

SEIU 2010 CYCLE FEDERAL CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

Thank you for participating in the SEIU 2010 Cycle Candidate Questionnaire and Interview Process. SEIU Locals and State Councils will consider your responses as they make a recommendation to our membership for both your party nomination process and the general election.

With more than 2.2 million members, SEIU is the fastest-growing union in North America. SEIU is dedicated to uniting workers in three sectors: healthcare, public services and property services. As America's largest healthcare union, we represent almost 1 million workers in hospitals, nursing homes and home care settings. SEIU is the second-largest public employee union representing approximately 750,000 local, state and federal workers in several states including California, Colorado, Georgia, Maine, Michigan, North Carolina, Nevada, New York, Oregon, Texas and Washington. As the largest property services union, we represent nearly 250,000 members in the building janitorial and security industries. In addition, the Workers United conference, an affiliate of SEIU, represents 150,000 workers nationwide in the garment, textile, laundry and manufacturing and hospitality industries.

The following questions reflect the interests of SEIU members nationwide. Our goal is to organize un-organized workers in these critical sectors of our economy, improve wages, hours and working conditions and build political and legislative power for all workers and their families.

CANDIDATE STATEMENT

I affirmatively seek the endorsement and support of SEIU, its members and their families. In seeking this endorsement, I pledge to support the rights of workers to join a union and collectively bargain. I understand that as a community leader, I may be called upon to help workers form unions, including speaking with employers and urging them to respect these same rights. As an elected official, I will maintain regular contact with SEIU local leaders and members. Any campaign contribution I may receive is from SEIU members who voluntarily give small monthly donations.

Signature Joe Courtney Date June 8, 2010

Name Joe Courtney

Office Sought U.S House of Representatives for Connecticut's 2nd District

Primary Contact Person and Phone Number Katy Cutright, 860-559-3207

*Return signed questionnaire to SEIU CT State Council and to SEIU in DC by **June 5.**

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CAMPAIGN PROFILE

Campaign Staff

Campaign Manager: **Katy Cutright**
Finance Director: **Caitlin Forsyth**
Field Director: **TBD**

Campaign Consultants

Pollster: **David Petts of Bennett, Petts and Blumenthal**
Fundraiser: **Bruce Kieloch**
Media: **Dixon Davis Media**
Direct Mail: **Mission Control**

Anticipated Campaign Budget

Total Amount of Anticipated Campaign Expenditures 2.2 million
Total Amount Anticipated to be Raised 1.75 million
Total Amount Raised to Date 1.2 million

Anticipated Allocation of Resources Between Paid Media and Voter Contact Operations:
Paid Media 70 percent Voter Contact 30 percent

Current/Anticipated Major Sources Campaign Funding (endorsements, elected officials, community leaders, etc.) Endorsements, Individual donors/supporters

Other Information

Primary Election Opponents (announced and likely): **None**

General Election Opponents (announced and likely):

The Republican primary is August 10. The candidates are Janet Peckinpaugh, Daria Novak and Doug Dubitsky.

Party Performance: Democratic X Republican _____ Other _____

Office(s) Currently/Previously Held (please list all):

Congress (current), Connecticut State Representative (former)

Previous Campaigns for Elected Office (please list all):

State Representative, Lieutenant Governor, Congress

Campaign Slogan _____

Campaign Message _____

Top Three Issues: Jobs and the Economy Health Care Education

LABOR LAW REFORM

The right to form a union and engage in collective bargaining is enshrined in U.S. and international human rights laws, but for too many U.S. workers it is a right that exists only on paper. Now more than ever, workers who join together to form unions face intense employer opposition and harassment. The law that protects the rights of working people to form unions is so weak that it is becoming irrelevant for workers seeking to improve their lives. Instead of functioning as a workers' rights law, the National Labor Relations Act has become a structure for management to pressure and intimidate workers that seek union representation. Labor law is in dire need of reform to return its original intent of allowing workers to come together and form unions and to bargain collectively with their employers over working conditions, wages and benefits.

Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA) contains three important changes to labor law. It requires employers to honor workers' decision to join a union after a majority of them have signed a union authorization card or petition verified by the National Labor Relations Board. It also establishes first contract mediation and arbitration, and creates new meaningful penalties against employers who interfere with, coerce or fire workers for attempting to join a union. Arbitration will stop companies from refusing to negotiate with newly formed unions, potentially delaying a contract for years by refusing to come to the table and negotiate. Currently, employers refuse to negotiate with nearly half of all newly formed unions, denying workers their right to stand together in negotiations.

