

AFL-CIO Presidential Questionnaire

America's working people have lived through decades of stagnant and falling wages. We seek to support candidates for public office who have concrete plans to reform our economy so that working people share in the wealth we create. These questions are not "check the box" questions. They are invitations to share your thoughts with us about how you intend to raise wages.

However, policy positions cannot be separated from the people who will formulate and carry out policy. 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 understand that no matter how strong my commitment is to standing up for working people, the company I keep is indicative of how sincerely I will champion their rights.

Assembling the wrong team has consequences. In the past, misguided advisors have pursued policies that deregulated Wall Street, weakened regulations that protect against workplace hazards, and negotiated secret trade agreements that prioritized corporate profits over wages for working people.

Assembling the right team is the only way to ensure the policies I pursue truly create conditions for broad-based prosperity. I would look to establish new leadership, calling on advisers who have advocated for financial reform and stood up to the biggest banks; to economists who have warned of the growing dangers of inequality and bad trade deals, and designed strategies to reverse them; to labor experts who have lobbied for better wage policies and a stronger voice for workers; and to others who share my commitment to protecting working people and their families.

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

For the vast majority of our fellow citizens, the American Dream is slipping out of reach. Making it true again will require us to return to the better choices we long made as a country to allow workers to capture the gains of their extraordinary productivity. To do this, we must fundamentally rebalance our economy so that it works for everyone, not just the wealthy few.

First, to directly lift wages and incomes, my administration would call for a \$15 federal minimum wage, indexed to inflation, and – if DOL does not first finalize its rule – would expand overtime pay to those earning less than \$1,000 a week. Because no family should have to choose between work and taking care of their children, I would fight for laws that guarantee all workers access to paid maternity leave and paternity leave, while also expanding access to safe and affordable childcare. And I would stand firmly with workers

and their right to collectively bargain for higher wages and other protections. There is no question that the decline of unionization over the last 30 years has fueled growing inequality and stagnating wages, and that the steps states are taking to wipe out unions—including public sector unions—are failed choices.

Second, my administration would restore investments in the common good and future of our nation, especially in education. We cannot revitalize our economy without creating an education system that empowers each and every child to reach their full potential, from pre-kindergarten through college. Nor can we build a competitive economy without robust investments in infrastructure, innovation, and new industries, which I have outlined in the questions below.

Finally, I would restore funding for these better choices and investments by rebalancing our tax system so that the wealthiest Americans – not just middle class families – pay their fair share. This includes setting higher marginal rates, taxing capital gains and income at the same rate, passing corporate tax reform, instituting a financial transaction tax, and making other long-overdue reforms. We must also restore accountability to our financial markets and reverse the failed policies that led to deregulation and wealth accumulation. That's why I have called for real structural and accountability reforms for Wall Street, including reinstating Glass-Steagall, charging regulators with holding law-breakers accountable, and breaking up big banks before they break us. These steps must be an explicit part of any agenda to revitalize the economy and make it work for all families.

We employed all of these policies in Maryland, putting the goal of a stronger middle class at the center of every decision we made. We raised the minimum wage, and passed the nation's first living wage. We made record investments in public education to make our schools the best in the nation, and invested more in infrastructure, research and development. We made our tax code far more progressive. And our choices and investments made Maryland one of the top states for upward economic mobility for families, with the highest median income in the nation, the best public schools in the country, and a faster rate of job creation than our neighbors in Virginia or Pennsylvania who mostly tried to cut their way to prosperity.

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?

My administration would expand Social Security benefits, not cut them. We are the most prosperous country the world has ever seen. In an economy that is increasingly out of balance towards the most privileged, we must expand Social Security so seniors can retire with dignity. We should not allow for cutting benefits, privatization, raising the retirement age, or means testing.

I would expand Social Security benefits by lifting the payroll tax cap for the highest earners, starting at \$250,000. Right now, millionaires are essentially done paying into Social Security by mid-February. Those in that upper income range can afford to contribute more to strengthen one of our most cherished programs. I would also modify the formula that determines the level of benefits that seniors receive, so lower and middle-income beneficiaries receive increased benefits.

