



CANDIDATE FOR U.S. SENATE SURVEY

1. **Counsel:** When making decisions regarding services, programs and laws that could impact people with disabilities, who do you turn to for advice and counsel?
2. **Legacy:** What legacy and/or contribution do you hope the disability community remembers you for?
3. **Community Integration:** In the *Olmstead v. L.C.* decision, the U.S. Supreme Court issued a ruling that requires states to eliminate unnecessary segregation of persons with disabilities and to ensure that persons with disabilities receive services in the most integrated setting appropriate to their needs. What more, if anything, can the State of Texas do to implement this requirement?
4. **Housing:** Medicaid provides essential services and supports, but, by law, typically cannot pay for a person's housing costs. Programs operated by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) help make housing affordable (through rent subsidies) and help create new affordable, accessible, integrated housing. These include HUD's Section 811 Supportive Housing for Persons with Disabilities program and Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher program. Despite these programs, the need for affordable, accessible, integrated housing for people with disabilities is far greater than the availability. What action, if any, would you take to increase access to affordable, accessible, integrated housing for Texans with disabilities?
5. **Voting:** Section 7 of the National Voter Registration Act expands voter registration access for people with disabilities by requiring that state programs providing services to persons with disabilities also provide voter registration assistance. Do you support continuing this requirement and what other steps would you take to ensure that Texans with disabilities have the same access to voting (registering and casting a ballot) as Texans without disabilities?
6. **Transportation:** Accessible transportation in urban, suburban and rural America is essential for people with disabilities to participate in community activities and to obtain medical care. What actions would you take to increase accessible transportation options for people with disabilities in urban, suburban and rural America?
7. **Emergency Preparedness:** What can the federal government do to improve emergency management and preparedness for people with disabilities?
8. **Special Education:** A recent investigation by the U.S. Department of Education found that Texas implemented a limit on the number of Texas students receiving special education services, which lead to tens of thousands of children with disabilities not receiving the services for which they were eligible. As a result, school districts must now



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work to identify eligible students and provide them the special education services for which they are entitled. Do you support or oppose increased education funding to ensure that Texas public schools have the resources and training necessary to meet the diverse needs of students with disabilities?

9. **ADA:** The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) protects people with disabilities of all ages from discrimination in employment, public accommodations and other areas. The U.S. House of Representatives recently passed a bill to reform the ADA. Do you support or oppose maintaining the original protections of the ADA?
10. **Disability Integration Act:** The Disability Integration Act (DIA) is bi-partisan legislation introduced in the U.S. House and Senate that will guarantee people with disabilities the liberty and freedoms outlined in the Constitution. This will mean access to community-based long-term services and supports; health care; and affordable, accessible, integrated housing. If elected, would you become a sponsor of the DIA?
11. **Wages:** Under Section 14(c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act, employers can obtain certificates from the Department of Labor (DOL) to pay less than minimum wage to workers with disabilities. Most of these jobs are in sheltered workshops away from the community. In 2001, a U.S. General Accountability Office report found that the DOL had not managed the 14(c) program to ensure workers received the correct wages. A 2016 study by Disability Rights Texas found that such sheltered workplaces create an environment in which Texans with disabilities can be exploited and do not provide meaningful opportunities for skill advancement.

What changes, if any, do you believe the federal government should make to the 14(c) program? Would you support or oppose legislation that would eliminate the 14(c) program?

12. **Empower Care Act:** The Money Follows the Person (MFP) program began in Texas and has relocated over 30,000 Texans out of costly nursing homes and other institutions to less expensive, more inclusive and better-liked community settings. Although federal MFP has expired, SB 2227 (the Empower Care Act) is a bi-partisan bill reauthorizing it. Would you support or oppose the Empower Care Act?
13. **Community Attendants:** Community Attendants provide critical in-home community support services to people with disabilities and older Americans that allow them to stay in their own homes and communities. In Texas, most community attendants receive less than \$10 per hour, and do not receive sick leave, vacation or health benefits. Would you support policies and funding that would increase the number of community attendants that are available to provide these critical in-home community services and supports?



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14. **Census:** Census data is widely used to apportion federal resources for community programs. So far three Census test studies have been canceled due to a lack of funding. What measures would you support to ensure that the Census is conducted in a comprehensive and apolitical manner with sufficient funding to guarantee the most accurate count possible of the population of individuals with disabilities?
15. **Community-Based Services:** Do you support continuing the Medicaid Home and Community-Based Settings (HCBS) rule that was established in 2014? How will you work to ensure that individuals receiving Medicaid community-based services have full access to the broader community and are able to access care in the most integrated setting?
16. **Social Security:** Social Security insures nearly all Americans and provides benefits to over 12 million people with disabilities and their spouses and children. People with disabilities and their families access benefits under all parts of the Social Security system, and all parts of the system are important to people with disabilities. Do you support or oppose cuts to, or changes in, eligibility for Social Security? What action, if any, would you take to strengthen parts of Social Security to meet the needs to people with disabilities?
17. **Medicaid:** Do you support or oppose turning Medicaid into a system of “block grants” or imposing “per capita caps?” If you support this, how would you implement such a program? If you are opposed, are there improvements you would support?
18. **Cannabis:** The U.S. Department of Justice has been directed to no longer take a hands-off approach to enforcing federal cannabis laws in Texas and other states where any type of cannabis has been legalized. Would you support or oppose change at the federal level to protect medical cannabis patients and providers? Do you support or oppose federal prohibitions on cannabis research?
19. **Engagement:** A key slogan of the disability community is “nothing about us without us.” Beyond what we now do, what can the disability community do to engage decision makers more effectively and participate in the policy decisions that affect our lives?

