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

**ANSWER:**Yes, I have strong relationships with members of Delaware’s disabilities community, and I rely on them for advice and guidance on how to best serve the needs of those with disabilities.

I have also learned a lot about the challenges impacting those with disabilities from experiences within my family. My niece was born with severe autism. I have seen my sister and brother-in-law struggle to find the care she needs, and have tried to help them overcome challenges with education, housing, and support in the community.

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

**ANSWER:** Yes, my campaign welcomes all Delawareans to share their thoughts and concerns about the future of our state. We ensure that our offices and community events are always accessible for anyone who wishes to participate in the election process.

**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. I believe that a true measure of the commitment of government to the people it serves is how well it addresses the needs of those who are living with disabilities. Throughout my career in public service, I have been a strong advocate for improving the services and support offered to Delawareans with disabilities. As Chair of the Delaware Healthcare Commission, I commissioned the state’s first comprehensive analysis of mental health, which made specific recommendations on the availability of professionals and gaps in the service continuum. In the past, I’ve also proposed plans that would create more employment opportunities for those with disabilities, increase access to community-based care, and improve key services, such as housing and transportation.

**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:**I’ve heard from business leaders and government officials that hiring people with disabilities is good for their organization. These employees are often very grateful for the opportunity, eager to learn new skills, and extremely hardworking — qualities that every employer wants in those they hire. The state of Delaware has been a national leader in hiring people with disabilities and as governor, I would expect this to continue.

**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:**My vision of economic development for Delaware includes leading the state through the transition to a more entrepreneurial, 21st century economy. Delaware has to be competitive in the global economy. There are more and more career opportunities for those with technical skills and innovative ideas. I believe that many people with disabilities have the skill and talent to succeed if given these opportunities, and would consider implementing programs that give them any extra support they need.

**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. A main part of my plan to improve education in Delaware is focusing on early childhood education and services for children from birth to five years old. Delaware has made significant progress in recent years on testing children at an earlier age for signs of developmental delays or disabilities. We need to continue improving this system by streamlining and prioritizing early childhood education efforts within state government, building stronger connections between the early childhood and K-12 systems, and providing parents with needed early intervention, coaching and support. Please visit [www.johncarney.org](http://www.johncarney.org/) for more details on my education platform.

**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:**Delawareans with disabilities should not be forced to choose between much needed health care coverage and meaningful employment, which provides them with income and self-worth, and benefits our larger community. I support both of these goals, and believe we can find a way to meet this challenge. In 2004, Delaware commissioned a comprehensive analysis of the benefits and impacts of a Medicaid buy-in program. I have not looked at this analysis recently, and many aspects of Medicaid and the overall healthcare system have changed since the study was done. However, I would be open to considering such a program again if it could be implemented in an effective, fiscally responsible way.

**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. While I was not a member of Congress when the Affordable Care Act was passed, I have voted more than 50 times in the U.S. House against efforts to repeal the law. I do not believe the ACA is perfect, and there are substantive changes that need to be made to keep insurance affordable for individuals and small businesses. But we must continue to ensure that those with pre-existing conditions, including those with disabilities, have access to quality, affordable health insurance**.**

**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:**All Delawareans with disabilities should be able to live close to friends and family, live as independently as possible, engage in lives that include productive employment, and live in settings where they can participate in community life. These are the same goals that we all have for ourselves and for our children, and I am committed to working with businesses, non-profit organizations, advocates, and people with disabilities to move Delaware closer to those goals.

**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. Delaware’s prison system is very expensive and often does not provide the needed support, rehabilitation, and training that offenders need. I support offering appropriate alternatives that put those with disabilities back on the path to being productive members of our community. And I believe more education and training options should be available to offenders with disabilities, and those without disabilities, to ensure that they can work, find housing, and support themselves after they are released.

**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:**I believe there needs to be substantial effort put into building relationships between Delaware law enforcement agencies and the communities they protect. This effort should include professional development and training on understanding and meeting the needs of those with disabilities to ensure that every Delawareans’ rights are protected and our communities remain safe.

**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:**The prevalence of children and adults with disabilities being victims of rape and sexual assault is truly horrifying. Several years ago, Delawareans experienced this horror in a very high-profile way when a local pediatrician was caught and convicted of assaulting hundreds of his patients. The incident shook our entire community. Delaware’s then-Attorney General Beau Biden made it his mission to inform and educate as many Delawareans as possible of the dangers and warning signs of sexual assault, as well as the appropriate actions to take if one suspects that a family member, friend, or loved one is being victimized. Unfortunately, Beau has passed, but his legacy of protecting children lives on through the Beau Biden Foundation, which is working hard to accomplish its goal of advocating for those who are the victims of sexual assault, including those with disabilities, and educating tens of thousands in our state on this vital topic. As Governor, I will support the organization’s work and continue to advance policies that protect those who are victims of these horrible crimes.

**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:**I believe, as Vice President Biden has often said, “Our nation’s one truly sacred obligation is to prepare and equip those we send into harm’s way, and to care for them when they return home.” After 15 straight years of conflicts, more and more Americans are returning home bearing the visible, and invisible, scars of defending our nation. As a member of Congress, one of my most important responsibilities is to help Delaware veterans get the care and support they deserve, including access to quality healthcare, housing, and employment. I have been a strong advocate for improving healthcare for veterans through the VA system, and a vocal critic of the VA, particularly in Wilmington and Philadelphia, when it was discovered that veterans were not being provided the timely care they needed. For the last two years, I have hosted Veterans Office Hours events in every county of the state to bring together federal agencies, service organizations, and local nonprofits to help address whatever needs veterans express. I have also co-hosted, along with Delaware Senators Carper and Coons, more than 30 job fairs for Delawareans, including a dozen specifically for veterans looking to connect with employers. If I’m elected Governor, I will look to continue these efforts and find additional opportunities to support veterans returning to civilian life.

**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:** Finding quality, affordable housing is a significant challenge in many Delaware communities. Statewide, a family has to earn an income of more than $21/hr. to afford a modest two bedroom apartment and utilities at fair market rate. This challenge is compounded for many Delawareans with physical and mental disabilities, as well as those struggling with substance abuse, because they often need professional support in addition to affordable housing. If I’m elected Governor, I will direct state agencies, like the Delaware State Housing Authority and the Office of Land Use and Planning, to work with local governments, private organizations, and members of the religious and non-profit communities active in this area, to develop a plan of action for addressing the challenges of affordable housing, including for those with disabilities.

**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:**Delaware has a strong transportation system for those with disabilities. The state’s Paratransit system is one of the most robust systems of its kind in the nation. There are also many other organizations, such as the Modern Maturity Center, Kent-Sussex Industries, CHEER, and Easter Seals, that provide transportation services for those in need. However, the system is also very disconnected and expensive to operate. As Governor, I will look for opportunities to more efficiently and cost effectively provide these services without sacrificing accessibility for those who need affordable transportation options.

**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:**I share the goal of helping those with disabilities have more opportunities to successfully gain employment, and live more productive, independent lives. I am not very familiar with new assistive technology that would help Delawareans with disabilities address the challenges discussed above, but I am interested in learning more.