These are critical steps, because we know for a fact that 401(k)s won't leave enough for many seniors to live on in retirement. The recession took its toll on families' ability to save and plan adequately, and further weakened state pension systems, including the one I inherited in Maryland. As a result, we had to implement balanced reforms that brought the pension system back on the path to fiscal health, while protecting the collective bargaining rights and retirement security of state employees. This was tremendously difficult, but we got it done not by demonizing teachers and state workers, as other states have, but by bringing them to the table. That's important because, after a lifetime of hard work, all retirees deserve to collect on the promises that were made to them.

I have always fought to ensure the rights and benefits of Maryland workers. My administration will do the same for all public employees.

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?

I will not be silent when it comes to workers' rights to organize. When Republican governors or legislatures attack workers and their unions, I will stand with you and rally to your defense. Nor will I be silent about the fact that, as a country, we've stood aside for generations as corporate interests dismantled collective bargaining rights, punctured the safety net, and are now attacking policies like workers compensation and prevailing wages laws. While every Congress passes legislation to make it easier for businesses to operate, it has been 80 years since we've passed major legislation defending – and strengthening – workers' fundamental right to organize.

New labor legislation is far overdue. I would champion legislation to make it easier for workers to gain union representation by modernizing the organizing process, strengthening the enforcement power of the NLRB, and creating tougher penalties for employers who violate the law and stand in the way of democracy in their workplace.

The workplace in our modern, digital, sharing economy looks very different than it did 80 years ago. Our labor laws should reflect that, guaranteeing more people, not fewer, the right to organize. This includes lifting up alt-labor organizations, workers' centers, and collaborative labor-management models to allow them to flourish and strengthen their fights on behalf of workers.

Short of legislation, there is an enormous amount the president can do to empower workers, and I would employ the full force of my executive authority as president. I would

appoint strong advocates to agencies like the NLRB, EEOC, and DOL who will advocate for the best interests of working people. And I would strengthen President Obama's executive orders for federal contractors, to raise their minimum wage to \$15 an hour and give preference in competitive contracts to model employers. I would also dedicate real resources to enforcement, crack down on misclassification and wage and hour violations, fight to raise civil penalties for labor violations, and ensure that investigators are engaging in strategic enforcement so that they can prevent violations before they happen.

However, strengthening workers' rights is only half of the equation. We must face head-on the consolidation of corporate wealth and power that has led to poorer worker conditions and stagnating wages. I would fight for measure to hold companies responsible for how they treat their workers – including workers whom they *effectively* employ through contractors, franchisees, or third-parties. I would reject bad, secret trade deals. And I would aggressively enforce our nation's anti-trust laws and hold Wall Street accountable.

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

I have been vocal in my opposition to both the TPP and fast track, and I would do the same as president. As a nation, I believe that we must reject bad trade deals like fast-track and the TPP that hurt middle class wages and ship middle class jobs overseas. I would only support a trade deal that is truly fair—one that puts workers first, protects consumers over corporate profits, and makes restoring balanced trade between partners an explicit goal. That would require real, strong, and enforceable standards, like cracking down on currency manipulation and labor and environmental violations, as well as tying agreements to domestic investments that strengthen the American economy.

The TPP is a bad deal in part because the largest corporations have used the agreement to rewrite the rules of the global economy – and further benefit themselves at workers' expense. Most notably, the investor-state dispute settlement provision gives corporations more power to circumvent labor and environmental protections, including in the United States. This continues the decades-long trend of deregulation and corporate consolidation that have concentrated wealth and power at the very top, as almost never before in our nation's history.

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?

I believe that our economy will have reached full employment when everyone who wants to work can find a good-paying job; when the employment rate for women, young people and communities of color do not lag behind; and when wages are rising for all workers.

Unfortunately, policymakers have not always prioritized full employment in the past. With this I mind, I would appoint a Chair and Vice-Chair of the Federal Reserve who appreciates

the institution's dual mandate, and would not raise interest rates until wages are consistently rising at a healthy rate or inflation appears immediately on the horizon.