1. If elected, would you support the bi-partisan *Employee Free Choice Act* (H.R. 1409, S. 560) in the 112th Congress?

YES NO

Comments: _____

The Supreme Court of the United States recently ruled that homecare workers are exempt from the minimum wage and overtime protections under the *Fair Labor Standard Act* (FLSA) (*Long Island Care at Home LD., et al., v. Evelyn Coke, 551 U.S. 2007*). This means that homecare workers not otherwise covered by state laws do not have to be paid minimum wage or overtime under the FLSA.

2. If elected, would you support legislation to amend the *Fair Labor Standard Act* to ensure that all homecare workers are explicitly covered by minimum wage and overtime protections under the FLSA?

YES NO

Comments: _____

Unionized workers earn, on average, 27 percent higher than those of nonunion workers, according to the U.S. Department of Labor. While all union workers are better off than nonunion workers, women and minorities are especially advantaged by being in a union—Women in unions earn an extra \$170 a week—\$9,000 more a year. African Americans in unions earn an extra \$150 a week—\$8,000 more a year and Latinos in unions earn an extra \$225 a week—\$11,650 more a year. 81

percent of union workers have job-related health coverage, while only 50 percent of nonunion workers do. Union families pay 43 percent less for family coverage than nonunion families—that's a savings of \$1,000 a year. Also, 72 percent of union workers have a guaranteed, defined benefit pension, compared to only 15 percent of nonunion workers

3. If elected, would you publicly support workers who are forming unions by reaffirming the importance of unions to our communities and by taking actions on behalf of workers such as contacting employers and urging them not to interfere with employee free choice, issuing public statements in support of workers, honoring picket lines, attending rallies, sponsoring public forums and otherwise supporting union organizing?

YES NO

Comments: **I have consistently supported the right for employees to organize at work sites across the state, and opposed efforts to restrict or alter these rights.**

HEALTHCARE

SEIU strongly supports H.R. 3590, and the Reconciliation Act (H.R. 4872) that together establish a historic new healthcare system. We also recognize that Congress must aggressively oversee the law's implementation, and improve the law where needed. SEIU has identified some priority improvements we will seek in the next Congress:

- Improve affordability provisions;
- Support an employer mandate and protect workers from employers who seek to cut their hours to avoid paying their employer responsibility payments for healthcare;
- Eliminate the excise tax;
- Add a federal public plan option;
- Enact limits on premium increases if insurance companies continue to jack up rates.

4. Will you pledge to enthusiastically support and defend the new healthcare reform law in your campaign, highlight the major improvements in benefits for working families and the importance of healthcare reform to fixing our economy and boosting job creation?

YES NO

Comments: **Since passage of the health reform law, I have worked aggressively to support its implementation by urging major employers in our state to extend coverage to dependents up to age 26, urge the state to implement a high-risk pool, and encourage small businesses to utilize tax credits to provide their employees with affordable coverage. I will continue these efforts.**

5. Will you oppose all efforts to repeal and/or replace the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PL 111-14/8, as amended by the Health Care and Education Act, P.L. 111-152)?

YES NO

Comments: _____

6. Will you pledge to work closely with your governor if he or she supports reform, and challenge your governor and state attorney general if he or she is actively undermining the new law?

YES NO

Comments: **I have repeatedly encouraged Governor Rell and state legislative leaders to implement various provisions of the health reform law.**

Due to the critical problems of understaffing and the practice of mandatory overtime in many hospitals, a staggering number of nurses are leaving for other less-stressful jobs or retiring early. This has created a nursing crisis in our nation's hospitals and other healthcare facilities. The Institute of Medicine has issued a number of reports highlighting the almost 100,000 deaths each year from accidental medical errors and the importance of working conditions, including adequate staffing, in ensuring patient safety. There is also clear evidence that as levels of nurse staffing rise, the quality of care improves and the number of medical errors decreases. SEIU is working to pass legislation at both the state and federal levels that would help address these problems.

7. If elected, would you co-sponsor and support passage of H.R. 2273, the *Nurse Staffing Standards for Patient Safety and Quality Care Act of 2009*, which would establish a federal limit on the maximum hours a nurse can work in most Medicare-funded health facilities?

