

Candidate Name
Broadhurst

House/Senate District
House –Third Hampden



**2006 UAW CANDIDATE
STATE LEGISLATIVE QUESTIONNAIRE**

I. Freedom to Choose a Union

Employers routinely undermine the freedom of workers to choose a union by intimidation, one-on-one meetings and holding mandatory anti-union general meetings.

Unions are striving to reduce employer interference and intimidation so that more working people are free to join unions today.

1. If elected, would you take a public position on behalf of working people and insist that employers should give employees a free choice, without pressure or intimidation, about whether to join a union? **YES**

I believe the National Workrights Institute aptly described this as an inalienable human right, noting that “[t]he right to organize is among the most fundamental of workplace human rights. It is the workplace expression of the right to freedom of association.” It is also the workplace expression of the right to survive. I will join unions in advocating for federal EFCA passage, and I will support the stiffest possible penalties in captive audience statutes. I’m firmly supportive of the Collective Bargaining Convention adopted by the General Conference of the International Labour Organisation, as I am of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. I support the passage of Majority Authorization legislation, and I support mandatory card check recognition and employer neutrality. This most essential and basic of human rights must be respected.

2. Will you publicly support organizing drives in your district/state by:

a) Writing letters of support for the workers’ organizing efforts?

Yes

b) Attending community forums in support of the organizing efforts?

Yes

c) Helping to pass resolutions of support by local governmental entities?

Yes

d) Joining and supporting other educational efforts and activities that seek to build public support for the right of workers to organize labor unions?

Yes

3. [For those states where public employees don't have the right to organize] Will you support legislation to give public employees the right to organize and bargain collectively?

Given MLRC rulings that graduate teachers and research assistants are not to be construed as employees, I consider Massachusetts to be one such state as described. I therefore shall answer this question:

Yes

4. Will you support legislation and/or administrative actions to prohibit state and local funds from being used for contracts unless the contractors agree to remain neutral in organizing drives and grant the union card check recognition upon the showing of majority support?

Yes

5. Will you support legislation and/or administrative actions to prohibit contractors from using state and local funds to oppose organizing drives?

Yes

II. Union Dues

Recently there have been efforts to enact legislation that would restrict the ability of unions to collect and spend union dues for legislative, political and community involvement purposes.

1. If elected would you oppose restrictions on the use of union dues for political and legislative activities? **Yes**

I support the right to freedom of expression as I do the right to freedom of association. I strongly would oppose any legislation even remotely resembling California's Proposition 75, and oppose so-called "paycheck protection" proposals in general. Union members already can opt out of political spending. Efforts to restrict collection and use of union dues for political purposes beyond such opt-out policies amount only to the denial of First Amendment rights to working people.

2. Will you oppose so-called paycheck deception proposals that would silence the voice of working families in the political process? **Yes**

So-called “paycheck protection” proposals (more appropriately deemed “paycheck deception” proposals) are little more than thinly disguised efforts to void the First Amendment for working families, and constitute part and parcel of a concerted campaign to destroy basic protections and rights secured by the labor movement. Such proposals are transparently part and parcel of union-busting efforts.

III. Occupational Safety and Health

The federal and state Occupational Safety and Health Acts were enacted to help assure the safety of workers who were being injured or killed in the workplace. Since then, the workplace has become safer, healthier and a more secure environment in which to work. Unfortunately, too many workers still are injured or killed on the job.

1. If elected, would you oppose any proposed legislation that would repeal or weaken state OSHA programs? **Yes**

I furthermore would oppose the requiring of fiscal impact studies for new programs

IV. Education

Private school vouchers undermine public education by taking scarce funds away from public schools, which are open to all students, and shifting them to private schools. It is in the interest of all workers that we maintain quality public education for all children.

- If elected would you actively oppose all private school voucher proposals? **Yes**

V. Living Wage

Living Wage laws would help ensure that persons working for employers that benefit from city government contracts or city financial assistance do not live in poverty.

1. If elected, would you support the efforts to enact and enforce Living Wage Ordinances? **Yes**

I firmly support the Living Wage campaign, and view Brookline's Article 19 as a most appropriate model for Massachusetts communities. I hope for stronger Living Wage Ordinances, and support incentives for communities to pass and enforce such. Every wage should at the very least be a Living Wage.

2. If elected, would you oppose legislation that would prohibit local municipalities from enacting the Living Wage Ordinance? **Yes**

Opponents have made the claim that, with such ordinances low-skilled people will be priced out of the market, marginal businesses will fail, and total employment will be reduced. Exhaustive analyses show no such impact.