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?

I believe this question answers itself: we must use every tool at our disposal to lift wages, so that American workers capture the gains of their extraordinary productivity. I have outlined above how I would use labor market policies, tax policies, monetary policy, and public investments to achieve this critical goal.

Fiscal policy is also important. As a nation, we can be both fiscally responsible and make the investments necessary to build an economy that works for everyone. The biggest deficit we face as a country is our divestments in education, transportation, innovation – and in the cities and communities that drive our economic growth. I respect the decisions the Obama Administration has made to bring the federal budget into greater balance, but I am concerned that some were made at the expense of doing more to create jobs and train American workers to succeed in those jobs. We must make greater investments, and do so in a fair and progressive way.

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?

As Governor, I urged Congress to pass comprehensive immigration reform, and I would forcefully do the same as president. Bringing undocumented immigrants out of the shadows will grow the economy, create new jobs, and expand our tax base – benefiting the country as a whole. It will help all our workers by lifting wages and driving improved labor standards by preventing employers from taking advantage of immigrants' undocumented status and exploiting them. I know the power of this approach from personal experience. In Maryland – even without federal action – we passed the DREAM Act, expanded access to drivers' licenses, launched a New Americans Commission, and provided refuge for more migrant children per capita than any other state.

That's why, while we continue to advocate for comprehensive reform, we can't wait for Congress to act. My administration would also use executive action to the fullest extent of our authority: to expand deferred arrival programs to all those covered by the Senate's 2013 bill; to end detention, especially for families and children; to ensure due process; and to make prosecutorial discretion meaningful, by examining every case to assess whether individuals are eligible to remain in the U.S. and contribute to their family and community. I look forward to unveiling this agenda for administrative relief in mid-July.

In Maryland, we also addressed incarceration, focusing especially on supporting and expanding efforts to help formerly incarcerated individuals re-enter their communities. We

provided identification cards to parolees, allowing them to secure housing and employment. We increased drug treatment and job training, developing partnerships to provide medical and mental health services both pre- and post- release. We also targeted both enforcement and additional supports toward violent and repeat offenders, while decriminalizing possession of marijuana so law enforcement officials could focus on serious crimes. We automatically expunged records of arrests that did not lead to criminal charges. And we restored voting rights to 52,000 felons. Through these and other measures, we achieved a public safety trifecta: driving down crime to a 30-year low, incarceration to a 20-year low, while at the same time reducing recidivism by nearly 20 percent.

This would be a model I would expand throughout our nation, because unequal access to justice and opportunity has created an economy that leaves far too many people behind.

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?

Yes – and as president I would lead the fight to strengthen collective bargaining rights for public sector workers, just as I did as Governor. In Maryland, I expanded public sector collective bargaining rights to thousands of additional state workers, and to home health aides and childcare workers whose pay is subsidized by the state. I also signed a Fair Share Act so that public employee unions, including in higher education institutions, can do their job representing the voices of their members.

I applaud labor's efforts to continue organizing and engaging new and existing members, even in the face of attacks by Republican governors and legislatures in the states – and even in light of what I agree was a bad decision in *Harris v. Quinn*. These cases – especially *Friederichs v. California Teachers' Association* – have nothing to do with the rights of workers. They are sleazy campaigns bought and paid for by powerful interest groups who don't want public employees to have a voice. We have to use every tool at our disposal to continue making progress.

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?

First, we must stop negotiating and entering into bad trade deals like the TPP that send U.S. jobs and manufacturing abroad. Our trade rules should help to level the playing field for U.S. manufacturers by addressing currency manipulation and unfair trading practices by other governments, which distort the global economy and place U.S. firms at a distinct disadvantage. They should also set – and enforce – higher labor and environment standards across the globe. Our own high standards should make us more competitive, not less, but for too long we've let corporations engage in a global race to the bottom.