YES NO

Comments: **As the husband of a nurse practitioner, I am very sympathetic to this issue and the need to support our nursing workforce. I have not studied this bill's implementation and will reserve my response. In the mean time, I will continue to strongly support efforts to increase the nursing workforce, improve workplace protections and augment education and training opportunities for nurses.**

SEIU has helped thousands of healthcare members improve their skills and earnings potential through labor-management partnerships that provide job training and education. These programs address critical shortages in healthcare occupations, particularly filling a growing demand for registered nurses. The federal government should do more to encourage the training and education of healthcare workers and should support employers and unions that work together to train a diverse healthcare workforce for the future.

8. If elected, would you support healthcare worker training legislation such as S. 1512/H.R. 2731, *Nurse Training and Retention Act of 2009*, that funds comprehensive programs to ensure an adequate supply of nurses?

YES NO

Comments: _____

9. If elected, would you support comprehensive legislation that addresses the nationwide shortage of hospital direct care registered nurses, such as the *National Nursing Shortage and Patient Advocacy Act (S.1031/H.R. 2273)* which provides minimum nurse-patient staffing ratios; creates nurse education grants that would help recruit and train direct-care registered nurses and protect direct care registered nurses as patient advocates?

YES NO

Comments: **See answer to question #7.**

The deepest recession in over 75 years may be ending, but high unemployment rates are expected to persist into 2011 and beyond. State and local government budgets have been decimated by falling tax revenues and higher demand for services, including health care services through Medicaid. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) provided states with \$87 billion in relief and aid through enhanced Medicaid matching funds. The House and Senate are expected to come together before the 2010 midterm elections to extend that aid an additional six months at a cost of \$23 billion. However, states and safety net health care providers will continue to need help beyond June 30, 2011 as the high jobless rate continues to depress tax receipts and increase demand for Medicaid.

10. Will you support additional Medicaid relief for state governments to extend the ARRA relief until December 31, 2011?

YES NO

Comments: **I have contacted Congressional leadership to urge the extension of the ARRA's enhanced FMAP to help states like Connecticut.**

Without real reform to our outdated and broken labor laws, healthcare workers and other workers will continue to face egregious behavior by employers during union organizing campaigns. It is wasteful and inappropriate for healthcare providers receiving federal funds through Medicare and other programs to violate the National Labor Relations Act and to use federal funds to support anti-union activity.

11. Will you work with SEIU to introduce legislation to impose sanctions on federally-funded healthcare providers who engage in illegal anti-union activity?

YES NO

Comments: **I support the right for workers to organize under the National Labor Relations Act.**

TAXATION AND FISCAL POLICY

Many of the Bush tax cuts allowed the top 1% of wealthiest families to avoid paying their fair share to help pay for vital public services and national security. SEIU supports tax policies that create

jobs, allows working families to keep more of their hard earned income and helps fund vital public services.

12. If elected, will you support extending tax cuts that are set to expire for low and moderate income families?

YES NO

Comments: _____

13. Will you support ending the Bush tax cuts for wealthy families earning over \$250,000?

YES NO

Comments: _____

14. Will you support putting in place a fair estate tax so that the wealthiest families in this country pay their fair share?

YES NO

Comments: **I have supported legislation to extend the Estate Tax to ensure that the wealthiest families continue to pay their fair share, while allowing for reasonable exemptions for smaller family estates and farms.**

Congress needs to approve *The Streamlined Sales and Use Tax Agreement* which is a compact ratified by 23 states that removes burdens to interstate commerce by simplifying definitions on what is subject to state and local sales taxes; the proposal makes arrangements for large businesses (no matter their physical location) to collect the existing tax where they sell their product (exempts small business) and remit it to the participating taxing authority. This proposal would end the unfair competitive disadvantage faced by bricks and mortar stores and shopping centers and help bring in more than \$20 billion this last year in uncollected tax obligations to cash-strapped states. This bill had strong bi-partisan support in the last Congress with lead sponsors Dorgan and Enzi in the Senate and Delahunt, LaHood and Bachus in the House.

15. If elected, would you support passage of the *Streamlined Sales and Use Tax Agreement*?

YES NO

Comments: **Generally, I support providing states a streamlined and effective system of local and state tax collection. However, I would need to consult with Connecticut officials and closely examine any implementing federal legislation on this issue before taking a position.**

WALL STREET REFORM

16. If elected, would you support legislation that holds Wall St accountable, rebuilds our economy, and helps prevent future taxpayer bailouts by enacting strong consumer financial protections by forcing big banks and credit card companies to provide clear, understandable information and stop abusive lending practices?

