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

**ANSWER:**Yes. My campaign manager Narlina Duke is permanently disabled herself and has long been an advocate for rights for the disabled and has worked with multiple different organizations. Upon my election, I intend on hiring additional advisers who will be able to assist Narlina to ensure all the rights of the disabled are honored, as well to assist in legislation that will continue to ensure this.

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

**ANSWER:**Yes. All of my events have been in ADA compliant locations. I have not produced video that are able to accommodate closed captioning. Narlina has a family member who can assist with sign language if the need occurs. Narlina ensures that if the need were to arise, we have the ability to accommodate an individual with disabilities. However, I have not made a campaign brochure that can be read by the blind and my website is unable to accommodate that.

**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 plan on assisting in passing legislation that will ensure the disabled are able to work within their capacity if they choose. I also support the continuing and strengthening of Social Security that provides necessary benefits for America’s disabled. I believe the disabled should have the ability to attend higher education and aim to ensure they are able to do this as well have the resources to do so. I do believe America’s public education system is lacking in areas for disabled children and think that there needs to be legislation passed that would ensure handicap children the ability to receive quality education based upon their individual needs and abilities. My campaign manager, Narlina, was a leading advocate in getting the bill HR803/WIOA passed through the Senate, House of Representatives, and signed by the President. She worked for over a year with thousands of advocates to pass this bill, and upon being elected I intend on ensuring this is fully implemented in Oregon and across the Country. I intend to have Narlina continue on with me upon my election to the Senate with the understanding that her medical needs will be top priority as well as her autistic sons to ensure she is able to continue working.

* I support the 1986 – The (American) [Air Carrier Access Act](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Air_Carrier_Access_Act)
* I support the 1990 – The [Americans with Disabilities Act](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Americans_with_Disabilities_Act_of_1990) (ADA)
* I support the 1990 – The [Individuals with Disabilities Education Act](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Individuals_with_Disabilities_Education_Act) (IDEA)
* I support the 1992 – Amendments to the (American) [Rehabilitation Act](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rehabilitation_Act) of 1973
* I support the 2002 – [Help America Vote Act](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Help_America_Vote_Act) (HAVA)
* I support the 2004 – The [Individuals with Disabilities Education Act](http://idea.ed.gov/)
* I support the 2006 – [UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](http://templatelab.com/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities/)
* I support the 2008 – The [Americans with Disabilities Act](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Americans_with_Disabilities_Act)  (ADA) Amendments Act of 2008
* I support the 2008 – [Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Genetic_Information_Nondiscrimination_Act_of_2008)
* I support the 2009 – The [Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Matthew_Shepard_and_James_Byrd,_Jr._Hate_Crimes_Prevention_Act)
* I support the 2010 – The [21st Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=21st_Century_Communications_and_Video_Accessibility_Act&action=edit&redlink=1)
* I support the 2013 – The [Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Workforce_Innovation_and_Opportunity_Act) (WIOA)
* I support the 2014 – The Stephen Beck, Jr. [Achieving a Better Life Experience Act of 2014](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Achieving_a_Better_Life_Experience_Act_of_2014&action=edit&redlink=1) (ABLE Act)
* I support the 2014 – [Every Student Succeeds Act](https://www.congress.gov/114/crpt/hrpt354/CRPT-114hrpt354.pdf)

**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. My campaign manager, Narlina, has discussed with me her own experiences regarding her being disabled and being judged because of it and her inability to convince employers she is able to do some work. I think there needs to be a focus on educating the public about disabled people like her and how these people are able to contribute to society in many ways. My interactions with Narlina’s handicapped son has shown me how with the proper education, encouragement, and support system he will be able to have a job and live his adult life with limited assistance. I believe all disabled American’s deserve a chance to have these same opportunities. In order for this to happen there needs to be a national effort to educate the public, including our school children on the possible abilities of the disabled and how they too have dreams and goals and should be offered the same respect and opportunities as the non disabled.

**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:**Yes. By hiring Narlina Duke as my campaign manager, I believe I have shown that I am committed to enabling the disabled to work, as well I am supportive of her career and providing her with a job. I have not written any specific legislation, however upon being elected, I intend on reaching out to the disability organizations, and discussing how I can be of assistance to achieve these things. I believe the disability organizations will have the best ideas and solutions of how to do this.