Second, we must foster and invest in industries where the United States has a competitive advantage in manufacturing. Clean energy is first among those, which is why I have

promised to make transitioning to a clean energy economy supported by millions of good-paying jobs a top priority as president. We must also restore investment in the roads, rails, ports, and other infrastructure necessary to support and grow American manufacturing. And we should restore federal funding for basic scientific research, which drives innovation in products that can be manufactured competitively in the U.S.

Third, we must lower barriers to entry for smaller manufacturers. That requires us to aggressively enforce our nation's antitrust laws: as a few bigger firms have wrested control over the bulk of our manufacturing market, they've made it harder for smaller firms to compete and enter. We must also curb the relentless corporate drive for quarterly profits, which comes at the expense of long-term, strategic innovation and investment.

Finally, we must encourage high-road and collaborative labor practices. Manufacturing workers often have important ideas on how to improve products, reduce waste, and shorten assembly lines. But they must be empowered to speak up in the workplace, and be given incentives that allow them to benefit from their own innovations.

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 21st century infrastructure technology?

Repairing, upgrading, and modernizing our nation's infrastructure will require an historic federal investment – one that can only be made using both public programs and other financing tools. My administration would restore the Highway Trust Fund, while redoubling successful competitive grant programs. I would also look to credit and loan guarantee programs; to bonding programs, for both transportation infrastructure and green building construction and retrofits; and to other programs that support public-private partnerships, including an infrastructure bank. Whenever we leverage private dollars to build public projects, I would first protect high-road labor standards, as we did through our P3 statute in Maryland.

In Maryland, after kicking the can down the road for 20 years, we raised the gas tax and indexed it to inflation during my administration as Governor. It wasn't easy or popular, but we built the consensus needed to move forward: Without the increase, Maryland wouldn't have been able to afford even basic transportation maintenance, yet alone the new, resilient, and cleaner infrastructure needed to keep our state's economy competitive. However, as a result of our better choices, we were able to invest \$4.4 billion in new transportation projects – while also pushing forward local, state, federal, and private partnerships to build new mass transit projects in our state.

These steps will help close our national infrastructure deficit, but that alone is not enough. To claim global leadership in infrastructure technology, I have proposed a comprehensive jobs and investment agenda for our renewable energy future. The agenda, which is detailed further below, includes proposals to retrofit federal buildings to the highest efficiency

standards and require new federal buildings to be net-zero; to set strong “MPG” efficiency standards for new buildings; to launch a Clean Energy Financing Authority to support clean energy infrastructure and resiliency upgrades nationwide; to modernize our electric grid; and to increase investment in basic clean energy research so the U.S. can lead in energy development and deployment.

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?

I believe that clean energy represents the biggest business and job creation opportunity we’ve seen in a hundred years. Given the grave threat that climate change poses to our communities, we have not only a business imperative but a moral obligation to future generations to act immediately and aggressively.

Within 35 years, our country can and should be 100% powered by clean energy, supported by millions of new, good-paying jobs. But we have to accelerate the transition right now.

As President, I would use my executive authority to train and support workers to lead the transition to clean energy. First and foremost, I would create a new Clean Energy Job Corps to partner with communities to retrofit buildings, improve local resiliency, and deploy technology and infrastructure. I would also partner with industry to help meet workers’ skills and employment needs in the clean energy economy. And I would keep domestically produced oil and gas in the U.S., instead of selling it abroad. These actions are fundamental to supporting the workers and communities who will be impacted by the transition to a clean energy economy.

Beyond executive actions, I would make clean energy deployment – and full employment – a first order priority. I would set a national, cross-sector Renewable Electricity Standard so our nation is powered by 100% clean energy by 2050, and a national goal of doubling energy efficiency within 15 years. I would fight for federal legislation for a cap on carbon emissions from all sources, with proceeds from permits returned to lower- and middle-class families, job transition assistance, and new jobs with the Clean Energy Corps. And I would make the critical investments in infrastructure and technology outlined in the question above.

