us to come together as a nation to find our balance again. We need to rebuild the bonds of trust and respect among Americans, and strengthen our families and communities. And we also need to deliver real reforms—whether learning from the good work happening in police departments and communities across the country and building on what we know works; setting the goal of making sure every police department in the country has access to body cameras, high-quality training, and better data; pursuing alternative punishments for low-level offenders and sentencing reforms; or ensuring that those who have paid their debt to society have a fair chance and real opportunities to get a fresh start.*

**Do you believe public-sector workers should be able to bargain collectively with their employers? Are there any groups of public-sector workers you think should not have the right to organize and bargain?**

*Throughout my career, I have stood with all workers as they exercise their right to organize and collectively bargain. For example, I was an original co-sponsor of the Employee Free Choice Act; actively opposed anti-collective bargaining provisions contained in the Department of Defense's proposed National Security Personnel System; and voted in favor of collective bargaining rights for TSA screeners. I stand proudly on the side of workers fighting for their continued right to organize and collectively bargain. Republicans and their corporate backers are waging a coordinated assault on unions. These efforts to undermine collective bargaining are undermining our economy, and they are weakening working families. As President, I will work with you to fight back from the state level all the way up to the Supreme Court.*

**Over the past several decades, U.S. manufacturing has declined precipitously. If you think this is a problem, what is your plan for growing U.S. manufacturing?**

*I agree that the decline in U.S. manufacturing jobs is a problem. Manufacturing jobs have been a bedrock of good jobs for everyday Americans for decades and punch above their weight in contributing to innovation and productivity throughout the economy. We need to ensure that more good manufacturing jobs are located here in the U.S., rather than shifting abroad.*

*In the wake of the financial crisis, we've seen the first sustained increase in manufacturing jobs in the U.S. in years – with about 800,000 manufacturing jobs added since February 2010. But that's not enough. We need to build on that success, and continue to strengthen manufacturing in the U.S. economy. That means investing in infrastructure so our manufactured goods can reach markets across town, across the state, or around the world. It includes changing our tax code to encourage breaking new ground in America, while at the same time cracking down on loopholes that reward companies for shifting jobs and earnings overseas. That's why I have supported permanently extending the New Markets Tax Credit, and will be talking about reforming our tax code to encourage investment. It means investing in basic innovation and research, including new advanced manufacturing technologies. It means further reforming and expanding our workforce, training, and apprenticeship programs to help prepare workers with the skills they need for good jobs, including in the manufacturing sector. And finally, we need to ensure that our foreign competitors compete on a level playing field, rather than unfairly undermining U.S. manufacturers.*

*In the Senate, I spoke out about the need for a “new Manhattan project” to “help stem the loss of U.S. manufacturing jobs.” I cosponsored a manufacturing training amendment, would have ensured that the technical training needed to link skilled employees to 21st century jobs was among the strategies used to revitalize our manufacturing sector. I will have more to say on encouraging manufacturing jobs here, in the U.S., in the months to come.*

**Currently, we have a national infrastructure deficit of \$3.2 trillion, according to the American Society of Civil Engineers. What is your plan for addressing that deficit? How much additional infrastructure spending should we be doing annually over the next 10 years? Beyond that, what is your plan to put the United States in a position of global competitive leadership in 21<sup>st</sup> century infrastructure technology?**

*Ordinary Americans can't afford failing to invest in our infrastructure. Poor road conditions alone can raise car costs for drivers through higher repair, fuel, and tire costs. If we don't repair our roads and bridges, and upgrade our infrastructure for the 21st Century, it will be harder for Americans to get to work in good jobs, and for our businesses to grow and compete.*

*I strongly support making additional investments in our infrastructure to create jobs, repair our crumbling roads and bridges, and ensure our basic foundations, from rail to transit and other modes of transportation, to ports and our power systems are modernized for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Infrastructure investments are one of the best ways to drive demand that creates good jobs and puts Americans to work. That's good for workers, good for business, and good for the economy. It will help our businesses large and small reach markets across town, across the state, or around the world, strengthening their competitiveness.*

