

REPRESENT ME AZ – CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

These are not comprehensive questions and we realize that we are not giving you a great amount of time to think about these issues, so answer as many as you can. We will upload your answers to our website prior to our event. If you feel you are unable to answer the questions properly, leave it blank and take the time you need. We can upload after the kickoff also.

When answering these questions;

- Keep your answers to no more than 150 words for each question.
- Please distinguish between the role of Federal and State Government for issues where they apply.
- Please indicate how programs can be paid for.

GENERAL

1. **Why are you running for Congress and what makes you uniquely qualified to represent CD2?** I'm running because the people of this district need someone who will represent them, even in the face of adversity. Congresswoman McSally's vote to repeal the Affordable Care Act coupled with her refusal to meet with constituents demonstrate her inability to adequately represent our interests. Our government is under attack and the very programs that helped me, the daughter of migrant farmworkers ascend to the position of Assistant Secretary of the Army, are under attack by President Trump and the radical right. At a time when racial tension and income inequality are at all-time highs, we hear nothing from our congresswoman. The only worse than a bully and a coward is someone who refuses to stand up to one. That's why I'm running.
2. **What is your biggest platform issue/what is most important to you?** Because a quality education is the single greatest threat to poverty, and because income inequality is destroying the middle class, it is essential we pass legislation to support debt-free college and vocational training. At a time when racial and economic injustice are tearing our country apart, we must support programs that allow everyone to make a better life for themselves and their families. Debt-free tuition and vocational training are ideas whose times have come, and I will fight to make them a reality.

ECONOMY/JOBS

3. **What are the most important things that Congress should do to improve the economy?** Manufacturing jobs aren't just going to other countries, they're disappearing altogether. Many of those good paying jobs families have relied on for decades aren't coming back. We need to create millions of new jobs to get

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people back to work. We can start by making significant and lasting investments in our nation's crumbling infrastructure – rebuilding here at home and by making sure people have the education and training they need to compete in our new, high-tech economy. I'll support policies that invest in people rather than giving tax breaks to companies that make empty promises and move jobs to other countries.

4. **What, if anything, should the federal government do about the growing economic disparity between the poor, the middle class, and the wealthy?**
The system IS rigged. Never in our history have so few controlled so much. For the past 40 years, Wall Street bankers and corporate bankers have been massively overhauling tax policy and deregulating financial markets that benefit the very few. We must fight back if we are going rebuild America's middle class. First, everyone must pay their fair share. Corporations who ship jobs overseas, hide profits in offshore accounts, and refuse to pay corporate income taxes cannot continue to get a pass from Congress. Second, we must support fair pay. I support increasing the federal minimum wage to \$15 per hour and I support the Paycheck Fairness Act. If you work equally hard, you should be equally paid. Third, we must support families in the workplace by championing affordable childcare so parents don't have to worry whether their kids are being looked after, while they are working to provide for them.
5. **What would you like to see happen with the federal minimum wage? I believe that the Federal minimum wage must increase.** I support increasing the federal minimum wage to \$15 per hour.
6. **Do you consider unions to be part of the solution, or part of the problem? What steps should Congress take to strengthen or weaken their role?** I believe that unions are part of the solution. Unions fight for better wages, reasonable hours, and safer working conditions. Congress must monitor and ensure, through the Department of Labor, that corporations comply with the NLRA giving workers a right to organize.

FOREIGN POLICY

7. **In the realm of foreign policy, what are the issues of greatest concern to you? What should Congress be doing to address them?** I'm concerned that foreign policy is now created by the President's 'inner circle', or the DoD; neither are foreign affairs experts, so are creating terrible foreign policies. I'm concerned about terrible policies like the Muslim Ban, the border wall, DoD controlling troop strength in Afghanistan, and withdrawing from the Paris Accord. These policies (executive orders) create extreme discord with our foreign allies, and within the US. Foreign policy must be developed by foreign policy experts within Department of State, USAID, and National Security Council. The National Security Council advises the President and coordinates foreign policy with government agencies. Congress should stop President Trump from