Finally, I understand that we cannot abandon communities that are dependent on fossil fuels. We must invest in these communities through job-training programs, and by creating a strong safety net for all workers. And we must do everything we can to protect the retirement security of the miners and others who have laid their lives on the line to power our country. These workers must also be provided with access to quality health care.

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?

No Child Left Behind must be reauthorized. I support the Senate's current reauthorization proposal, which has preserved the integrity of the bill while avoiding the most extreme Republican amendment attempts. However, there are a number of areas where the law needs improvements – most notably, a requirement for turning around our lowest-performing schools. As a nation, we must commit to concentrating federal dollars where the need is greatest, including in the communities with the most underperforming schools and vulnerable students. I also strongly support amendments to the reauthorization that will help states boost the quality of and access to early childhood education.

Together with increased investment, these efforts will help to strengthen of our public education system – not only as a way for all children to prepare themselves for economic success, but as a way to stronger neighborhoods, healthier communities, and a more engaged citizenry and informed electorate. That is why I oppose vouchers for private schools, and the expanded use of tax credits to support private school tuition.

I am very concerned about the rapidly growing student debt crisis, and put forward a plan for addressing it earlier this spring. Specifically, I called for Congress to give student borrowers the right to refinance their loans at lower interest rates, and to make income-based repayment the default for all borrowers. To prevent colleges from raising tuition further, I proposed holding institutions that receive federal aid accountable for directing it toward the students who need it most. Our ultimate goal must be to make college debt-free for all students, and I plan to release a more comprehensive plan for achieving that vision as early as next week.

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 oppose efforts to weaken or undermine the postal service. The USPS provides a critical public good, including for families and business owners across the country who live or work where private shippers do not operate. We should provide the USPS with more flexibility to provide services, not less, including postal banking. This would not only strengthen the postal service, it would provide greater financial security to the 68 million Americans who are unbanked or have limited access to financial services. And any reform proposal should address major drivers of the postal service's financial crisis, chief among them the Congressional mandate that the service prefund 75 years' worth of retiree health benefits over just 10 years.

What direct steps would you take as an employer and as a contractor to raise living standards and ensure compliance with labor law?

As indicated above, I would do everything in my power, through aggressive executive action, to make the federal government a model employer and contractor. I would strengthen President Obama's minimum wage executive order to set a minimum wage of \$15 an hour for all federal contractors. I would enact a Good Jobs Executive Order, giving preference in competitive federal contracts to model employers. That includes firms that offer a living wage, benefits including health insurance and sick leave, full-time hours, and fair and stable work schedules; and that have a strong record of compliance with workplace safety and wage laws. And I would require employers that do business with the government to allow their workers to bargain collectively for decent treatment and working conditions, without being forced to go on strike.

To guide this work, I would look to the example we set in Maryland. We expanded the use of Project Labor Agreements, and passed the nation's first living wage law for contractors. And when we laid out legislation governing public-private partnerships, we made clear that all P3 projects would be bound by prevailing and living wage laws in our state.

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

My administration would dedicate real resources to enforcement, as we did in Maryland, where we passed a law to give the state more tools to address workplace fraud. As president, I would first engage in strategic enforcement. It is not enough for investigators to chase quarterly metrics or simply respond to complaints of violations. By focusing on smaller number of bigger cases, enforcement agencies can deter and prevent employers from breaking the law. I would also call for higher fines and civil penalties, and ensure that enforcement agencies have the staff they need to get the job done.

Further, I support efforts to hold companies accountable for how they treat their workers – including workers whom they effectively employ through contractors, franchisees, third-party management, or other loopholes. Among other measures, this could include redefining the definition of “employer” to make companies liable for the workers they push to third parties but still effectively control; or updating the definition of “joint employer” under the Fair Labor Standards Act to hold companies responsible for the labor law violations of their franchisees.

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?**

I agree that a high quality healthcare system is a “moral imperative, an economic necessity, and a fundamental right for all.” The Affordable Care Act is an important step in realizing that goal. My administration would build on the successes of the Affordable Care Act while being ready, as always, to support smart changes that can better provide high quality

coverage and control costs. Our guiding principle would always be the triple aim: better patient experience, lower costs, and improved outcomes.

