

# League of Women Voters of Elmhurst

## Candidate Forum Questions -- 5<sup>th</sup> Congressional District

### **Mike Quigley (D)**

#### **1. Explain why you agree or disagree with President Trump's decision for the United States to exit the Paris Climate Agreement?**

The President's decision to remove the United States from the landmark Paris Agreement on climate change was a decision that will have long-lasting consequences. Not only does pulling out of the Paris Agreement do nothing for domestic fossil fuel producers who still need to compete in a global market committed to addressing greenhouse gas emissions, it completely isolated the U.S in the global community and ceded leadership to countries like China who do not have our best interests at heart. In addition, as the climate continues to change, every nation must do what science demands to address the causes of global warming. We are already beginning to see the consequences a warming world and without urgent action, severe storms, droughts, wildfires, changing weather patterns, and the social and economic impacts they produce will only continue to worsen. Embracing the transition to a low-carbon economy will generate trillions of dollars in growth globally and safeguard the lives and livelihoods of billions.

#### **2. What is your position on universal background checks, closing gun show loopholes, increasing penalties for straw purchases of gun and limiting high capacity ammunition magazines?**

I strongly support expanding background checks to all firearm transfers and the reinstatement of the assault weapons ban, which included restrictions on magazine capacities. When it comes to preventing gun violence, the status quo is no longer acceptable. Whether a sale is online, at a gun show, between neighbors, or at a licensed dealer, the process to purchase a firearm should not differ. I experienced this first hand when I visited a gun show in Indiana. The ability to purchase a semi-automatic rifle with no questions asked is not only disturbing, it is nonsensical. Lax gun laws in Indiana drive much of the unprecedented violence we see in Chicago. According to the Chicago Police Department, 20 percent of all crime guns come from Indiana. Requiring mandatory background checks and providing adequate funding for the National Instant Background Check System is just one step to address these loopholes that plague our gun laws.

Elected officials must also stop covering to the gun lobby and address the gun violence epidemic our country is facing. Mass shootings in Newtown, Parkland, Aurora, Tucson,

Orlando and Las Vegas -- just to name a few -- have demonstrated all too clearly the need to regulate assault style weapons. The type of firearms that fall into this category are not used for hunting or sport, they are weapons of war. The original ban, which lapsed in 2004, included certain types of ammunition that I believe should be banned again. A magazine capable of holding 100 rounds far exceeds everyday use. To put this in perspective, the military only uses 30-round magazines with their semi-automatic M16 issued rifles. As Anthony Scalia stated in his opinion of the District of Columbia et al. v. Heller case, "the right secured by the Second Amendment is not unlimited." I do not disagree that Americans have the right to bear arms, but weapons used on the battlefield should not be among them.

There is no one size fits all solution to the gun violence epidemic, it will take a combination of small pragmatic measures. I look forward to continuing the fight for gun violence prevention and finding ways to keep firearms out of the hands of individuals who wish to do us harm.

**3. The current administration and the Commerce Department intend to add a citizenship question to the 2020 Census. What are your thoughts about this and how do you think it will impact the Census?**

The decision to add a citizenship question to the 2020 census is blatantly discriminatory and only serves to further the anti-immigrant agenda set forth by the Trump Administration. Without question, the addition of this question will decrease participation and negatively impact the accuracy of the 2020 census, making it difficult to tally hard-to-count populations like communities of color and low-income individuals. These communities rely on the census to guide the amount of federal funding for local government initiatives like Medicaid, Head Start, and the National School Lunch Program. Regardless of creed or political affiliation, a census that accurately represents America is in our best interests. That's why I've used my position on the House Appropriations Committee to fight each fiscal year for adequate funding to carry out the census. I also used my position as a vice-chair of the LGBT Equality Caucus to urge the Administration to include same-sex couples in the census and to add a question about sexual orientation and gender identity. While more work still needs to be done, I'm happy to report that the 2020 census will include an option for recording relationship status as a same-sex couple. It is an essential part of our democracy, and I will continue to fight for a census that is fair, just, and accurate.

**4. Will you support a bill to propose a U.S. Constitutional amendment to abolish the electoral college system for electing the President and Vice-President of the United States and replace it with a one-person, one-vote system?**

The Electoral College is an extremely flawed method of Presidential selection that has permitted those that lack a majority of the popular vote to become President of the United States on five occasions, including the most recent election, in which Hillary Clinton attained almost 3 million more votes than Electoral College winner Donald Trump. While the framers of the Constitution may have intended the Electoral College to act as a check on unqualified candidates, they could not anticipate that party loyalty would supercede independent judgment. Additionally, the Electoral College encourages candidates to bypass the majority of states, whatever their size, to focus their campaign efforts on a very small number of swing states. That's why I support a constitutional amendment to replace the Electoral College with a process for electing the President and Vice-President by a national popular vote.

**5. Is protecting pre-existing conditions important to your potential constituents? - If so, will you take action to protect insurance of pre-existing conditions?**

Covering pre-existing conditions is of paramount importance to me, in this Congress, where coverage requirements appear to be under threat, and in the future. The Affordable Care Act entrenched this principle in the law. Yet, despite Republican efforts to dismantle it, ACA is still the law of the land. While there's no denying the very polarizing nature of the broader "Obamacare" debate, many of its central tenants have emerged as hugely popular. Coverage for pre-existing conditions is one of those things that Americans agree must not be rolled back. Recent polls show 3 out of 4 Americans, regardless of party affiliation, support keeping pre-existing conditions covered. Going back to the way things were would impact tens of millions of Americans who suffer from conditions as broad as asthma to cancer, from acne to diabetes. I was proud to vote for ACA and have spent time in Congress defending the law from unrelenting partisan attacks. As the only Member of the Appropriations Committee from Illinois, I have worked for years to beat back harmful policy riders on funding bills related to ACA and to ensure that the law was funded. Specifically, these pre-existing coverage benefits also make long-term financial sense. People with pre-existing conditions need care and when they fall out of care, they often end up in critical, emergency situations, which ultimately cost the system significantly more. Preventative medicine is fiscally smart and insurance helps patients take personal responsibility, get on treatment plans and preserve their health. That's good for everyone. Now that the dust has settled, the American people have come to see that protecting pre-existing conditions is the right and smart thing to do.