YES NO

Comments: **I voted for the House Wall Street Reform bill, and will continue to support strong consumer protections.**

17. If elected, would you support bringing new transparency and accountability to financial dealings and ending the shadow banking system that brought our economy to its knees?

YES NO

Comments: **Since the collapse of our economy, I have been critical of the unregulated subprime mortgages, derivatives trading and other activities that led to our economic collapse. The House-passed Wall Street Reform bill, which I voted for, is an important step in tackling this issue.**

18. If elected, would you support making big banks and financial institutions pay for the bad decisions they make and ensuring that taxpayers are never again responsible for bailing out a financial firm that is deemed too big to fail?

YES NO

Comments: **I voted against the Wall Street Bailout three times. The House-passed Wall Street Reform package, which I voted for, includes provisions to prevent taxpayer funded bailouts of "too big to fail" companies that post systemic risk to our economy.**

RETIREMENT AND SOCIAL SECURITY

19. If elected, would you oppose any attempts to privatize and undermine the overall Social Security system?

YES NO

Comments: _____

20. If elected, would you support reform to strengthen the Social Security system?

YES NO

Comments: _____

Adopted in 1977, the Government Pension Offset reduces the Social Security benefit of public employees with public pensions who are eligible for benefits as a spouse or widow. The offset reduces the amount of the benefit by two-thirds of the individual's public pension. The 1983 Windfall Elimination Provision affects public employees who have worked in a job covered by Social Security and who also have a public pension. Public employees affected by this provision could see their estimated Social Security benefit reduced by as much as half.

21. If elected, would you co-sponsor bipartisan legislation (H.R. 235/S. 484) that reforms the government pension offset and windfall elimination provisions which unfairly penalizes public sector retirees and their families?

YES NO

Comments: **I am a cosponsor of H.R. 235.**

When Social Security was established, state and local government employees were excluded. Many state and local governments then set up their own retirement system with a mirror employee-employer contribution. Federal law was then changed in the mid-1950s and governments were allowed to opt in voluntarily. However, many stayed out, content with their own system of contributions and benefits. Now, there are proposals to mandate the inclusion of all state and local public employees, which would cripple the existing systems (i.e. States could not continue to contribute 8 percent of payroll to their own system if they had to do the same to FICA).

22. If elected, would you oppose proposals to mandate the inclusion of state and local government employees into the Social Security system?

YES NO

Comments: **For decades, state and local level of government employers have created retirement systems to fit the individual needs of their employees. Mandating coverage through Social Security could compromise the solvency of state and local pension plans as well as potentially result in reductions in employee salaries as well as other local and state government services.**

23. Twenty percent of American workers depend for their retirement on defined benefit pension plans. These plans have been severally affected by the financial crisis of 2008 and 2009 which was caused by excessive risk-taking and greed on Wall Street. Will you work with SEIU to seek reasonable relief from the Pension Protection Act to allow these funds more time to rebuild their financial strength?

YES NO

Comments: **I voted for the American Jobs and Closing Tax Loopholes Act (H.R. 4213) which includes provisions that included several pension relief provisions.**

24. The United States is facing a retirement crisis. Defined benefit plans are under stress. Defined contribution 401(k) plans have proven ineffective in building retirement security. And 50 percent of the American workers have not retirement plan at all, other

than Social Security. Will you work with SEIU to pass legislation that will create a retirement system that is universal, secure and adequate?

YES NO

Comments: _____

STATE BUDGETS

States continue to face fiscal pressures from education, Medicaid and other programs. States cannot depend on the temporary federal fiscal or other short-term measures to address their fiscal crises. This situation has been exacerbated by unfunded federal mandates.

25. If elected, would you vote to increase federal funding in education, such as *Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act*, Title I under the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act*, No Child Left Behind, Head Start, Medicaid and other programs where federal mandates are under-funded?

YES NO

Comments: _____

26. If elected, would you support additional efforts to help states address the fiscal crises that are forcing them to cut services and jobs, including voting to make federal payments for Medicaid more immediately and quickly responsive to economic downturns?