*It's time for us to invest in America's infrastructure. That means Congress must make the public investments we need in our roads, highways, and other kinds of infrastructure. At the same time, we should find ways, where appropriate, to leverage private sector investment, while understanding that public investment is essential to revitalizing America's infrastructure and creating good jobs. I am looking at a variety of means to ensure that we pay for our public investments in infrastructure, and a variety of vehicles to drive increased private investment where appropriate.*

*I will have more to say on this in the weeks and months ahead.*

**What is your energy strategy? Are there sources of energy we should focus on or move away from? Specifically, what is your view of nuclear power? Of carbon capture and sequestration technology? Of coal? Of natural gas? What is your view of how to manage change in the energy sector and the effects on workers and communities?**

*Combatting the defining challenge of climate change, while building a stronger and more sustainable clean energy economy that creates good jobs and reduces pollution are top priorities for me. We can create millions of new jobs in a clean energy economy—manufacturing jobs, retrofitting and infrastructure jobs, and more. As President, I will fight to build on the important progress already made by promoting smart federal policies, including in R&D, and working with states, cities, and rural communities to develop and deploy innovative clean energy solutions, cut carbon pollution, protect the air we breathe and water we drink, and ensure safe and responsible domestic energy production while reducing energy waste and oil dependence.*

*Powering the economy of the future and meeting the climate challenge requires building new energy infrastructure to connect cleaner sources of fuel and electricity to American households and businesses. We must also repair our existing energy infrastructure to make it safer and more efficient. I will make this a priority as President, reducing costs for consumers and creating good paying jobs across the U.S. Together, we will make America the Clean Energy Superpower of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.*

*Nuclear power has been a large source of zero-emission electricity generation in the U.S. for decades and supplies about 20% of all the electricity we consume today. Given the magnitude of the climate challenge, we can't take any clean energy technologies off the table. When constructing or relicensing a nuclear power plant, however, safety is clearly the top priority. The Fukushima disaster made that clear.*

*On natural gas, we have to ensure the current boom in energy production is good for our economy, our environment and climate, our communities, and our strategic position in the world. There are legitimate concerns about the risks associated with the rapidly expanding production of natural gas. Methane leaks pose a particularly troubling threat. It is crucial that we put in place smart regulations and close loopholes, such as in the Safe Drinking Water Act, that could put our families at risk. If we are smart about this, and put in place the right safeguards, natural gas can play an important role in the transition to a clean energy economy, reducing methane emissions, sulfur dioxide, mercury, and carbon pollution.*

*As we build the energy economy of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we cannot turn our backs on the workers and communities in the coalfields who kept the lights on and factories running during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. We must ensure that the retirement benefits of coal miners and their families are secure, invest in carbon capture, utilization and sequestration technology, and support workforce and local economic development in coalfield communities. We must also address the legacy costs of fossil fuel combustion in communities disproportionately impacted by the resulting air pollution.*

*I will share new ideas in the weeks ahead about how we can achieve these goals and move forward toward a stronger, cleaner, and more resilient economy for the millions of hardworking Americans who are trying to achieve a better future for themselves, their families, and future generations.*

**What is your view of the No Child Left Behind Act? What changes, if any, would you make to the law, and why? What provisions would you retain, and why? Do you support or favor vouchers and/or other programs that allow taxpayer dollars to be used for private and religious schools at the K-12 level, either as an experiment or as a full-scale program? What is your plan for addressing the crisis of affordable higher education and student debt?**

*I have been working to improve and support our public schools for decades. Throughout my career I have worked to ensure that every child reaches his or her full potential, and I know a quality education is essential to reaching that goal. When I was First Lady of Arkansas, I chaired the Arkansas Educational Standards Commission where I worked to raise standards for Arkansas' schools, increase teacher salaries, and lower class size. I continued in this effort as First Lady of the United States and as a Senator, working throughout my career to provide dedicated resources and support to teachers and to recruit, support, and retain more outstanding teachers. We need to attract a whole new generation to teaching because it is critical that our students have well-prepared and well-supported teachers.*

*When the No Child Left Behind Act was enacted, I viewed it as a historic promise between the federal government and educators. I hoped that it would lead to a greater sense of shared responsibility for our schools' success. Unfortunately, that promise was largely broken because schools struggled to meet the mandates imposed by the law and the implementation at the federal level was problematic.*

