

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: Tarah Probst

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 have worked very hard as Mayor of Stroudsburg, newly re-elected, to bring building and development to our borough. I was a strong supporter of the Rite Aid project on lower Main St., which employs 35 people and grew our tax base--a great tax assistance to our borough. We changed the parking code ordinance to be business friendly, which is allowing other companies to take a serious look at Stroudsburg without a "sea" of asphalt for a parking lot. We are also instituting a "blight law" that requires the upkeep of local property by its owners, as well as I requested a PLA with the borough of Stroudsburg.

As Senator, my legislative priorities would be the creation of local business development, wage growth, expansion in public education opportunities and improving our economy so that we can retain and recruit the

best talent in the country. Our Main Street focused, small and medium sized economy has increased since I have become Mayor, and it has led to recent local building and development. I want to grow those opportunities across my district and create a fairer corporate tax code that closes the Delaware Loophole and incentivizes quality corporate jobs and building to come to our Commonwealth.

Economy

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

It is clear that we need an economy in Pennsylvania that works for all of its citizens. Currently, Pennsylvania is 50th in the nation in entrepreneurship and 48th in business development. Monroe County is 65th out of 67 counties for quality of life. We can do better and we have had the same leadership in Harrisburg for 16 years. We keep going down, not up. 35% percent of our county commutes over an hour to work because our wages are among the lowest. We need to grow our wages for our workers, so that they can live and pour back into their local economies. When our local downtowns thrive, development comes, and we have many aging buildings and infrastructure pieces we must replace so that not only Stroudsburg, but also all of Pennsylvania can build itself to fully enter the 21st Century. Our county does not even have broadband. What company would invest in an area without 21st century technology? Our business parks and industry should be booming in our location being 70 miles from NYC and 90 miles from Philadelphia. We have the tracks for passenger rail (we had rail for decades and it went away 40 years ago) which would boom our economy in not only tourism, but quality of life for those that travel to New York and New Jersey daily. With my legislative agenda, we can grow opportunities across the state.

Workforce Development

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

We must grow our investment in trade schools, so that we can have skilled construction industry workers ready to enter the workforce the moment they finish school. We need to grow our opportunities in apprenticeship programs, so that the next generation of construction industry workers can start learning their crafts as soon as possible. We need strong public schools and affordable public universities, so that we can train and retain the talent the construction industry needs to thrive.

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 fully support Governor Tom Wolf's proposed policy to raise minimum wage to \$12 immediately, rising to \$15 by 2024. We must raise the prevailing wage to give a fair opportunity to the workers of Pennsylvania. We must support prevailing wages in the trades.

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).

I believe it is essential that we both protect smaller contractors, construction industry workers, yet create modern systems that allow us to construct with the greatest efficacy and best construction. I want to maintain protections that allow smaller contractors to compete against large contractors, but we must create the ability for our larger firms to better compete for multi-sector bids by modernizing the Separations Act. I would hope that in amending the Separations Act, we can maintain the competitiveness that allows smaller firms and unionized labor to be empowered while making sure there is as minimal inefficiency created by the multiple prime system.

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?

Opioid addiction is a plight that affects Pennsylvanians of all backgrounds across our Commonwealth. To fight this disease, we must expand addiction treatment centers across the state. We must increase county block grant funding that allows treatment for specific issues such as mental health, drug and alcohol treatment, child welfare services, homelessness, and intellectual disabilities. Overdose deaths are a tragedy, so we must expand Narcan access to first responders and medical professionals across the state.

General

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

If elected, I want my legacy first to be that I was an honest, caring, and beneficial representative for my constituents. Legislatively, I want to be a part of the senatorial class that ended the war on the working class and was able to enact minimum and prevailing wage raises, new worker and labor protections, and a strengthening of our social safety net so that all Pennsylvanians benefit. I firmly believe that if we can return to a labor-focused economy, we can bring prosperity and growth to the middle class that is unprecedented in recent years. When the middle class thrives, it raises people out of poverty and increases the wealth of the

wealthiest. We have seen a separation of wealth getting worse and worse in Pennsylvania and we can do better for all of our citizens.

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