YES NO

Comments: _____

27. Eighteen states have agreed to simplify their sales tax definitions and enter into a compact that will eliminate red tape and overhead costs for business, level the playing field for local merchants and provide a mechanism to collect the largely uncollected sales taxes on Internet purchases. This would have amounted to an estimated \$36 billion in extra revenue for state and local governments through 2008 alone. Congress must ratify the compact in order for it to go into effect. If elected, would you vote for the *Sales Tax Simplification and Fairness Act*, which ratifies the interstate compact to simplify sales taxes?

YES NO

Comments: **The collection of state and local sales taxes on internet purchase is a challenging issue. I believe that Congress must closely examine this issue and the**

compact, and I would need to study the issue and consult with officials in the State of Connecticut before taking a position.

PUBLICLY FUNDED SERVICES

Resources for child care assistance help working families get and keep jobs and ensure that their children get a strong start so they can be ready for school. If significant new child care funds are not made available, fewer and fewer working families will get the help they need. Still, federal funds have been frozen for the past several years. States will be forced to continue to cut back eligibility for child care assistance, increase co-payments for the parents who do receive help and cut back on reimbursement rates to already low-paid child care providers. More than two million children receive assistance through the federal child care block grant (Child Care and Development Block Grant or CCDBG). However, estimates indicate that current funding covers only one in seven eligible children.

28. If elected, would you vote to increase working families' access to child care by expanding federal funding for child care assistance and enhance services for children from birth to age three?

YES NO

Comments: _____

29. If elected, would you take steps to help family child care providers win the freedom to form a union and have a voice at work?

YES NO

Comments: _____

Head Start has been around for 35 years and has been proven in many studies to improve the educational chances of low-income children. We know Head Start children are successful and that accountability measures are already built into the program. That notwithstanding, only three out of five eligible children are served by Head Start. The House voted to reauthorize Head Start in 2007. *The Improving Head Start Act of 2007* reauthorized this program for the first time in almost a decade, boosting authorization funding to \$7.4 billion for fiscal year 2008 and such sums as necessary through fiscal year 2012.

30. If elected, would you continue to support increases federal Head Start funding to adequately meet the need for quality Head Start?

YES NO

Comments: _____

The funding for the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) has been flat or decreased over the last decade. In some states, WIA partially funds free services to residents regardless of employment barriers such as disabilities and language barriers, veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan, those with emotional or physical trauma from past wars, parolees and those who have literacy problems.

31. If elected, would you support to reauthorize and increase the funding of the Workforce Investment Act?

YES NO

Comments: _____

Early care and education lays the foundation for children to enter kindergarten ready to learn and succeed in school and life. However, the child care industry suffers from a gross lack of funds and cannot, in its current state, ensure that every child receives a quality early education. One of the greatest challenges is recruiting and retaining qualified early care providers.

32. If elected, would you support legislation aimed at improving the child care workforce through supports such as educational scholarships, training and professional development programs, wage supplements and access to healthcare?

YES NO

Comments: _____

Research shows that contracting out public work generates false savings in public budgets. A significant body of research shows that contractors are much more costly than public employees, work quality is lower and services are compromised.

33. Under what circumstances do you support and/or oppose contracting out of public services traditionally provided by public employees to the private sector?

Comments: **Contracting public services to the private sector must be done open, competitive and fair contracting process that is held accountable through appropriate government oversight. If public services are proposed for private contracting, then the public employees providing those services should be allowed to compete in an open and fair bidding process in which they can demonstrate savings and efficiencies. Ultimately, we must adopt policies that balance the needs and costs of government employees and private contractors, while protecting the taxpayers who use and pay for these services.**

In addition to being the fastest-growing union in North America SEIU is also the largest union of workers who have recently immigrated to the United States. Our strong commitment to comprehensive immigration reform is based on the benefits that such reform would provide to all workers. We need to reform our immigration laws so that they are better adapted to the needs of America's workers in the 21st century global economy.

Immigrants work hard, pay taxes and are essential and productive contributors to our economy and our communities. However, our immigration system has long been broken, resulting in the current situation where millions of unauthorized workers and their families are integrated into our economy and social fabric. Hundreds of thousands of young people who came here years ago as undocumented children have grown up in our schools and neighborhoods and now have little or no connection to their countries of origin. Realistically, these individuals are not going anywhere and it would benefit all of us if they were to have some viable mechanism to get right with the law. It is also essential to reform the legal immigration system so that future workers come here legally and the same situation does not recur.