**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:**I believe that first there needs to be a complete assessment nationwide regarding these services. I believe educators, parents, and organizations should be involved in the process to work together to come up with actual solutions that will ensure every disabled child is provided the opportunity and resources to achieve their own goals and as well ensure they are being provided every opportunity a non disabled child is if not more.

**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. I have spent many hours discussing with my campaign manager, Narlina, all of the ins and outs of the Medicare/Medicaid system and how it is not properly set up for the disabled. I believe that it needs its own reform for the disabled and that due to their medical needs it should always ensure their coverage especially while working. We cannot allow for the disabled to have any lack of coverage due to an employer or lack of funds as the building block of a disabled person being able to work is the assurance of their health being in optimal condition to do so.

**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. Like I said above, I think there needs to be a reform within the health system specifically for the disabled that ensures they always have quality care no matter employer, financial situation or 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:**I do not have a specific plan, however, I fully support programs that ensure people with disabilities are able to live in their own homes. A community based living situation, like there is for the retired, would accommodate this perfectly where homes are catered to the needs and abilities of the disabled but as well a community center that would allow for social activities, meals and other things. I do not believe the disabled should be locked up in institutions or hospitals as this does not provide them the quality of life they deserve.

**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:**I believe that part of the reason the disabled get wrapped up into crime situations has to do with the lack of public awareness, lack of community support, lack of quality education, and just all around lack of support programs and funding. In order for us to rectify this we first must directly deal with the things that are lacking and fix those. Then we will need an institution based treatment that focuses solely on the disabled who have committed crimes that allows them to learn about why what they did was wrong, teaches the better response, and prepares them to return to society as law abiding citizens. In the case of violent offenders I believe there needs to be a separate prison like setting solely for those proven to be disabled. There is currently an extreme amount of brutality in our prisons towards individuals with disability that is inhumane and due to lack of public awareness and knowledge this will take years to change, however having an entirely separate secured location for these offenders will at least ensure they are treated humanely.

**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. This falls into the same category as education to the public. Just as we have information classes regarding medical conditions I believe we need the same for disability symptoms and behaviors. By passing legislation that provides a better support system for individuals with disabilities I think that will limit some of these situations from continuing to occur however we need an overall campaign that educates all of the public about the disabled. Narlina has told me about the stigma related to her and how she does not openly tell people she is disabled because many judge her for it, and if they don’t know they will respect her, however, if she openly tells them they will judge her and instead of providing respect will attack and belittle her. Due to this stigma, it would not be beneficial for people with disabilities to be provided an identifying item that could be provided to law enforcement, however with education and implementing law enforcement officers who are trained to identify the disabled it would greatly limit this abuse.

**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:**Yes. First we must pass laws nationwide that register all sex offenders. In Oregon, currently 98% of the sex offenders are not registered, this creates a dangerous situation. Second there needs to be extensive oversight in the hiring of people who work with the disabled to ensure they are not previous offenders nor prone to be one. As well legislation needs to be passed that funds the research to identify how to educate individuals with disabilities about the dangers and as well an education program that is able to teach them about these dangers. Recently, Narlina was discussing with me about how she reached out to the Autism Society regarding assistance in teaching her autistic son just going into puberty about his body and what is okay and what is not and she found that in Oregon there was no program for this. She said it complicates the ability of her as a parent to ensure her son properly understands about his own body and what is not okay.

**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:**Yes. I believe our veterans should have all of their needs met, no matter the expense. I support providing our Veterans with insurance, education, housing, and rehabilitation if needed. Currently the system is set up so difficulty that most veterans fall through the cracks and never receive help which contributes to the suicide rate. The Department of Veterans Affairs pays a ridiculous amount of money to the people in charge and this has to end. I believe by ensuring the people in charge of our Veterans Affairs are actual veterans themselves is the first step in ensuring they receive quality care. Second, we need counselors available to every veteran prior to leaving the service and throughout their lives that are able to navigate both the VA system and as well the job market. Third, we need specific health care that is based on Veterans only, this will ensure they are able to see the doctors they need to and as well receive the medical treatment they deserve. This will also enable the ability of the doctor to be able to apply for the grants needed for housing adjustments, medical supplies, and physical therapy. Currently, American’s have a stigma about veterans, especially those with PTSD. There needs to be education and campaigns that advertise this and educate the public regarding so this can be stopped. There needs to be a law passed that punishes employers against discriminating against Veterans. There needs to be a hiring initiative that prioritizes veterans in the job market that focuses on ensuring disabled veterans are able to acquire employment they are able to do. I meet veterans often that are disabled and either homeless or stuck at the bottom of society, these veterans tell me about how they are not receiving help nor the funds they should be. This is a disgrace, and America should be ashamed of themselves for allowing this to happen. Just as there are programs for offenders, refugees, and others there needs to be programs that ensure no veteran is left behind especially those who are disabled. I understand that many of these laws exist however they are grossly abused and I believe that an entire VA package needs to be submitted solely about Veterans with proper enforcement and funding set up.

