



FLORIDA CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS *Candidate Questionnaire Project*



2018 CANDIDATE RESPONSE
Florida Senate District 12

Gary McKechnie (DEM)

Do you support or oppose...

ABORTION REGULATION: Requiring parental consent before a minor child's abortion, notwithstanding previous judicial concerns?

OPPOSE

Optional Candidate Comment: *While I see the point you're making and would love to support this, I've been made aware that some minors are being abused -- and then impregnated -- by a family friend, parent, or other relative which makes the likelihood of them seeking guidance from the courts extremely slim. They don't have the confidence or life experience to navigate this. So while I'd like to think that there's one level of society in which a young woman can go to warm, loving, and understanding parents, there are too many variables involved to make this a blanket policy. That said, I'd work hard to create a society in which minors can trust and rely on their parents to be their most trusted advisors and role models.*

ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE: Increasing access to care for uninsured Floridians, especially the working poor?

SUPPORT

Optional Candidate Comment: *My campaign is based on three tenets: Compassion, common sense, and compromise. When I speak to groups, I share that the Golden Rule (Do unto others as you would have them do unto you) has been the basis of nearly every major religion for thousands of years. Why conservatives choose to make caring for the least among us a political issue is far beyond the scope of my understanding. Providing healthcare just so a minor ailment doesn't accelerate into a major illness is what a caring and compassionate society does. It's humane.*

AFFORDABLE HOUSING: Using all state housing trust funds as intended to address affordable housing needs in Florida?

SUPPORT

Optional Candidate Comment: *The Sadowski Fund had been established to create affordable housing for Florida's poor and disadvantaged citizens. When the Republicans in Tallahassee saw a shortfall in the state budget -- a shortfall they created by giving tax breaks to their corporate patrons -- where did they go to fix the problem? Straight to the Sadowski Fund which they raided to siphon millions from the most vulnerable among us. If that's their idea of loving thy neighbor, they have a lot to learn. It's shameful.*

DEATH PENALTY REPEAL: Ending Florida's use of the death penalty while preserving the alternative of a life sentence without parole?

SUPPORT

Optional Candidate Comment: *One of the best aspects of life is finding your perspectives evolve as you grow older. When I was younger, the death penalty seemed appropriate. Now it seems inhumane. The racial component, too, needs to be addressed. As I understand it, never in Florida's history has a white man been executed for killing a black man -- but many black men have been executed for killing white victims.*

END-OF-LIFE PROTECTION: Preserving Florida law that bans physician-assisted suicide?

OPPOSE

Optional Candidate Comment: *While I can't foresee a time when I'd personally choose to engage a physician to help end my life, I also can't speak for 20 million other Floridians who may someday face this difficult situation. While I'd like to believe we'll all pass on peacefully surrounded by friends and loved ones, the reality is there are people whose quality of life has diminished beyond measure, whose medical bills are pushing them and their families into bankruptcy, who are enduring unendurable pain days and weeks and months on end, and whose family members are enduring unspeakable anguish as they watch this process. Since we can't project a blanket approach to end of life decisions, this is where you come in. As religious leaders you are essential in counseling patients and their families so they can make this most difficult decision. It's said only God can take a life, but as His representatives you can assist patients who are facing this decision and hoping to do so while remaining in God's favor.*

FREEDOM TO SERVE: Allowing individuals and organizations the freedom to serve the public in accord with reasoned conscientious beliefs related to sexuality and marriage?

OPPOSE

Optional Candidate Comment: *I read this a few times and take it to mean giving a pass to someone who wants to discriminate against someone else based solely on who that person is or who they love. Here's my take: Using faith as a reason to express intolerance toward anyone isn't using it the right way. Now let's take that a little further... Should members of the LGBTQ community deny service to the people or organizations who had denied service to them? Where does it end? Do we break up into tribes and talk past each other, or do we see one another as fellow citizens who, by the grace of God, are here on a journey together and each here to learn something from one other?*

IMMIGRATION: Urging Congress to undertake extensive immigration reform, rather than adopting piecemeal state policies?

SUPPORT

Optional Candidate Comment: *I'd support it, and that's one reason I'm running for the State Senate -- to get lawmakers working together and doing what they were elected (and are paid) to do. Unfortunately, the two-year trend toward nationalism, racism, and intolerance -- coupled with wholesale corruption of the Executive, Legislative and, now, Judicial branches of the government -- makes this impossible until men and women of conscience and character are elected to office.*

JUVENILE JUSTICE: Establishing that children under 14 shall not be transferred to the adult criminal justice system?

SUPPORT

Optional Candidate Comment: *I'd raise that to 17.*

PARENTAL EMPOWERMENT: Creating education savings accounts to use for nonpublic school tuition?

NO RESPONSE

Optional Candidate Comment: *I would need clarification on this. If I read this correctly, I would support it ONLY if those funds are private (ie: no taxpayer involvement) and that funds earmarked for public schools are not affected or decreased in any way. You can't transfer public funds into private or charter schools that play by a different set of rules.*

SAFETY OF SCHOOLCHILDREN: Expanding existing legislative initiatives to harden the physical security of nonpublic schools?

NO RESPONSE

Optional Candidate Comment: *Again, I would need clarification on this. If it is a for-profit private or charter school, then they should add the costs of security into their budget. Public schools should receive public funds.*