For these reasons there is an urgent need for comprehensive immigration reform that includes the following features:

- Earned legalization: A realistic and expeditious mechanism whereby the estimated twelve million undocumented persons currently living in the United States can get right with the law. The programs under consideration in Congress would require workers to pay a significant fine and back taxes, undergo a background check and go to the back of the line of others who are waiting to enter the country legally;
- Future flow: Replace the current undocumented flow of workers, with a legal and regulated flow so that in the future all workers will be legal workers. Any new worker visa program must include portability of visas so that workers can change jobs, have the right to join unions and have full labor and civil rights protections, have the right to bring immediate family members with them and the ability to self-petition for permanent residency and citizenship. SEIU supports the idea of a standing commission to study and regulate the worker visa system to ensure that there is a close match between the number and types of visas that are available and the needs of our economy;
- Border enforcement: Improved border enforcement that is accountable to border communities and undertaken without compromising due process and other core American values;
- Interior enforcement: Interior enforcement that is consistent with our values as a nation and designed to obtain results rather than terrorizing and dividing communities. SEIU supports judicial review, access to the federal courts and limited and humane detention. Solely in the context of comprehensive immigration reform, we support a revamped mandatory employment verification system that is accurate, protects privacy and is not subject to misuse by employers;
- Labor law enforcement: Vigorous labor and civil rights enforcement that reduces the incentive for employers to employ unauthorized immigrants;

- Family unity: Elimination of the family backlog and an increased number of visas to reunite families; and
- Sending countries: Bi-lateral partnerships with other countries to encourage real economic development so that workers don't have to leave their country of origin in order to support themselves and their families.

34. If elected, would you support comprehensive immigration reform along the lines of the bulleted immigration principles listed above?

YES NO

Comments: **Many of the priorities listed above, whether taken up in one comprehensive bill or separately, deserve support.**

Congress' failure to date to pass comprehensive immigration reform has opened the door to politicians and commentators who fan the flames of intolerance, demagoguery and xenophobia. History has shown that when communities face economic insecurity, racial and ethnic hostilities are often the unfortunate responses in the absence of real solutions. Elected officials have often attempted to respond to this dynamic by ramping up enforcement without reforming the underlying immigration system and they have typically done so in an untargeted manner that fails to consider the impact on communities and on other societal goals. This enforcement-only approach has been tried for more than two decades now and it has failed to solve any of our immigration problems, as well as feeding the forces of intolerance rather than moderate them.

Until we solve our immigration problems by enacting comprehensive reform, it is important to prevent enactment of policies that will make things even worse for all workers and support those that would make our system a little more sane and humane. For example, it is important for all workers, regardless of immigration status, to have recourse to full and fair workplace protections. Otherwise employers can violate those laws with impunity by hiring workers who are not covered. The same applies to criminal and public safety laws. Those laws are fatally weakened if immigrants are unable to step forward to assist local law enforcement without fear.

In general, with so many unauthorized immigrants, enforcement resources should be used in a manner that is consistent with efforts to promote other worthwhile objectives such as reducing crime and raising the wages and working conditions of all workers. Therefore, immigration enforcement resources are best focused on the prosecution of criminals and smugglers rather than ordinary immigrants and workplace enforcement should target bad-apple employers who violate workplace laws such as minimum wage and health and safety rules.

35. If elected, would you reject the un-targeted, enforcement-only approach to immigration legislation that sinks more money and resources into futile efforts to enforce our broken system without enacting the reforms necessary to fix that system?

YES NO

Comments: _____

The enforcement-only approach also includes efforts to impose mandatory electronic employment verification in advance of comprehensive immigration reform. Under federal law, employers are responsible for verifying the immigration status of their workers. The I-9 paper verification system that has been in place since 1986 is obviously inadequate and the voluntary E-Verify system that was adopted as a pilot project that same year is plagued by inaccuracy and employer misuse that has resulted in privacy violations and discrimination against lawful workers.