One underappreciated aspect of the Affordable Care Act is its support for innovative models of health care delivery in payment. In Maryland, we adopted a creative approach with our unique hospital rate setting commission: We obtained approval to put our hospitals on global budgets covering all payers, creating a strong incentive to reduce preventable admissions and keep patients and communities healthy. We just learned that Maryland hospitals generated more than \$100 million in Medicare savings during the first year of this system, making it a national model for reducing costs while improving care.

However, where the ACA has had unintended consequences, we must be prepared to evaluate the law and consider necessary changes. For instance, I'm concerned by reports that companies are reducing hours for certain works to avoid paying them health insurance. This is obviously not what was intended by the law. I am also very concerned about the ACA having the unintended consequence of disadvantaging multi-employer plans relative to the exchange. I support providing equivalent subsidies to multi-employer plans, so people can keep getting coverage from trusted sources. I would bring together experts and the agencies to create a plan for achieving this goal.

Similarly, we must have the courage to look at the most recent data and consider necessary changes to the excise tax on generous benefit plans. While the tax was intended to discourage very costly employer-based health plans, they may affect far more people than expected and make it more difficult for individuals to get important, comprehensive medical coverage. And because some employees have received better health care plans in exchange for wage increases, the excise tax could have the unfortunate affect of depressing incomes for middle class families.

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?

Our democracy depends on greater participation, yet in recent years we have sharply limited access to our most fundamental right. My administration would push to restore the Voting Rights Act and tear down barriers to voting like ID requirements. This includes giving strong support to legislation that would (a) update the Voting Rights Act formula for determining which states must pre-clear changes to their voting laws, and (b) allow all states to stop discriminatory changes before they are implemented. The legislation recently introduced by Sen. Patrick Leahy and Rep. John Lewis, which I have endorsed, takes the right approach, creating significant new tools to prevent and address discriminatory election policies nationwide.

I would also work to modernize voting and voter registration to make it easier for more people to vote. We did this in Maryland, establishing on-site early voting and same-day registration, as well as online voter registration. We restored voting rights to more than 50,000 people with criminal records, and made it easier for young people to vote. I support

all of these policies at the federal level, in addition to universal voter registration. And I applaud the Supreme Court's recent upholding Arizona's independent redistricting commission. While we did not move unilaterally in Maryland, I believe that it would be beneficial if every state together made Congressional redistricting a non-partisan process.

Finally, I support a constitutional amendment reversing *Citizens United* and *Buckley*. But, I also recognize that we can't afford to wait for a Constitutional amendment to restore our democracy. We can address the *Citizens United* decision by bringing greater transparency to our elections. That includes updating the rules governing disclosure to ensure that big special interest spending is reported, as well as charging and empowering federal regulators to block unlawful outside spending. Even more important, we must return to a government where all voters' voices are heard. Runaway election spending forces candidates to listen to big money donors over the voters they claim to represent. We should embrace citizen-funded elections, giving candidates the opportunity to raise a larger number of smaller contributions from people back home.

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.

I have always stood with workers seeking to organize or press for better working conditions and benefits, and I would do the same as president.

As Governor, I granted collective bargaining rights to home health aides and child care workers first by executive order, then worked to codify the protections into law. We recognized that the health workers, whose pay was subsidized by the state, nevertheless earned very low wages and few benefits, and were offered limited opportunities for training. In the executive orders, I wrote that these workers needed a voice. We also expanded collective bargaining rights to more state workers in transportation and education, and signed Fair Share legislation that protected public employees.

When the workers who clean Baltimore's stadium demanded better pay, I endorsed their call for a living wage. We then passed a living wage that covered all those who contract with the state. When concession workers at BWI airport were grandfathered out of paying living wages, I pressed them honor the new law anyway.

And as Mayor of Baltimore, I supported the University of Maryland Medical System's employees in their bid to unionize – because SEIU was with me, and so I stood with SEIU.