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This nonpartisan guide will help you learn about key issues supporting gender equity so you can cast your ballot for candidates who share your values.

It includes sample questions to:

- Help you evaluate candidates' stances
- Ask at public events (virtual and in-person)
- Discuss on social media





Research shows diverse learning environments improve academic performance and retention. While women have made gains in higher education,

Black and Latina women earn four-year degrees at much lower rates than white women and are underrepresented in higher education leadership roles.

Despite this need for inclusion, there is growing hostility towards efforts by colleges to address diversity. In June 2023, the U.S. Supreme Court rendered a decision in *Students for Fair Admissions v. Harvard* and *Students for*

Fair Admissions v. UNC that struck down race-conscious admissions policies.

Over the past three years, there has been legislation introduced at the state and federal level to dismantle diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) efforts on college campuses. These bills range from prohibiting the use of public funds on DEI-related activities; banning

restricting mandatory diversity training; and forbidding institutions to use diversity statements in hiring and promotion.

- How do you view the role of diversity and inclusion in higher education?
- Given last year's Supreme Court rulings on race-conscious admissions policies for colleges, what do you propose to address disparities in representation based on race, gender, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status in colleges and universities?
- Do you support investments in programs to help low-income individuals, for a postsecondary education and succeed once they are there?
- and equitable learning environment for all college and university students?
- What measures would you support — recruitment, retention, and professional development programs — to increase diversity among faculty, staff, and leadership in colleges and universities?

For many jobs, higher education is not just an option, it's a necessity. Within the next decade, it is expected that more than 70 percent of jobs in



Despite advancements in women's education and state and local pay equity laws, the pay gap affects women across backgrounds, ages, and education levels.

On average, women working full-time are paid about 84 cents for every dollar paid to men working full-time. The gap persists across races, ethnicities, and occupations. The impact is especially devastating for women of color, for example Black and Latina women working full-time making 69 cents and 57 cents on the dollar respectively, compared to non-Hispanic white men in 2022.

Pay equity is a matter of respect and fairness. While the reasons for the pay gap are complex, there are a range of steps that can address these disparities.

Increasing transparency around wages and compensation can help address gender and racial pay gaps by

preventing unconscious bias and outright discrimination that can skew compensation.

Prohibiting employers from relying on salary history to set wages ensures that prior pay discrimination does not hurt a woman's future earning potential.

Giving women tools to challenge wage discrimination and incentivizing employers to do the right thing, will also help address wealth gaps that disproportionately impact Black and Brown women.

Finally, robust pay data collection provides enforcement agencies with better data to enforce civil rights laws and encourages employers to self-analyze their pay practices and address pay disparities.

- Do you think the federal government should play a role in addressing the gender pay gap?
- How would you address systemic factors contributing to pay inequities, such as occupational segregation, discrimination, and barriers to advancement for women of color?
- Do you endorse the Paycheck Fairness Act or similar legislation aimed at strengthening existing laws, such as the Equal Pay Act of 1963, to promote transparency, accountability, and fairness in pay practices?
- What steps would you take to improve data collection and reporting on pay equity metrics, including tracking and analyzing pay disparities within and across industries, occupations, and demographic groups?
- How would you build bipartisan support for these efforts?

Too many American workers are forced to choose between a job, their health, or the health of a loved one whenever they get sick or a family member needs care.

As women continue to be the primary caregivers for children and elderly family members, they continue to disproportionately bear the economic opportunity cost of the lack of paid parental, family, or sick leave. The U.S. lags behind every other industrialized nation regarding this aspect of family care policies.

or sick leave are well documented and have widespread support, yet the vast majority of working people in the United

States still do not have access to this basic protection. The federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), provides job-protected, unpaid leave, however its promise remains out of reach for the 40 percent of the workforce not currently eligible for FMLA, which disproportionately are comprised of workers of color.

Additionally, nearly 28 million private-sector workers in the United States —

have access to paid sick days.

