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Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, September 12, 2018 2:15:42 PM
Last Modified: Wednesday, September 12, 2018 3:17:26 PM
Time Spent: 01:01:44
IP Address: 204.148.52.30

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Q1 Candidate's Name

Bob Morgan

Q2 Candidate's District

Illinois House of Representatives, District 58

Q3 Will you support closure of any State Operated Developmental Centers and shift corresponding resources toward integrated, community-based living options?

Respondent skipped this question

Q4 Would you support legislation to eliminate the subminimum wage for workers with disabilities in Illinois?

Yes

Q5 Do you support per-beneficiary funding caps in the Illinois Medicaid system?

No

Q6 Should Illinois Medicaid and SNAP benefits have a mandatory work component?

No

Q7 Would you advocate raising Medicaid reimbursement rates for home-based nursing services?

Yes

Q8 Do you support a fair (graduated) income tax?

Yes

Q9 Will you demand improved disability access to the State Capitol complex and General Assembly, including but not limited to a formal reasonable accommodation request process for public proceedings, provision of key materials in alternate formats, and captioning of floor proceedings?

Yes

Q10 What will you do to ensure people with disabilities, who identify as members of other marginalized communities (e.g. black/brown, LGBTQ, immigrant, etc.) know they are welcome to live and pursue their full potential in Illinois? In other words, how can you address systemic oppression against multiply marginalized disabled people?

ANSWER TO QUESTION 3: I will review the service provided by State operated centers and compare their effectiveness and cost to the taxpayers with community-based living options to make the decision that provides the best outcomes for disabled residents and the community. Generally, Illinois lags behind every other state in transitioning adults with disabilities away from antiquated state-operated facilities and into the most independent living environment available and appropriate.

ANSWER TO QUESTION 10: The most important action we can take is enforcing laws we have on the books that provide robust protections to all minorities in Illinois. We should dedicate substantial resources to an education effort to make sure law enforcement, business, and non-profit communities are aware of these protections and are appropriately respecting them in their day-to-day activities.

Q11 How will you ensure a free and appropriate public education for Illinois students with disabilities?

This issue is intensely personal for me. My older brother has developmental disabilities (Fragile X Syndrome) and as a child faced regular obstacles in identifying adequate school settings and support services.

The school funding debate is absolutely paramount to providing equal access to education for students with disabilities. Without proper resources, schools cannot give students the care they need or provide the proper learning environment. We also need to make sure that any institution receiving public dollars in any fashion is following the laws of Illinois and making the proper accommodations for disabled students.

I look forward to the next General Assembly and the opportunity to build on historic school funding formula reforms. With the potential for a new tax structure on the horizon, now is the right moment to increase the investment we need to be making in our schools.

Q12 How will you work to expand affordable, accessible, integrated housing options in Illinois?

We have to attack the housing problems in Illinois in a multi-faceted fashion. Restrictions to supply caused by limited governmental funding, exclusionary zoning limitations, reduced aid to needy families through income subsidies, and relatively few government-provided housing are barriers that we must work together to overcome.

Q13 What would you do to make Illinois more compliant with the Ligas, Williams, and Colbert Consent Decrees?

One of the most important things we can do is not put Illinois through a budget crisis again and shut down the entire Illinois social service system. The lack of a state budget placed extraordinary pressures on class members from the Ligas, Williams and Colbert consent decrees. Each Consent Decree would benefit from increased and stable funding to Illinois HFS and DHS agencies, but more broadly, from a new Governor. Bruce Rauner has shown no concern for those in transition, or still waiting for housing and support services as required by the Decrees. Having been involved with the implementation of all three Consent Decrees under Governor Quinn, I will be a champion for those individuals (and their families) who qualify under those lawsuits.

Q14 How will you play a role in making business accessible to all customers with disabilities?

The right approach is a mix of incentives and penalties where businesses are properly notified about requirements once they are making investments in expanding their infrastructure and penalized if they fail to comply. All new infrastructure – especially any made with or subsidized by public dollars – should be fully accommodative.

Q15 What will you do to provide full and equal access to public transportation in Illinois?

We have woefully failed to make the proper investments in public transportation and this will be a top priority of mine in any new capital improvement plans to come out of the legislature. Given my personal background, I will always fight to ensure new public transportation includes access for individuals with disabilities.

Q16 How can wages for Illinois' Personal Assistants, Direct Support Professionals, Community Care Program and Homemaker service providers be improved and/or stabilized?

We have to raise our wages in Illinois and I'm a strong supporter of increasing the minimum wage. This puts pressure all the way through the wage scale and broadly increases prosperity for workers. Beyond the minimum wage, we must thoughtfully review our hourly wage being paid to PA's, etc., so we protect the community being served by these workers, and also recruit trained professionals to provide this work.

Q17 Illinois has 19,000+ residents with disabilities on the PUNS (Prioritization for Urgency of Need for Services) waiting list. Thousands more are waiting for DON (Determination of Need) assessments to become eligible for home and community-based care. What concrete steps will you support to reduce these backlogs and improve Illinois' laggard status (we rank #47) when it comes to home-based disability services for eligible Illinoisans?

Illinois cannot have a social service approach that stops for two years and expects to resume without any damage having been done. There's a serious lack of funding available to care of our neediest and any discussion of improvement of this has to begin with getting our fiscal house in order. With an improvement in the fiscal picture, we can expand personnel to address those on our waiting lists; build facilities or engage community partners to provide services; and expand the quality of care we provide. The PUNS waiting list has been neglected (financially and otherwise) for many years, and it will take legislators prioritizing these services before the conditions in Illinois improve.