**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. I mentioned above how there should be communities that are like retirement communities but are set up for the disabled and handicap based upon their needs. I believe these need to be established all throughout each state where there are individual apartments/homes for the self sufficient and apartments for those who need more assistance with support within the community for their needs. Currently most neighborhoods consist of a combination of the disabled and non disabled. I believe passing legislation that ensures these communities are built and/or created will solve the housing crisis and as well ensure that the disabled and handicap have affordable and reliable homes. By creating these communities limited to the disabled, handicap, and families with disabled family members I believe it will solve many issues people with disabilities face and will help with crime as well. These communities would provide a safe environment and the affordable housing needed to ensure all individuals with disabilities have their equal opportunity at quality of life.

**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. The communities I mention above would be benefited well with a transportation system or as in Oregon bus routes that go from them to places people need to go for work, necessities, medical, and leisure. By ensuring they have affordable housing, encouraging self sustainability, and encouraging proper medical care this will allow for funds to be directed at creating transportation solutions. Uber and Lyft could have an entire system set up for the disabled that would easily allow for them to get to where they need, but as well just as in a retirement community there is transportation available for those who need more assistance.

**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 do not have a specific plan however I am supportive of investing in technologies and innovation that advances the abilities of individuals with disabilities. As my campaign manager points out, she does almost all of her work for me from home on the computer or phone. She has a laptop that has a touch screen and can be used laying down if need be. I believe there can be programs set up that allow others to perform work at home such as data entry, etc. that would require very little education and allow for people with disabilities to work. I know that mobility equipment such as motorized wheelchairs are very expensive and bulky and that research should be invested in making them more affordable and agile. I am aware of robotics as well that can actually assist people to live, cook, and do a number of things. Currently most of these are being created for military purposes however I believe there should be research and development dedicated to using this technology to better the lives of the disabled and handicap. In doing so we would be able to bring forth a future that would allow for the disabled to apply themselves in almost every area they could imagine.

**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. I believe that America needs to lead the world in equality and in human rights and will actively support this. I believe that as an advanced nation that has the ability of bettering the lives of individuals with disabilities in America we can as well show the rest of the world the importance to do so and the knowhow. Just as mentioned in your questions above regarding crime, this is an issue around the world. In order to empower the disabled to live a life of quality, we must also ensure they are educated and offered a way to be protected. I believe in protecting the innocent and consider America a beacon of hope.

**Statement by Narlina Duke, Callahan’s Campaign Manager**

[](http://therespectabilityreport.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Narlina-Duke.jpg)Narlina Duke

My name is Narlina Duke. I am the campaign manager for Mark Callahan, who is running for the United States Senate in Oregon. I am permanently disabled with a rare terminal illness, called primary intestinal pseudo-obstruction, among other conditions. In 2013, I was provided letters of non-treatment from multiple GI Doctors when I was informed my disease was terminal, and there were no treatments that could help me.

In 2004, my employer put me on medical disability because I had been having seizures and/or chest pains, which caused fainting spells, and were followed by me being unconscious for minutes to hours. My doctors could not pinpoint the actual cause, and prohibited me from working. In 2006, I became officially disabled due to unknown seizures, heart issues, and other unknown conditions. In 2008, I was diagnosed with fibromyalgia and chronic fatigue syndrome. In 2011, we finally diagnosed the seizures as extreme allergy reactions. In 2012, I was diagnosed with primary intestinal pseudo-obstruction and Sleep Apnea. To this day, the Doctors do not know the exact cause of my multiple other health symptoms, but they have decided it all derives from my digestive disease, which is genetic-based.

Prior to becoming disabled, I had worked one to two jobs at a time, while volunteering within the community. When I first became disabled, it was like my life had ended. I lost all motivation to live, and lost all hope in the future. I consumed myself in obsessing over finding my disease and resolving it. I was 25 years old, at the prime of my life and had to face the reality that I would not work again, and may never get married or have children. I spent the first two years of my disability moving to different states, and trying to convince employers to hire me, while I saw specialist after specialist. I would get to the interview, only to be informed that my health was too much of a question, and be denied for the job. In 2006, I had my first child. In 2007, I went into hiding through the Domestic Violence program, during which time I had little to no medical care. In 2008, my child was diagnosed with autism.