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- abusing his executive authority. Congress can (1) create legislation to override Trump's executive orders, (2) defund all 'unwise' foreign policies, and (3) impeach Trump for high crimes and misdemeanors while in office.
8. **How should the U.S. respond to Russian interference in U.S. elections?** First, the President must acknowledge and strongly condemn Russian interference in our election process. The U.S. along with the U.N. should investigate and if interference can be proven, impose international sanctions on Russia. Those sanctions could be lifted when Russia admits its interference, collusion in the interference, and commits to not interfere again.
9. **Should the U.S. be involved in foreign conflicts, and if so, what criteria are needed to engage?** The U.S. should be involved in foreign conflicts, this is a commitment we made by being part of NATO and/ or the United Nations. The criteria should be to enhance stability and security not only for our country but for our allies as well. We should always enter conflicts with the support and help of allies. I am concerned that the United States is too readily using military power over political or economic power to influence foreign policy. I am concerned that the military industrial complex is pushing us to take military action, over diplomatic or economic action. President Eisenhower warned that a great threat to a democratic government is the "unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought by the military-industrial complex." The Constitution places civilians in control of the military, and allows Congress to declare war. Civilian leadership should coordinate with allies, not special interest groups when addressing foreign conflicts.
10. **What changes would you like to see in the U.S. approach to terrorism?** Better international relationships will greatly decrease the threat of terrorism. International relationships can be improved with the distribution of foreign aid and displaying sensitivity and knowledge of other cultures, i.e., a more effective diplomatic approach. Good international relationships will result in less hate directed to the U.S., and more collaborative intelligence sharing. The diplomatic approach of 'speaking softly' must be augmented with an effective intelligence gathering community, and effective deterrence techniques. Our intelligence community (e.g., CIA and FBI) is responsible for monitoring terrorist threats. Failure to monitor terrorist was the root cause of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, e.g., the FBI was faulted for shoddy analytical programs, not sharing intelligence information, and weak counterterrorism investigations; resulting in losing track of the 9/11 terrorist while in the U.S. A strong diplomatic corp, collaborative international relationships, effective intelligence agencies (including military intelligence), and deterrent border security will result in a more secure U.S.

ENTITLEMENTS

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- 11. Do you favor increasing, decreasing, or leaving unchanged Social Security and Medicare benefits? How should Congress ensure that these programs are financially viable going forward?** I favor increasing Social Security (SSI) and Medicare benefits. Social security and Medicare are entitlement, i.e., they are ‘earned’ benefits—a pay-back of taxes paid. However, SSI and Medicare reform is necessary because these programs are insolvent (paying more than receiving), and there is an inequitable burden on payers; low-income earners paying proportionately more SSI than high-income earners. Congress should lift the SSI income caps and scale SSI payments, as well as, provide Medicare for all. I support lifting the compensation cap on Social Security payroll tax, reducing SSN income for upper-income workers, and increasing SSN income for lower-income worker. The SSI fund will become solvent once the cap is lifted. Medicare for all will become solvent through payroll contributions. An efficient and effective ‘Medicare for All’ system will cost less than current insurance premiums because profit motive will be eliminated from the health cost equation.

HEALTH CARE & REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH CARE

- 12. Do you believe the federal government should ensure that all Americans have health insurance coverage? Describe the health care system most likely to be successful in the U.S. (please be specific with regard to single payer, universal, etc.) and how does it get funded?** Health care is a right, not a privilege. While most prosperous countries have moved to a universal health care system, we have stayed in a “sick care” system that costs more and provides less. Medicare for All would drastically reduce administrative costs, help with negotiating drug prices, and encourage preventative care. Because Medicare for All will save billions of dollars annually, providing health care for all Americans is not only the right thing to do, it will save lives and money.
- 13. According to the Guttmacher Institute, the unintended pregnancy rate in the U.S. was 45% in 2011, and approximately two thirds of unplanned births are paid for by public insurance programs, primarily Medicaid. What role should the federal government play in reducing the rate of unintended pregnancy?** Choice over the care of their bodies empowers women. The Federal government must invest in women’s healthcare education and services, to ensure a more productive and happy society. Planned Parenthood is a major provider of healthcare for women, especially, women who do not have private insurance. Planned Parenthood provides affordable birth control education and birth control methods, as well as, other healthcare services. According to the Guttmacher Institute, unintended pregnancy rate is significantly higher in the U.S. than in many other developed countries. Unintended pregnancy is highest among poor and low-income women, women aged 18-24, cohabiting women and minority women. Economic inequity results in unintended pregnancies, because poor women do not have access to healthcare, more specifically, birth control education and birth control. The

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Federal government must continue funding Planned Parenthood, so poor and low-income women can practice birth control, thus, regain control over their bodies and future.

