

**American Family Association of Pennsylvania
Congressional Voter Guide
Responses from Todd Rowley, Democratic Nominee PA-13**

09/20/2020

- 1.) Do you fully support the Second Amendment and the right of citizens to own firearms?

YES. I am a gun owner and have been my entire adult life. I grew up hunting with my father and grandfather and was taught the responsibility and safety that comes along with owning and possessing a firearm. As a lifelong gun owner and having spent nearly 30 years in public service as a law enforcement officer, I will always protect law-abiding citizens constitutionally protected right to own and possess firearms – the right to bear arms. I will defend and protect this right as vigorously as any other rights we have as Americans. I also support common sense, reasonable firearms safety legislation just as most of my fellow gun owners, hunters, sportsmen and sportswomen support. We must first ensure that law enforcement agencies are enforcing the firearms laws we have in place, that includes making sure that the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) System is receiving all of the necessary and appropriate criminal records data information from all law enforcement agencies, including from DoD and military judicial convictions/sentencing. The majority of fellow gun owners - and Americans - support universal background checks on all firearms sales, including at gun shows, private sales and on-line. Why would we continue to allow a dangerous, convicted felon, violent extremist or terrorist circumvent the process in which a law-abiding citizen must follow and be able to illegally purchase a firearm?

- 2.) Do you support the actions of the EPA in reducing regulations?

I support a fully funded and staffed Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) with competent leadership that performs its oversight and accountability responsibilities to effectively protect the American people and our environment. We do not have to sacrifice clean air, water and soil by weakening or eliminating necessary regulations within the manufacturing, transportation, industrial and energy sectors. We can protect the health of Americans and our environment without sacrificing jobs and our economy – we can do both with the right leadership and respect for facts and science.

- 3.) Do you support the Equality Act which would extend the same rights to gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transgenders as afforded to other protected groups under the 1964 Civil Rights Act?

YES. As a person of Christian faith and having been raised and taught the values of Jesus, I support those core values of hope, compassion, love, humility, and forgiveness – to love your neighbor as yourself. These are the Christian values that have guided me in my life’s journey. All human beings deserve equal protection under the law.

4.) Do you support overturning Roe v Wade?

NO. Despite what the AFAPA currently reflects my position as “pro-abortion,” I would like to make it clear that I am not “pro-abortion.” My personal wish is that there would never be a situation or reason for a woman, her family, and her physician to decide to end a pregnancy. But as we all know, that is not reality and it will never be in the world which we live. Regardless how anyone or any entity wants to characterize my position regarding abortion, I am not “pro-abortion” and if it is necessary to classify my position, a more accurate description would be “pro-choice.” I respectfully request the AFAPA to revise my position as reflected in your voter guide.

The issue of abortion and Roe v. Wade stirs so much passion, controversy, and divisiveness to its discussion that whatever one’s views may be regarding this issue, I fully respect these differing views. As a candidate seeking elected office, I believe it is important to separate my personal views and feelings about abortion from how an issue like abortion is viewed within the context of the law, as currently a legal, protected right as determined by the highest court in our land, the U.S. Supreme Court. I also like to remind citizens that should I be so honored to represent the hardworking families of PA-13 in Congress, as a representative in Congress I will have no legislative or other legal authorities to change existing abortion laws or the legal precedent that has been set by the U.S. Supreme Court concerning abortion rights. Any restrictions placed upon legal abortion is decided at the individual state legislative level.

As a former law enforcement officer of nearly 30 years, I have taken the oath to protect and defend our constitution - our freedom of speech and religion; a law-abiding citizens right to own and possess a firearm; and a women's right to seek a safe, legal abortion as affirmed by the U.S. Supreme Court. No citizen can pick and choose what laws he/she cares to follow and those to be ignored. That is the foundation of our democracy, the principle of the rule of law. In addition to protecting and upholding our constitution and laws without prejudice, I will always defend women's rights. Women's rights for equal pay, opportunity and advancement in the workplace; end to domestic violence and sexual harassment in the workplace and our society; and the autonomy that every woman deserves - the right to control her own body, the right to make those most personal, private health care and reproductive family decisions. The three most important people in my life are my wife of nearly 27 years, my mother and my sister and I will fight for their equality and autonomy like it is my own freedoms I am fighting for. Who am I, or any other elected official - particularly any man - to tell another human being, a woman - what she can or cannot do with her own body and health care, reproductive decisions? Try forcing restrictions upon any sitting Congressman what he can or cannot do with his own personal freedoms, or decisions regarding his own body and reproductive decisions.

