**QUESTION 1: Do you have designated advisors and clear processes for making decisions on disability issues? If yes, please describe.**

**ANSWER:**Yes. We have an all volunteer campaign. We do not have a “formal” disability advisory group, but I have several disabled friends and family members that I call on for advice on disability issues.

**QUESTION 2: Is your campaign accessible and inclusive to people with disabilities? If yes, please describe.**

**ANSWER:**Yes. Our volunteers include several people with disabilities. We have begun the task of captioning our YouTube videos. Our main limitation is, being an all volunteer campaign, finding people willing to put in the volunteer hours necessary. ASL interpreting is available upon request. We will make sure our events are accessible.

**QUESTION 3: Do you have a proven record on improving or a plan to improve the lives of people with disabilities? If yes, please describe.**

**ANSWER:**Yes. My oldest son is hard of hearing. As he was growing up, my wife and I advocated for changes at his deaf school that improved the educational experience for all subsequent students. When he was in 8th grade, he brought home a seventh grade textbook in math. We asked what was going on, and were informed that deaf students were all held back several years in middle school and high school because they all “needed more time to learn.” We knew that this was wrong for our son, so we insisted on aptitude tests. They showed that he was already several grades ahead in several subjects. After that, all students now receive personalized testing and curriculum that matches their abilities and needs. I also served as a volunteer member of the IEP committee in my son’s school district, where I saw students with many different situations.

Since my son is hard of hearing, I learned ASL and have worked professionally as an ASL interpreter, both for private interpreting firms and for the Toledo Public School system.

**QUESTION 4: Do you have a plan/commitment to reduce the stigmas about people with disabilities that are barriers to employment, independence and equality? If yes, please describe.**

**ANSWER:**Yes. I plan to support and strengthen legislation such as the ADA, IDEA, and ABLE acts. I believe that disabled people receiving Social Security benefits should be able to receive full benefits and a full time paycheck for a period of some years with SS benefits tapering off very gradually perhaps over a period of 10  years, with full reinstatement of SS benefits in case of job loss.

**QUESTION 5: Do you have a proven record on enabling, or a plan to enable, people with disabilities to have jobs, careers and to start their own businesses? Do you have specific strategies for youth employment for people with disabilities and/or sector strategies such as jobs and careers in STEM, hospitality, healthcare and elder care? If yes, please describe.**

**ANSWER:**When I had a business installing wind turbines and solar panels, I did not have any full time employees, but I hired a deaf employee part time when I needed help. Our son attended, and we have donated to, Camp Mark Seven in New York, which is a camp staffed by deaf for deaf children.

Greens believe that post secondary education should be free for all Americans. Education is key to employment in our technologically advanced society. With our plan, disabled will be able to receive the education necessary to earn a degree or certificate without suffering financially.

**QUESTION 6: Do you have a plan to enable students with disabilities, including those from historically marginalized communities and backgrounds, to receive the diagnosis, Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and accommodations/services they need to succeed in school and be prepared for competitive employment? If yes, please describe.**

**ANSWER:**Yes. When I worked as a grant writer for a community college, I assisted in the design of one of the most successful Tech Prep programs in New York State. Key to the success of our Tech Prep program was that the academic requirements for the Tech Prep students were actually MORE stringent than for the general curriculum. However, these higher standards were presented in the context of real world work situations. So, students immediately saw how the math and mechanical skills they were learning applied to the “real” world. I believe this concept should be applied for integrating differently abled students into the work force as well. Internships are a valuable piece of this puzzle.

Our son graduated valedictorian from his deaf high school. However, he was also mainstreamed for his math and science courses, and had the second highest grade average in his hearing school as well. Part of the reason he succeeded was that we taught him from a very young age that being hard of hearing did not mean that he was limited in what he could do in life. Today he is completing a Master’s degree in Outdoor Education and living on his own in Alaska, going to school and working at Costco.

**QUESTION 7: Do you have a plan to reform the benefits system (Medicaid, Medicaid buyin) to enable people with disabilities to work to the best of their capacities without losing supports they need to work? If yes, please describe.**

**ANSWER:** Yes. The Green Party is working to establish universal, single payer health care in the United States. That means that every single person will be covered fully regardless of whether or not they have disabilities. They will be covered if they change jobs, or if they are not working.

**QUESTION 8: Do you have a plan to ensure people with disabilities are eligible for affordable health insurance regardless of preexisting conditions? If yes, please describe.**

**ANSWER:**Yes. Our single payer, universal health care system will be based on the models used by other developed countries such as France, and Canada. We will NOT emulate the British system, which has created a “two-tiered” health care situation. Everyone will be included, regardless of pre-existing conditions.

**QUESTION 9: Do you have a plan to provide home and community-based services to people with disabilities who would rather live in their own homes instead of institutions, and have the community attendant supports they need to work? If yes, please describe.**

**ANSWER:**Yes. Home health caregivers are an essential part of health systems in countries like France. When we switch to a universal health system, they will be provided.