14. **In cases of unintended pregnancy, what role should the federal government play regarding the choices available to women?** Preventing unwanted pregnancies starts with education, which is why I support medically-accurate, age-appropriate sexual education curriculum in schools. We must also stop the politically-motivated attacks on Planned Parenthood and other reproductive health care providers. Family planning including abortion is legal and the government should remove any obstacles politicians have placed or seek to place between a woman and her doctor.

EQUAL RIGHTS

15. **Specifically, what should Congress do to better protect Americans from workplace discrimination?** Congress should pass ENDA and if elected I will co-sponsor this badly-needed, and long overdue piece of legislation.
16. **What, if any, protections do you believe are missing for LGBTQ people?** In many states, businesses may refuse service to people based on their sexual orientation or gender identity. Housing discrimination still runs rampant throughout much of the country where laws protecting the rights of LGBTQ people haven't been passed. Marriage equality was a tremendous step in the right direction, but we need to understand the fight doesn't end there. Equal protection for all, means just that.
17. **What more should Congress be doing to end hunger in America, and to ensure the safety of our food and water?** Income inequality is a major cause of hunger. Income inequality often results from discrimination (e.g., sexism, racism). White women get 80% and Latinas 55% of their male counterpart's pay. People of color suffer discrimination in labor, and that discrimination leads to lower wages or unemployment for the aggrieved, thus hunger. Congress must ensure equal employment opportunity, fair employment practices, and equal access to education and health care. Also, Congress must budget for the immediate needs of the poor, e.g., Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Section 8 rental assistance, and unemployment payments, which are income shifts to lower income households to fight hunger and homelessness. The Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of Agriculture are responsible for the safety of water and food; they must aggressively monitor states and municipalities for compliance with food and water safety regulations. For unsafe environments, applicable federal agencies must ensure that problems are corrected and aggrieved parties are compensated.

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EDUCATION

- 18. What responsibility does the federal government have to ensure that students are safe from bullying and/or discrimination in public schools, including charter schools?** Bullying is the result of an unequal power dynamic—the strong attacking the weak. New research shows that bullying follows us through life, and with the rise of cyber-bullying, this is no longer something that you can walk away from. Discrimination has evolved from mistreatment solely based on race or color, to the mistreatment of gay and transgender youth, children with disabilities, and sexual harassment. Under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, schools receiving federal money may not discriminate based on a student’s gender. The federal civil rights law guarantees all student an opportunity to participate equally in school programs and activities without sex discrimination. The laws exist, but more needs to be done to ensure they are enforced.
- 19. According to the National Assessment of Educational Progress, only about a third of U.S. high school seniors are ready for college-level coursework. What do you see as the cause(s) of the problem, and what are some possible remedies?** Public education is a right that ensures the citizenry has an equal opportunity for success. However, many public schools do not have sufficient resources, teacher commitment, and parent involvement to ensure quality, effective education. Low performing schools are usually in poor neighborhoods, have low teacher retention, and uninvolved parents (intentionally or unintentionally). States must pay attention to educational spending per student. Arizona’s spending per student is among the lowest in the country. Lack of resources for public schools leads to crowded classrooms, lack of technology, lack of innovation in teach education, poor teach retention, and students ‘passed along’ to the next grade due to social pressure and lack of accountability. States adequately fund public education per student, establish success measures, pay teachers more, and actively involve parents. The Federal government must monitor states to make sure States adequately fund public education and develop processes ensuring successful educational outcomes.
- 20. What would be the most effective way for Congress to help make college more affordable?** Education is an investment in our citizenry’s future and the future of our Nation. Debt free education will increase access to education. Eliminating tuition bills at public universities, community colleges, and vocational schools for students whose families make less than \$125,000 a year will allow those aspiring to attend college to attend. States must hold down cost for their educational institutions. Additionally, Federal entities must assist states through a Medicaid-like transfer of funding. Debt free education costs approximately \$31 billion a year, which can be paid through a 5% efficiency saving in the Department of Defense and other Federal Agencies. But, there are a lot of other cost that must be paid by students, for example, rent, automotive,

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food, etc, which accounts for 61 percent of your educational cost. Federal assistance through PELL grants are one way to cover these costs.