*I applaud Senator Patty Murray and Senator Lamar Alexander for coming together in a bipartisan fashion to unanimously pass the Every Child Achieves Act of 2015 out of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions committee to reauthorize NCLB. I believe this bill addresses some of the real challenges with NCLB while retaining our commitment to high academic standards, and to assessments that give parents and teachers the information they need to know how students are performing and if and where they need help to improve. I believe that this bill will correct for some of the challenges that schools and communities experienced in implementing the law and will ensure that principals, teachers and local communities are lifted up as full partners and innovators in improving public education. I also applaud the forward-*



*looking investments in education contained in the bill, including a new commitment to improving early learning.*

*One of the issues that I am most concerned about is testing. Tests are intended to provide parents and educators with an understanding of how well kids are learning. Having that understanding is crucial. And it is important to remember that testing provides communities with full information about how our low-income students and students of color are doing in comparison to other groups so that we can continue to improve our educational system for all students.*

*But I understand the frustration many parents and educators feel about tests. Teachers and parents alike are concerned about the amount of time being spent on test preparation, and worry that children are missing out on the most valuable experience in the classroom-- a teacher sparking a student's curiosity and love for learning.*

*So I am mindful that we need to find the right balance -- and that starts with bringing parents and educators back into this conversation about how we ensure a robust and engaging curriculum that engages students in the love of learning rather than narrowing our schools to focus primarily on test preparation.*

*I do think that Senators Murray and Alexander struck the right balance in the Every Child Achieves Act by continuing to maintain the federal requirement for annual statewide testing in grades 3-8, but ensuring that accountability for improving schools will be based on multiple measures of performance. And I think it will be critical for states and communities to continue to strike the right balance and not layer test upon test. There must be room for invigorating teaching and learning in the classroom.*

*On the issue of vouchers, I strongly oppose voucher schemes because they divert precious resources away from financially strapped public schools to private schools that are not subject to the same accountability standards or teacher quality standards. It would be harmful to our democracy if we dismantled our public school system through vouchers, and there is no evidence that doing so would improve outcomes for children.*

*On the issue of student debt and affordable higher education: First, too many young people are struggling under the burden of student debt and too many families are struggling to pay the rising cost of college. Second, too many students are starting but never completing college, which means they leave with debt but no degree. I will be offering my own ideas for how to make college more affordable, how to make sure no one graduates with crushing debt, and how to hold colleges accountable to help more students graduate. Among other things, we have to do more to link student loan repayments to income and to help people refinance their loans. And we have to think about both four-year colleges and community colleges. I support President Obama's free community college proposal. I will be talking about ways to reduce the burdens on those entering four-year colleges too, as well as those who are out in the world trying to start a business or a family. I intend to introduce significant proposals on these subjects in the weeks and months ahead.*

**What is your view of the future of the United States Postal Service? Do you support cutting delivery schedules, cutting postal facilities or privatizing postal operations? Do you support postal banking? Do you have other ideas for expanding services at, and access to, the USPS?**

*I value the contributions of the U.S. Postal Service and would take steps to maintain its long-term viability. The Postal Service has been a steady source of good jobs for middle class Americans and helped make the dreams of families all across our country come true.*

*I cosponsored legislation to protect city and rural letter carriers from having their work contracted out by the U.S. Postal Service to private firms. And as President, I would work to maintain the U.S. Postal Service as a source of good jobs with good benefits.*

**What is your plan for address the rise of low-paid precarious work, including the misclassification of employees as independent contractors and wage theft?**

*It is vital that we modernize basic labor standards. Worker protections and basic labor standards have failed to keep pace with changes over the past half century. Options to raise wages and reduce poverty among working families include raising the minimum wage, eradicating wage theft, promoting collective bargaining, ensuring that employers do not misclassify true employees as “independent contractors” to skirt their obligations, and leveling the playing field for women and people of color. I was pleased to see the President expand overtime protections this week. That was an important step in the right direction. In the coming months, I will be laying out specific proposals for addressing these issues.*

**What changes would you propose making in the Affordable Care Act, if any? Specifically, what changes, if any, would you make in the following areas:**

- **The employer shared responsibility provision?**
- **The rules governing access to the exchanges?**
- **The excise tax on high-cost plans?**

*Thanks to the Affordable Care Act, more than 16 million Americans have gained new coverage. The reduction in the uninsured rate across the country has been staggering, down to roughly 12% for adults.*