**QUESTION 10: Do you have a plan to ensure that individuals with disabilities receive services that would prevent them from being swept up into the criminal justice system, divert individuals with disabilities who are arrested to treatment options in lieu of jail where appropriate, receive needed accommodations in the criminal justice process and while incarcerated, and offer appropriate reentry support to help individuals with disabilities leaving jails and prisons reintegrate into their communities and secure jobs? If yes, please describe.**

**ANSWER:**Yes. Greens are committed to shutting down the “school to prison pipeline.” Our incarceration rates are the highest in the world, and the for profit prisons are creating an incentive for judges to fill them. Many studies have shown that education is the key to eliminating recidivism. I worked in a college program that provided inmates the opportunity to earn Associate’s degrees.  Recidivism rates for those students who finished their degrees were very low. These programs were eliminated when congress denied Pell grants to inmate students. I will work to restore education programs for incarcerated people. Prisons should be for rehabilitation.

There needs to be better transition services for all those who are released from prison, including the disabled. I will work to increase funding for prison to work transition programs. I will also work to insure that people with disabilities who are incarcerated receive necessary accommodations.

Greens also want to restore voting rights to inmates. This will help them more effectively press legislators for their own fair treatment.

**QUESTION 11: People with disabilities are twice as likely to be victims of crime as those without disabilities. People with disabilities also are far more likely to suffer from police violence, partially because manifestations of disability can be misunderstood as defiant behavior. Do you have a plan to address these issues? If yes, please describe.**

**ANSWER:**Yes. I am acutely aware of the problems disabled often have in relating to police. Deaf people, especially, have many times suffered injury, arrest, and even death because they could not perceive shouted commands from police officers.

The Green Party advocates Citizen Review Boards that will monitor police departments and ensure that best practices are followed. Sensitivity to disability issues varies widely from police department to police department. The Black Lives Matter movement has also pointed out the inequities in police treatment of minorities. I believe it is time for the federal government to issue guidelines to local police departments, based on best practices for dealing with the public. These guidelines will help police departments protect the public, both from criminals, and from bad policing policies.

**QUESTION 12: Both children and adults with disabilities are more likely to be victims of rape or sexual assault. Do you have a plan to address this issue? If yes, please describe.**

**ANSWER:**No. But I am aware that this is an important issue. Some residential schools, especially, have reported high levels of sexual abuse. I intend to become more educated on this subject so that I can create a plan to address it through legislation. I also intend to read  your organization’s Disability & Criminal Justice Reform: Keys to Success, report.

**QUESTION 13: Do you have a plan for veterans with disabilities facing barriers transitioning from active duty to civilian employment? If yes, please describe.**

**ANSWER:**No. but I intend to study this important issue and create one.

**QUESTION 14: Do you have a plan for accessible, affordable, integrated housing to allow people with disabilities to live in the communities where they work or are seeking work? If yes, please describe.**

**ANSWER:**Yes. There is no reason for homelessness in America. We have enough wealth to ensure that everyone has a home. We intend to increase funding for public housing programs such as HUD to increase housing access.

**QUESTION 15: Do you have a plan to address the lack of accessible transportation options that is a barrier to work for people with disabilities? If yes, please describe.**

**ANSWER:**Yes. In Wood County, one of our local municipalities, Perrysburg, appointed a member of the Libertarian Party to their city council. Libertarians believe that the government has no role in doing things like providing public transportation. One of the first acts the Council then did was to eliminate public transportation in Perrysburg. Many disabled people became virtual prisoners in their homes. Blind people, especially were unable to do simple things like go to the grocery store. The Wood County Green Party, under my leadership, helped pass a ballot issue that restored public transportation funding.

Many local municipalities depend upon federal matching grants to maintain their roads and bridges. I intend to make those funds contingent upon providing adequate public transportation to all their citizens, including the disabled. Greens also want to see an increase in the use of rail, and a de-emphasis on the use of automobiles. It’s part of our plan to go carbon free by 2030.

**QUESTION 16: Do you have a plan to advance innovations (i.e., assistive technologies, devices) that can help people with disabilities become more successfully employed, productive and independent? If yes, please describe.**

**ANSWER:**Yes. I intend to fully fund federal research grants that encourage the development of assistive devices. The federal government also needs to work with private industry to ensure that new technologies that are developed are then marketed and made available to persons with disabilities at an affordable cost. The cost of many assistive devices such as hearing aids will continue to be covered by the universal health care program.

**QUESTION 17: In your foreign policy and national security plan, do you plan to continue America’s tradition of standing up for the rights of oppressed people, including people with disabilities, around the world? If yes, please describe.**

**ANSWER:**Yes. As a Senator, I intend to push for ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Also, many of our trade deals such as NAFTA and GATT are based on the idea that somehow trade must be kept separate from any other kind of issue. That is trade can’t be used to pressure other countries to improve workers’ rights or the rights of the disabled or the rights of LGBT people. I intend to push for a repeal of many of these trade deals, allowing the US government to pressure other countries that violated their citizens’ rights by allowing us again to impose trade sanctions.