SEIU supports a revamped employment verification system that addresses these problems as an essential part of comprehensive reform. But such a program in advance of comprehensive reform is doomed to failure in that it would only induce the millions of unauthorized workers already living and working here - and their employers - to find ways to get around the system. This will cause harmful consequences for all workers, including paying cash to avoid detection. Efforts to cut corners — for example by making the seriously flawed E-Verify system mandatory or forcing layoffs due to Social Security mismatches — are an even worse idea because they would victimize so many authorized workers. All of these proposals would disadvantage law abiding employers who are paying taxes and attempting to verify employment status, but will not affect those who operate in the “underground” economy. For that reason, the principle impact of such proposals would be to accelerate growth in the underground economy and to drive unauthorized workers even further underground into the unregulated cash economy.

36. If elected, would you support a revamped mandatory employment verification system that is accurate, protects privacy and is not subject to misuse by employers; but oppose efforts -before comprehensive immigration is enacted- to make the flawed E-Verify program mandatory or to force layoffs based on Social Security number mismatches that apply to many U.S. citizens and authorized workers?

YES NO

Comments: **We need a verification system that is fair to all stakeholders.**

Finally, the DREAM Act is an example of humane and sane policies that should be enacted immediately as part of comprehensive reform, or immediately if comprehensive immigration is delayed for any reason. Under the DREAM Act, young people who were brought to the U.S. as undocumented children years ago would be able to obtain a six-year temporary “conditional” legal status upon high school graduation if they have stayed in school and maintained good moral character. The conditional status would be convertible to permanent residency and citizenship if, during the six-years, they complete at least two years of college or serve in the U.S. military for at least two years. The young people affected by the DREAM Act tend to be over-achieving students, honors students, prize winners, class leaders. These hard-working individuals would contribute enormously to our joint future if given half a chance.

37. If elected, would you support and will you cosponsor the DREAM Act?

YES NO

Comments: **I believe that we must balance enforcement of our immigration laws with the reality that the children of illegal immigrants had no choice in the decision to come to our country. The status of hard-working children who have the opportunity to contribute to our nation should be considered as part of immigration reform.**

Child Nutrition Reauthorization—Healthy Workers, Healthy Food, Healthy Kids

SEIU members are working hard to strengthen school nutrition programs and to improve children's participation rates in these programs through the Child Nutrition Act Reauthorization.

At the same time they are fighting hard for children, food-service workers are the lowest paid workers in our children's schools. In addition to low wages, many school food service workers do not have access to affordable health insurance or paid sick days, which forces them to choose between losing a day's pay and coming to work sick. These low wages and lack of affordable health coverage and paid sick leave lead to a disturbing reality: Many of the workers that are critical to the success of one of the nation's most effective anti-poverty programs are forced to live in poverty themselves. These conditions also lead to high turnover rates in the industry, undermining efforts to maintain the stable and well-trained workforce that is needed to prepare and serve our nation's children meals that are healthy, safe and nutritious.

38. If elected, would you support action by the Federal government to address this problem, including a pilot program to raise wages and benefits for contracted workers in the Child Nutrition Reauthorization?

YES NO

Comments: I have also spoken with Chairman George Miller about the need for such a pilot program after hearing from SEIU members and staff about the difficulties they face.

39. If elected, would you support mandatory paid sick days for all school nutrition workers at K12 facilities?

YES NO

Comments: I am a cosponsor of HR 2460, which ensures that employers provide paid sick days to their employees.

The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) promotes good nutrition for millions of children each working day, as well as making daily care for the elderly an affordable option for low-income families. CACFP reimbursements help Head Start and child care providers, who are often low-income themselves, afford the healthy foods children need to grow and learn. CACFP also improves the overall quality of early care and learning programs through annual trainings, group classes and onsite technical assistance on child nutrition and food safety. Studies show that children who are cared for by providers accessing CACFP eat more nutritious foods than children in early childhood settings without CACFP. Right now, CACFP is more important than ever. During this economic downturn, more and more children are coming to early childhood settings hungry; at the same time, childhood obesity remains a problem. Still, caregivers continue to drop out of CACFP primarily because of low reimbursements and excessive paperwork.

40. If elected, would you support strengthening and improving the CACFP program by improving access, increasing reimbursements and expanding opportunities for providing additional nutritious meals?

YES NO

Comments: **I am a cosponsor of the Access to Nutritious Meal for Young Children Act (H. R. 4402) introduced by Rep. Paul Tonko. I have been working with him and other advocates to include this legislation in the 2010 Reauthorization of the Child Nutrition Act.**

Federal Procurement Reform

Federal contracting has ballooned since the beginning of the Bush administration: goods and services contracting totaled over \$500 billion in 2008, more than double the level in 2000 and equal to over three percent of the total U.S. economy.