- Do you believe that all workers in the U.S. should have access caregiving and addressing personal medical needs?
- Would you support bills to provide all workers with paid family and medical leave and paid sick days, like the FAMILY Act and the Healthy Families Act?
- Most Americans live in areas without adequate childcare options. For those who have access to center-based childcare, the average cost is more than \$15,000 per year. How would you expand access to affordable, high-quality childcare for all families?
- How would you work with both parties to advance paid leave legislation at the federal level? How would you overcome obstacles to enacting comprehensive paid leave policies?



Women should be trusted to make their own informed choices about their reproductive lives within the dictates of their own moral and religious beliefs without government interference.

Reproductive rights and access to abortion care are fundamental pillars in promoting women's education and economic security. When women have control over their reproductive choices, they can better plan their futures, including their educational and career paths.

By having access to abortion care, women can make decisions about their reproductive health that align with their life goals. Autonomy over if, when and how to have children is vital to women's ability to control their lives, bodies and futures.

Since the U.S. Supreme Court's decision to overturn *Roe v. Wade*, access to abortion

care is now wholly illegal or severely restricted in many states. Over the last decade, the courts have created roadblocks to contraception access and creating ambiguity over access to fertility treatments.

Laws restricting access to abortion care and a full range of reproductive health care disproportionately affect low-income women, women of color, and women with disabilities, as they are disproportionately likely to live in those states, and already face substantial barriers to accessing reproductive services and health care worsening disparities in education and economic opportunities.

- Do you support or oppose government restrictions on abortion?
- Do you believe access to abortion care should be legally protected as a fundamental reproductive right?
- Do you support or oppose efforts to restrict access to abortion care through arbitrary gestational limits, waiting periods, and mandatory counseling?
- What legislative initiatives would you support to ensure all have access to comprehensive reproductive healthcare, including abortion, contraception, and IVF regardless of location?



Our democracy works when everyone can fully participate.

about issues that directly impact all of us. From our paychecks to paid leave, access to reproductive health care and access to education, our lives are on the line — and our vote is our voice.

To create real change, we must be part of the conversation, and the most powerful way for us to have our say is at the polls. Yet the right to vote has a long and tumultuous history. Protecting that right — one that many fought long and hard for — continues today as ongoing efforts to suppress the right negates what it means to live in a free democracy.

The freedom to vote is not a political issue — it is a constitutional right. In



the wake of the U.S. Supreme Court's *Shelby v. Holder* decision, anti-voter bills swept the nation disproportionately impacting people of color, women, disabled, young, and old voters.

Americans of all races, backgrounds, genders and zip codes have the same right to vote. The full promise of democracy can be made real by enacting policies promoting safe and accessible elections for all and pushing back on unsubstantiated claims of voter fraud. Such policies include expanding online registration, early voting, and voting by mail.

- What measures would you support to expand voting access and protect the right to vote for all eligible citizens?
- What steps would you take to address misinformation about the integrity of our elections and combat voter disenfranchisement?
- Would you support a bill to expand access to voting and protect the right to vote for all eligible citizens such as the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act?
- What strategies do you propose to promote civic engagement, voter education, and voter empowerment initiatives?



Most Americans wrongly believe the Constitution provides gender equality. However, the 14th Amendment guarantees equality for men but is poignantly silent on women.

While the text of the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) is simple — “Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex” — its impact would be profound. Yet, the progress our country has made on gender equality through the courts and patchwork legislation can be reversed.

The Equal Rights Amendment would provide explicit constitutional protections against gender-based discrimination in



areas like education, employment, and healthcare. Without this, laws regarding women’s rights can be changed or revoked by legislators and judges.

While the Equal Rights Amendment has

states, it still has not been recognized as the 28th Amendment. Publication of the ERA would provide, once and for all, the constitutional guarantee that all men and women are truly equal under the law and that these rights cannot easily be abridged.

- Do you support the publication of the Equal Rights Amendment to the United States Constitution, which seeks to guarantee equal rights under the law regardless of sex?

