



2018 Pennsylvania CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

Candidate Name: Bill Troutman

Running For: PA Senate

District: 36th

Party Affiliation: Democrat

Charitable nonprofits include groups like food banks, Habitat for Humanity, YMCAs, religious institutions, hospitals, museums, libraries, child care centers, and many more. What has been your personal experience with nonprofits (ex: as a board member, employee, volunteer, or donor)? How do these experiences shape your policy positions?

I have been involved in Scouts, Boys and Girls Club, local recreation leagues, and sporting clubs as a volunteer and a parent. My wife currently works for a non-profit child care center. By working with organizations like these that cross social and economic barriers, we are able to get a better understanding of the struggles facing families, children, and seniors. It is possible to have a deeper relationship with the community we've lived in our entire lives. The centerpiece of my campaign is based on serving the needs of working families.

What is your position on the following tax issues that affect charitable nonprofits:

Do you support preserving state and local sales and real-estate tax exemptions for charitable nonprofits?

Rising property taxes are a real problem for many small and struggling communities and many people are demanding a solution. It is important to remember that nonprofits very often provide valuable services that save public dollars in places where local resources are stretched thin and in essence SAVE tax dollars. But nonprofits with large cash reserves or large real estate holdings that are not focused on human services or quality of life improvement "could be" getting a free ride. We need to find out. Any tax exemptions should be based on the value of what the organization contributes to the communities they are in.

Do you believe that nonprofits should be required to provide Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILOTS) or Services in Lieu of Taxes (SILOTS)?

In many situations, the work done by charitable nonprofits in their communities is more than enough to offset any local tax losses. Nonprofits that maintain large cash reserves or have large or valuable real estate holdings may need to be required to provide payments or services. Again, it should all be based on what the organization provides to the community and the Commonwealth overall. I'd hate to see places have to close but people having to sell houses that have been paid off for years is worse, and a very real possibility.

Would you support additional state tax revenues dedicated to fund nonprofits providing contracted government health and human services?

Providing needed services to citizens (affordable and accessible health care is a very important one) is one of the most important jobs of state government. Partnerships with private and nonprofit organizations is a vital part of the system. Increasing taxes is a difficult move, particularly when so many of our seniors and working Pennsylvanians are struggling and haven't seen a real pay increase in years. But taxes to provide valuable services is always worthy of consideration if we are certain those increases are more likely to be paid by those (individuals and corporations) who can afford them.

Additional comments about tax policies that affect nonprofits:

Nonprofits provide more than 720,000 jobs in Pennsylvania (15% of the state's workforce). What policies would you propose to promote continued job growth for private employers, including both nonprofit and for-profit business?

Supporting strong wages, employee empowerment, and labor protections will create the kind of income that allows working families economic choices, the chance to invest in their communities, and the ability to support organizations doing good work. When working families do well, we ALL do well. Economic empowerment from the ground up supports business growth large and small. Additionally, closing corporate tax loopholes that cost the state over a billion dollars annually can create opportunities to increase support for small businesses and family farms.

Would you favor legislation that would reduce the likelihood of a budget impasse in future years? If so, what type of legislation?

Because of Republican anti-spending dogma there is a very good chance that budget impasses may become a regular thing in Harrisburg. But No budget impasse should every create a situation where the money stops for schools and organizations that citizens rely on every day. I would consider supporting legislation that mandates continual funding of essential services in the event of a budget standoff. Working families shouldn't have to suffer because politicians can't act like responsible adults.

Would you support regulatory changes that increase efficiencies and nonprofit-government partnerships. (Proposed regulatory changes could include reducing redundancies across state agencies - e.g. common pre-award processes, budget templates, use of a single audit, reporting template and central depository vault)?

Empowering the auditor general in cooperation with important legislative oversight could create the framework for a periodic review of state/nonprofit partnerships. Efficiency should be publicly evaluated as well as the effectiveness and fairness of any such partnerships.

If elected, what would be your top three policy priorities?

1. Working Families: wage increases, protection of collective bargaining and prevailing wage, property tax reform, a comprehensive opioid crisis response, creating livable/sustainable communities, support small businesses and family farms
2. Education: a firm commitment from the state to support rich and poor districts equally with a fair funding formula, pre-K and full-day kindergarten, increased support for CTE (career and technical education), making higher education more affordable and accessible for all, increased private/state cooperation in apprenticeships, training, and re-training programs, build more community colleges o train young people and non-traditional students for tomorrow's jobs.
3. Energy & Environment: fully fund the PA Department of Environmental Protect, severance tax and pipeline property tax to create environmental remediation fund and support local emergency services, support education, in-state recruitment and apprenticeships for future pipeline and gas industry jobs, protect individual property rights, demand responsible stewardship of soil, air and water resources (they belong to the people, not corporations.)