PUBLIC SAFETY

- 21. What reforms should be implemented in law enforcement?** The 1994 Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act authorized the U.S. Dept of Justice's Civil Rights Division to bring civil suits against local law enforcement agencies to rein in abuses and hold agencies accountable. Blacks and Latinos are three times as likely as Whites to be subject to search. Blacks are four time as likely to experience the threat of use of force. Four ideas proposed by the Center for American Progress: (1) Increase the use of special prosecutors in police misconduct investigations; (2) Enhance the collection of data on fatalities involving police; (3) Implement implicit bias training for all federal law-enforcement officers and state and local police involved in federal task forces; and (4) Increase the federal government's oversight of police conduct. At all levels for law enforcement, police brutality can be decreased through bias training and consequences for brutal behavior.
- 22. What reforms are needed in the criminal justice system?** The goals for criminal justice reform should include decreasing the U.S.'s prison population, decreasing prison sentences and eliminating mandatory minimum sentences for low-level drug convictions. It is outrageous that many Americans incarcerated today are nonviolent offenders. We can improve the system by: (1) training justice officials to be fair and unbiased in their interactions with the population; (2) providing good juvenile justice education programs, programs that will make juveniles productive when they get out of the juvenile justice system, thus, keep them out of prison; (3) providing good mental health and education programs to prisoners, this will keep prisoners from becoming aggressive and extremely angry; and, (4) providing mental health and training programs to help released prisoners, thus, helping them transition into society; then, establishing a 'ban the box' policy on employment applications to help transition.
- 23. Who should not be allowed to possess firearms? Do you support universal background checks and if so, how should they be implemented?** Everyday 93 American are killed with guns—this is a national crisis. The Second Amendments protects the right to bear arms, but criminals and irresponsible people should not bear arms. ThinkProgress writes the National Rifle Association and public agree on: 1. Requiring criminal background checks on gun owners and shop employees; 2. Prohibiting terrorist watch list member from acquiring guns; 3. Mandating that gun-owners tell the police when their gun is stolen; 4. Concealed carry permit should be restricted to individuals who have completed a safety training course and are 21 or older 5. Concealed carry permits shouldn't be given to perpetrators of violent misdemeanors or individuals arrested for domestic violence. I also support banning assault

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weapons and high capacity magazines, closing terrorist loopholes, and requiring background checks for all gun sales.

24. **What steps should Congress take to address sexual violence?** Sexual violence is a serious public health problem and has a profound short or long-term impact on physical and mental health. States vary in their definition of sexual assault. Congress can act to require one definition of sexual assault across all states. This will result in all states more aggressively prosecuting sexual assault offenders, thus, ensuring appropriate justice measures, i.e., sentencing guidelines across all states.

IMMIGRATION

25. **What criteria should we use to determine which people should be allowed to immigrate to the U.S.?** The present criteria for a green card requires an immigrant must have a safety net or seek safety, i.e., have a sponsor family or business sponsor, or seek refugee or asylum status. For permanent citizenry, an immigrant must first have: a green card for five years; continuous residence in the US for five years; physical resident in the U.S. 1.5 years before taking the citizenship test; the ability to read, write, and speak ordinary English; basic understanding of the fundamentals of US history and government; and, finally, paid taxes and have a clean criminal record. I believe children born in the U.S. to undocumented workers are provided citizenship by the Citizenship Clause, Amendment 14, Section 1. In order to avoid separating families and children, families of children born in the U.S. must be given a path to citizenship, allowing families to stay together, by waiving the five-year criteria.
26. **What criteria should be used to decide which people are deported?** The criteria must be clear, fair, and executable, and must consider criminality, and cost vs benefit. The criteria should prioritize deportation of criminals. We should not spend excessive federal funds deporting an undocumented worker that contributes to our economy, i.e., provides more benefit to this country than cost. Removals decreased from 2012 to 2015, because undocumented workers aren't criminals but productive workers. (When deportation aligns with State civil issues (crime), States cooperate with deportation efforts, not otherwise.) Deporting undocumented workers that benefit to our States and Nation is self-defeating; these workers are essential in the farming, construction, childcare, nursing, etc. industries. We should implement a flexible, official Bracero Program that allows the continuous flow of workers from Mexico to help with seasonal work and difficult to fill work. Participants of Bracero that eventually meet our immigrations requirements (except for 'continuous' residency) should then become citizens.
27. **Do you support a citizenship pathway?** Yes, I support a pathway. However, the current processes are unfair and inadequate. It is unfair that immigrants can buy their way into the U.S. by having a sponsor, individual or corporate, that has

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substantial financial assets. The Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and Deferred Action for Parents of Americans and Lawful Permanent Residents (DAPA) are processes that recognize the value, and future productivity, of undocumented workers and their children; they give undocumented workers time to obtain citizenship, however, they are only temporary programs. I believe that once a Dreamer completes their education and/or training they should be given a pathway to citizenship, just as undocumented workers with a criminal record be given priority to deportation. The current asylum criteria is compassionate, however, the criteria of asylum must be expanded to include assaulted and harassed victims.