VI. Health Care

Millions of Americans do not have any health insurance for themselves and for their families, and everyday employers are foregoing health care coverage for their employees often saddling the state with the cost covering those employees who are also poorly paid. In addition, those who do have coverage are struggling with a vicious cycle of reduced health care access and higher costs.

1. Will you support efforts to expand health insurance coverage in your state?

Yes

I support a single-payer plan. I support a Massachusetts Health Care Trust such as that which favorable passage of S. 755, reintroduced December 1, 2004, would provide. I furthermore support passage of the newly proposed Affordable Health Care constitutional amendment. I support affordable quality health care for all, and firmly believe that this is an inalienable human right.

2. Will you support legislation that would allow health care professionals to report quality problems without retaliation from HMO's, insurance companies, hospitals and others?

Yes

Whistle-blower protections must be strengthened and expanded.

3. Will you support legislation that holds insurance companies accountable when their decisions to withhold or limit care injure a patient?

Yes

When an insurance company commits the moral equivalent of mayhem or murder, then it ought to be held both criminally liable and financially liable.

- 4 Will you support legislation that would require large employers to provide or contribute to the cost of providing health coverage to their employees.

Yes

A single-payer plan is ultimately the sole and only solution to the health care crisis in this state. For as long as health care coverage remains dependent on employment, however, the practice of hacking and slashing health care coverage while continually raising premiums must cease. I would indeed support minimum contribution legislation, even as I pursue passage of Health Care Trust legislation.

VII. Privatization

Some politicians are pursuing ill-conceived privatization efforts, operating under the smokescreen of “market efficiency”. The UAW opposes any privatization measures that undermine accountability in public programs.

1. Will you oppose measures to privatize basic services within the public sector?

Yes

I solidly support passage of H. 1333, the Public Water Preservation bill, to ban the privatization of water services and sewer services in our communities; and I’m in steadfast opposition to the Jones-Stanley bill to privatize public lands. I campaigned against the Town of Agawam’s decision to sell off its street-sweeper fleet, and I am very much opposed to Holyoke’s deal with Aquarion. Public resources should be of only public benefit.

VIII. Minimum Wage

A fair minimum wage is fundamental to a social economic system that guarantees a decent minimum reward for work. A fair minimum wage not only reduces costs for social support systems, but also acts as an economic stimulus in the communities in which low-wage workers live.

1. Will you support an increase in the state minimum wage?

Yes

I support raising the minimum wage and indexing it to the rate of inflation.

IX. State Unemployment Insurance

1. If elected would you support legislation to raise unemployment benefits and to expand eligibility for benefits?

Yes

I furthermore would support expanding benefit duration, and would work to reduce the period employees must work to qualify.

X. Deregulation

In recent years the government has deregulated many industries including cablevision, telephones, electricity and natural gas utilities. Consumers have paid a terrible price in these areas.

1. If elected would you oppose the continuation of deregulation?

Yes

I would furthermore work to challenge existing deregulation. I firmly believe that Department of Telecommunications and Energy quasi-judicial powers of over-turning municipal zoning laws is in violation of the Constitution of the Commonwealth, and amounts to the sacrifice of public health and natural resources for political expedience.

XI. Workers Compensation Insurance:

1. Do you support efforts to improve benefits and coverage under the state workers' compensation law?

Yes

An allegedly impartial court appointed medical examiner should not, and ought not, have his or her own finding be the sole and only medical evidence supplied a judge. I furthermore find the practice of assigning injury cases to the employers preferred provider quite objectionable. The notion of a benefit system geared more towards returning employees to work than securing and safeguarding employee health and fitness is a recipe for more devastating injuries. Payments for permanent partial disability furthermore ought not be automatically discontinued when an employee returns to work. The so-called "reform" bill of 1991 decreased both benefits and duration of benefits in a fashion I find unconscionable. I would indeed support such efforts described.

XII. Product Liability Act:

Many states have laws that are actually stronger than federal laws that protect consumers from faulty or defective products, like flammable child pajamas or flying lawnmower blades.

1. If elected would you support proposals to strengthen existing product liability laws in Massachusetts and Hampden County?

Yes

XIII. Candidates for Judicial Positions and State Attorneys General

1. How would you describe your social and judicial philosophies?

2. What kinds of community groups, clubs and associations have you been involved in?

3. If you were faced with a strike action or organizing drive, how would you deal with it?

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