

GCAP's 2018 Candidates' Questionnaire

Dear Senatorial Candidate:

As a candidate for Pennsylvania State Senate in the 2018 election, the General Contractors Association of Pennsylvania (GCAP) is interested in learning more about you and your stance on issues affecting the construction industry. The information that you provide will be shared with members of GCAP and other construction industry stakeholders.

GCAP is an organization representing the memberships of General Building Contractors Association (based in Philadelphia), Keystone Contractors Association (based in Harrisburg), and Master Builders' Association of Western PA (based in Pittsburgh). Collectively, GCAP represents over 600-plus commercial construction companies based throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Since 1953, GCAP has been a strong, unified voice in Harrisburg representing major contributors to employment and economic growth in Pennsylvania.

As for completing this questionnaire, please feel free to answer the questions on these pages, adding pages as needed for expanded comments, or you may submit your answers on a separate document included with this questionnaire. Responses can be sent to: sethkohr@keystonecontractors.com or by mail to General Contractors Association of PA, 20 Erford Road, Suite 310, Lemoyne, PA 17043.

We would appreciate responses by Friday, August 31, 2018.

Candidate's Signature: Michael Folmer

Introduction

As leaders representing the commercial construction industry, GCAP is interested in hearing your legislative priorities. Why should the construction industry show support for you?

I am pro-business. I want to help, and have been helping to make Pennsylvania a business friendly state which would promote construction of various businesses and homes.

Economy

Everyone benefits from a strong economy. How can your priorities grow the economy in Pennsylvania?

We need to make sure that we keep taxes under control. We cannot tax ourselves to prosperity. We have to continue to look at various ways to cut out waste and duplication of spending by our various state agencies. In other words we need to squeeze every penny out of every tax dollar.

Workforce Development

The construction industry workforce in Pennsylvania is currently facing some challenges to attract workers. How would you address this issue?

We need to reform our education system. Not everyone needs to attend a 4 year college. Ideally, our students should be adequately educated to function as adults by the 8th grade. Then by 9th grade to 12th grade students could choose their career paths expanding our use of our Career and Technology schools and building a public/private partnership with interested businesses to create mentorships and apprenticeships so we can have a trained workforce by their senior year. For example, students could choose an academic career or a trade career. In other words, make our education system practical so that our students can see an opportunity for their future endeavors.

Additionally, it appears every legislative session that Prevailing Wage is under attack. Lowering workers' wages may not be an ideal approach to attract future workers. Where do you stand on Prevailing Wage?

I am not against anyone earning as much as they are worth but prevailing wage comes off the backs of tax payers. It sometimes doubles the cost of building public buildings which are paid for by tax payers. How much more money could we get back into the classroom if we had prevailing wage reform?

Construction Practices

GCAP believes in having the freedom of choice concerning construction delivery method. The Separations Act is an archaic mandate enacted in 1913 that only allows for one delivery system – Multiple Prime Delivery. Due to the inefficiencies of Multiple Primes, this delivery system is only required in three states; meanwhile 47 states, the federal government, and the private sector all benefit from choice in construction delivery. What are your thoughts on the modernization of the Separations Act? (Since this is such an industry-specific question, please do not hesitate to contact GCAP for additional information on this topic).

It needs to be modernized and I have prime sponsored a bill to do so.

GCAP members are renowned for having a safety-first mentality. Due to the opioid epidemic, construction workers and the general public are put in harm's way. How can you help on this issue?

My Senate Bill 3, which was passed into law in 2016, which is now ACT 16, the medical use of cannabis. Studies have shown and are continuing to show that using cannabis as a long term pain management tool is helping to diminish our opioid addition problem and will continue to do so. The good news is over 70% of the cannabis used for long term pain management is not psychotropic.

General

If you win this election in 2018, what will your legacy be 20 years from now?

1. The legal use of medical cannabis and making Pennsylvania the leader in medical cannabis research, as stated by Forbes magazine.
2. Civil asset forfeiture reform, civil service commission reform, which was greatly needed. Working on election code reform and ethics code reform.
3. Various government reform issues from redistricting to equal access to the ballot.