CLIMATE CHANGE & ENERGY

- 28. How should Congress address the threat that climate change poses to U.S. agriculture, coastal property, public health, and national security?** The Greenhouse Effect has caused climate change and the main contributor is increases of CO₂ by burning fossil fuels. With the onset of the industrial revolution, CO₂ in our atmosphere increased by 40%. Temperatures are rising largely due to greenhouse gases produced by human activities that burn fossil fuels. Global climate change has caused loss of sea ice, accelerated sea level rise and more intense heat waves; and one fourth of Earth's species may be extinction by 2050. Military resources have and will continue to be drained to address this epidemic through increased humanitarian mission around the world, rising seas flooding military bases, increased competition for resources, and increased the chance of civil strife. Congress can pass policies and legislation forcing industry to decrease the emission of CO₂ by decreasing the use of fossil fuels. Tax credits for advancing the use of alternative energies would incentivize industries and individuals to severely decrease the use of fossil fuels.
- 29. What changes, if any, should be made to the tax code to encourage the growth of renewable energy sources?** The renewable energy choices individuals and industry make are largely driven by cost/benefit factors. Net cost of renewable energy is decreased when tax credits and/or deductions are provided by local, state, and federal governments. While solar and wind power are growing at 20 to 30% and their cost are decreasing rapidly, their market share is minuscule compared to oil and gas productions. Tax credits will decrease the cost of renewable fuels, encourage the renewable fuels industry to invest in alternative fuels, and encourage individual use. Additionally, fossil fuels hurt the environment and there should be incentives to decrease that harm through tax penalties for polluting, and tax credits for collaborating with the renewable fuels industry. The federal government can augment renewable energy research and share such research with the renewable energy industry; this will decrease the cost of research for the renewable energy industry.

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30. **What is your view of the U. S. pulling out of the Paris climate agreement?**

Pulling out of the Paris climate agreement is a terrible, irresponsible decision. This act is a negation of climate change science, a global crisis that is amplifying natural disasters, and the need for international collaboration. 97% of scientists agree that manmade causes created climate change. Global warming requires global cooperation, global solutions, and global resources.

VOTING/ELECTIONS

31. **What specific steps should Congress take to address political corruption?**

Citizens United loosened restrictions on political expenditures, so campaign financing has exploded, e.g., \$4.4 billion has been spent on television ads alone. Campaigns cost so much that only the very rich, with rich friends and rich PACs, can run for political office -- witness Donald Trump. Not only must we control the amount of donations, but we also need a strong, independent Campaign Ethics office. This office should ensure that elected officials not be corrupt before entering office and not be corrupt in office. Additionally, ethical behavior must be monitored after leaving a government position; there should be a four-year waiting period (currently two) for political, civil servants, and military members leaving a government position before accepting a government contractor's job.

32. **What should be done to ensure that every citizen has the ability to vote.**

Voting should be as easy as possible while maintaining the integrity of our elections. Innovations such as automatic voter registration and vote-by-mail balloting combat the voter disenfranchisement and discrimination that still exist today. Local, state, and federal governments must ensure that voter suppression is eliminated.

VETERANS

33. **What reforms are needed in the VA system?** Simply put, the VA system needs better leadership and more resources. As the wife of a career Air Force officer, and as someone who has worked within the military community nearly all my life, I understand the debt we owe the brave men and women who serve and their families. I'm sick of politicians who march in parades on Sunday and vote to gut the VA on Monday. We must fully fund and expand VA operations, including streamlining the process for claims and compensation. We must also enhance mental health programs to combat the epidemic of veteran suicide.

34. **What do you see is needed to combat the nearly 20 Veteran suicides a day?**

Feelings of hopelessness enhanced by societal attitudes, such as, oppression, racism, homophobia, discrimination, and prejudice can lead to suicide. Veterans commit suicide because of posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) caused by combat-related guilt, or overwhelming societal, family and organizational pressures. Early detection is important for prevention, so mental health

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professionals and health physicians are in a key position to screen for PTSD as soon as possible. Military leaders must monitor the effectiveness of suicide prevention programs, and fund the effective ones.