The largest growth in federal contract work has been in the service sector, where jobs often pay low wages and provide few benefits. The Economic Policy Institute (EPI) has conservatively estimated that there were 2 million federal contract workers in 2006, representing 43 percent of all civilian employees who do work for the government either directly or under contract. Nearly 20 percent of these contract workers earn less than the poverty threshold wage of \$9.91 per hour and fully 40 percent of earn less than a livable wage. A substantial portion of this group lacks affordable health insurance.

In addition to their failure to pay their workers livable wages or provide affordable healthcare benefits, many federal contractors are socially irresponsible employers that have histories of lawbreaking, such as tax evasion, fraud and labor law violations. The result is that taxpayer dollars go to lawbreaking companies that deny millions of Americans a chance to enter the middle class.

41. Do you agree that prospective bidders for federal contracts should be required to report violations of workplace laws (e.g., occupational safety and health or wage and hour laws) and tax laws as part of their bid and that contracting officers should take these reports into consideration when awarding government contracts?

YES NO

Comments: _____

42. If elected, would you support the inclusion of workplace practices such as the provision of health benefits, paid sick days and retirement benefits and the payment of living wages as part of determining "best value" in evaluating bids for government contracts?

YES NO

Comments: _____

Standards for Security Contractors

In its report on the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks, the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks, also known as the 9/11 Commission, concluded that “the ‘first’ first responders on 9/11, as in most catastrophes, were private-sector civilians.” The NITC also observed “because 85 percent of our nation’s critical infrastructure is controlled not by government but by the private sector, private-sector civilians are likely to be the first responders in any future catastrophes.” Independent experts credited the actions and the preparedness of the World Trade Center security officers with “saving countless lives.” These officers were members of SEIU 32BJ and had undergone extensive training.

The importance of preparedness was evidenced again during the June 10, 2009 attack on the Holocaust Museum in Washington, DC. The quick response and heroic actions of the well-trained security personnel was again credited by authorities as having saved many lives. While the officers at these sites were well prepared to do their job, this has not been the case with many other security contractors, where the failure to provide training and the financial collapse of the security agency has left many high-profile sites vulnerable. No federal security agency licensing standards exist and there are significant shortfalls in many state regulatory standards.

43. With 85 percent of our nation’s Critical Infrastructure and Key Resource (CIKR) sites operated and secured by the private sector, if elected, would you support the implementation of security agency licensing guidelines as an integral part of any “first-responder” strategy?

YES NO

Comments: _____

44. The guidelines would include background checks for executives and insurance and bonding requirements along with security officer training. If elected, would you support baseline national regulatory standards that would govern the licensing of all security agencies and officers, even at sites that have not been designated as CIKR?

YES NO

Comments: _____

Transforming our economy through renewable energy, energy efficiency, mass transit and rail, a new smart grid and other solutions to global warming, has the potential to create millions of jobs, while reducing global warming emissions and moving America toward energy independence.

The workforce of this emerging green economy must have all the necessary tools, knowledge and training to successfully work in this burgeoning sector and safeguards must be put in place to make sure that new jobs created are good middle-class jobs that help lead us on the path to economic recovery. *The Green Jobs Act* of 2007 provides an optimal framework for training and implementation of these new green jobs in a fair and equitable manner.

Energy saved is just as important as energy produced. Energy efficiency saves people and businesses money, reduces our reliance on fossil fuels and creates jobs. But programs that promote retrofitting of commercial office and residential buildings must also focus on the continued operations and maintenance in order to realize their full energy and cost-saving potential.

45. If elected, would you support allocating a significant portion of allowances in the *American Clean Energy and Security Act* to fund programs authorized under the *Green Jobs Act of 2007*?

YES NO

Comments: _____

46. If elected, would you support wage-and-benefit provisions in federal energy and environmental legislation that guarantees that all new jobs funded in part or in whole by the federal government pay fair wages and benefits and that contractors pay a living wage and abide by responsible contracting principles?

YES NO

Comments: _____

47. If elected, would you support funding federal grant programs to promote joint labor-management efforts—such as those underway at the SEIU 32BJ Thomas Shortman Training Fund in New York City—to train a green job workforce to monitor and maintain operational efficiency in commercial and residential buildings?

YES NO

Comments: _____