When I married in 2009, my husband was in the military, which provided exceptional medical for myself and my autistic son through his active duty service. With encouragement from my husband, I began advocating for victims, military families, and the disabled. During this time is when I met Dr. Robert Sears. My autistic child was referred to him after multiple specialists had stated there was nothing they could do, and that my child would remain around 8 months old in his abilities, although he was almost 4. Dr. Bob’s first action was to run allergy tests. My son came back allergic to all of the foods he was consuming, as well as many medications. This is when I learned of my own allergies. Dr. Bob taught me about nutrition and supplements. Because of Dr. Robert Sears I was able to identify the cause of my seizures, and end them, in addition to my son later becoming classified with high functioning autism after adjusting his diet for the identified allergies. My Doctors have stated multiple times that it is a miracle I am still living. I actually credit some of this to Dr. Sears, because him identifying my son’s allergies directly led to me finding mine, and learning about nutrition, which has assisted in enabling me to continue to live, and led to the later diagnosis of my rare disease.

When I received my final diagnosis in 2013, and was told I had weeks, months, maybe years to live, I decided that I would no longer wait for life to happen, and created a volunteer organization with another advocate that advocated for jobs for America’s, at the time, 93 million jobless. This advocacy involved fighting for legislation that would encourage job growth in all forms. In 2014, with millions of other advocates that are jobless, disabled, Veterans, retired, and handicapped, we succeeded in helping pass HR803/WIOA – an education bill designed to assist job seekers in obtaining the training that will lead them to sustainable futures. During this time, I realized that Congress was lacking in legislators that actually care about serving We the People. So, at the end of 2014, I made the decision to become involved in campaigns. I knew just how hard this would be, and never imagined that I would actually be permitted to do this, because the entire time I was advocating for legislation I would encounter one politician after another, or their staff, who chose to criticize me for being disabled, would ridicule me, or would be rude regarding.

However, in 2015, to my surprise, I was selected to be the Oregon State Director for Senator Ted Cruz’s Presidential campaign. For the first time in my life I felt worthy of being a member of society, and I didn’t feel ashamed for being disabled. I had the pleasure of traveling for his campaign into multiple states. I even took my family with me when I went to Nevada, and my autistic son, now nine, got to say a speech with Heidi Cruz. This is single handily the proudest day of his life. After his speech, while talking to Heidi, she was shocked to find out my son was autistic, because he communicates so well. While working for Senator Cruz’s campaign, I got to know Mark Callahan. When Senator Cruz suspended, I prepared to apply as Mark Callahan’s campaign manager, but before I could even do so, he called and asked. He said he would be honored if I would be his campaign manager for the general election, as he had just won his primary. I started to explain about my disability, as I have learned over the years not to talk about it unless I need to, because too many people are prejudice regarding my abilities. He quickly replied that I was qualified, and if I felt I was able, he would be honored to have me on the team. He went on to tell me that he believes everyone should have an opportunity to work, no matter the circumstance. Working for Mark Callahan has provided me a joy I cannot explain properly in words. He has accommodated my own health needs, as well as my autistic son’s. He regularly expresses his gratitude and appreciation for my work. During this time I have had the privilege of being a delegate at the National RNC Convention. I have been elected as a PCP for the Republican Party and I have been able to participate in things that I never dreamed imaginable prior to this year.

I am sharing all of this with you because despite being someone who is permanently disabled with an illness they say is terminal, I am more than capable of contributing to society. Politics have provided me an outlet that allows me to also accommodate my own health needs. Politics have provided me a way to stand up for what I believe in. If I succeed in helping elect Mark Callahan to the US Senate, I will continue on with him to D.C., and will be able to be a shining example of just what a disabled person is capable of doing. I will be able to stand up for the disabled and the handicapped, and show the World that we are worthy, able, and capable of contributing to society, just like someone who is not disabled. America is the only Country in the World that has a Constitution based upon equality, and it is time for America to celebrate all of their citizens, not just the select few, and I intend on ensuring this happens no matter how short or long my life may be. I am honored to have worked for a Presidential candidate who is a sitting Senator, and I am honored to work for Mark Callahan who I know will continue to stand up for all people with disabilities just as he has done for me.