*These statistics translate into real change in people’s lives. Families who no longer have to face the threat of bankruptcy because of catastrophic health care costs. Parents who now have health care when only their children were covered before. Women can no longer be charged higher rates solely because of their gender. People with preexisting conditions can no longer be denied coverage. Americans can make the leap of changing jobs or starting a business without worrying about whether they will be able to buy insurance. This is a real accomplishment we should be proud of.*

*As with any piece of major legislation, it’s not perfect and would benefit from updates and fixes. For example, I am examining is the so-called “Cadillac” tax. I know that unions often set the gold standard in health care benefits, after fighting hard and winning at the bargaining table,*

*and these health benefits help both union and nonunion workers. While I support the intention of trying to get health care costs under control so that those costs aren't eating up such a large share of workers' paychecks, I worry that the tax may, over time, hit plans that aren't just the highest cost ones and so shift more and more costs to consumers. I also want to be sure that both workers and their families have access to affordable health care. I believe we need to fix the "family glitch," when spouses and children with access to a family member's employer coverage can't get subsidies because of a glitch in the law. As President, I would work to ensure that our tax code appropriately advances the health care interests of lower-income and middle class families.*

*We also need to take steps beyond the ACA. We should crack down on the drug companies that charge too much and the insurance companies that offer too little. And we need to tackle rising out-of-pocket health care costs for consumers across the board.*

**What steps would you take to restore the American people's faith in our democracy? Do you support universal voter registration? How would you curb gerrymandering? Do you support reversing the *Buckley* and *Citizens United* Supreme Court decisions?**

*As President, I will work to revitalize our democracy so that it works for everyday Americans.*

*The assault on voting rights threatens to block millions of Americans from fully participating in our democracy. We should be clearing the way for more people to vote, not putting up every roadblock anyone can imagine. Congress should move quickly to pass legislation to repair the damage done to the Voting Rights Act and restore the full protections that American voters need and deserve. And we should also implement the recommendations of the bipartisan presidential commission to improve voting. I have called for setting a standard across the country of at least 20 days of early in-person voting, including opportunities for weekend and evening voting. And I believe we should go even further to strengthen voting rights by establishing universal, automatic voter registration so that everyone is automatically registered to vote when they turn 18—unless they actively choose to opt out.*

*We have to reduce the influence of big money in politics. I think the Supreme Court made a grave error with its *Citizens United* decision. As President, I would appoint Supreme Court Justices who will protect the right to vote and not the right of billionaires to buy elections. And as I said recently, I support a constitutional amendment to get unaccountable money out of politics.*

**Please describe situations where you personally have supported specific groups of workers seeking to form a union or raise wages in their workplace. These might include situations where you made public policy changes that helped specific groups of workers to organize or bargain, or where you issued public statements or participated in public actions by speaking at rallies or walking picket lines with workers.**

*The right to organize is a fundamental right of workers that is being eroded by the courts and Republican attacks. Throughout my career, both through legislation and behind-the-scenes, I*

*have worked to ensure workers have the collective bargaining power they need to fight for the fair wages and benefits they deserve.*

*For example, as a Senator, in addition to being an original co-sponsor of the Employee Free Choice Act, I voted in favor of giving collective bargaining rights to firefighters, police officers, and first responders, and protecting collective bargaining rights for the federal employees being transferred to the new Department of Homeland Security. I also introduced or cosponsored bills to raise the minimum wage in every session of Congress during my time in the Senate, and I cosponsored legislation to block the Bush Administration's attempt to roll back overtime pay.*

*I have also played an active role in advocating for unions by bringing people back to the negotiating table and urging them to negotiate in good faith. For example, I signed a public ad in support of the workers at Lawrence Hospital in Bronxville who were trying to organize a union within the facility. Ultimately, the workers won a union and the right to bargain collectively. Throughout my tenure in the Senate, I worked diligently on behalf of New York's local unions, calling CEOs to push for fair contract negotiations when efforts had stalled. And in 2007, I refused to cross the picket line when the workers at CBS News had been without a contract for almost two and a half years, promising, "I will honor the picket line if the workers at CBS News decide to strike. America's unions are the backbone of America's middle class and I will always stand with America's working men and women in the fight to ensure that they are able to earn a fair wage."*