As I previously stated, I am not “pro-abortion” and abortion should never be thought of or used as a form of contraception. I have never met anyone in my life who is “pro-abortion” or thinks there should be more abortions. As human beings, unplanned pregnancies happen and will continue to occur in our society. That is human nature and we will never change that. What we can change is preventing as many unplanned pregnancies that occur through age-appropriate sexual reproductive education and the availability of contraceptives to lessen the scenarios when the decision is made by a woman, her family and her physician in making

what often is the most difficult, heartbreaking decision made by ending a pregnancy - to include incidents of rape, incest, a non-viable fetal abnormality, or the risk and health of the mother. As an elected representative, I will work to address the myriad of societal issues that often are factors linked to unplanned pregnancies such as: poverty, homelessness, substance abuse, lack of education, and job opportunities. I will always protect and defend the laws of our land and women's rights. Should Roe v. Wade be overturned in a future court challenge, women who have abortions - often at the direction of and financed by the man involved - will still take place. The reality is poorer women in our society will suffer and these women will die. While the wealthy women in our society - and men - will seek out and have abortions as they normally would do under the safe, legal protections that exist today. It is my position that we must do everything we can to prevent this decision being made and never place a woman and her family in a situation where they have no safe, legally protected health care and reproductive facility to call upon for the health care they need.

5.) Do you support efforts to repeal and replace Obamacare?

NO. I believe health care is a basic human right and is not a privilege exclusively for the wealthy. I support policies that ensure every American has access to affordable, quality health care. Clearly, there are aspects of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA) that must be examined, revised and improved; however, there is no denying that the ACA has been able to provide millions of Americans health care coverage who otherwise would not have this coverage. Should the ACA be struck down by the U.S. Supreme Court, 21 million Americans could lose their health insurance; 133 million Americans with pre-existing conditions could lose this critically important coverage; 12 million Americans could lose their Medicaid coverage – fellow citizens who are poor and/or who have disabilities; 800,000 Americans with opioid addiction receiving treatment through Medicaid; 165 million Americans who no longer face caps on expensive treatments; 60 million Medicare beneficiaries would face changes to medical care and possibly higher premiums; 2 million young adults with coverage through their parents' plans; \$50 billion medical care for the uninsured could cost billions more; nutrition labeling and calorie counts could be ended. These are the potential negative consequences of eliminating the ACA altogether. Where is the replacement health care plan that will provide this level of health care protection to Americans without the ACA?

6.) Do you support building the wall on the southern border of the United States?

I support federal funding for the renovation, enhancement, and additional construction of the approximately 700-mile existing barrier walls and fencing as deemed necessary by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and U.S. Border Patrol. The security and enforcement of the remaining nearly 1,300 miles of the southern border – much of which is in remote areas along the Texas border, can be accomplished through law enforcement advanced technologies, some of which are already in place along the border. This funding should also include the hiring of additional DHS and Border Patrol personnel. Spending U.S. taxpayers' funds to build a wall along the southern border is generally inefficient and ineffective.

7.) Would you support a bill that banned transgenders from serving in the military?

NO. There are an estimated one million American veterans in the U.S. with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) and related identities who have or are proudly serving our country. All veterans and active-duty service personnel deserve respect and dignity. I support justice and equality for all Americans, and I oppose discrimination of any person.

8.) Do you support repealing the Johnson Amendment which tends to silence churches and pastors from addressing issues viewed as political?

NO. This relates to the fundamental concept of a “wall of separation between church and state” as referenced by one of our Founding Father’s Thomas Jefferson. Although not specifically referenced in the constitution, this concept is the foundation of the First Amendment – the Freedom of Speech and Religion – protecting the citizenry’s religious beliefs and liberty without interference from the government. The Johnson Amendment as related to the U.S. tax code prohibits those non-profit organizations, i.e. churches from endorsing or opposing political candidates. If churches and religious leaders wish to endorse specific political candidates from the pulpit, then they should be willing to end their non-profit organization tax status. If not, keep politics and the endorsement of political candidates out of the sermons and churches across America. I do not support policies that mix one’s religious beliefs with governance.

9.) Do you support a ban on fracking in order to combat climate change?

I support protecting existing manufacturing and energy jobs, including those existing hydraulic fracturing operations in Pennsylvania and across America. Our country requires significant energy production and consumption to maintain our economy and national security. The process of fracking has resulted in increased oil and natural gas reserves and a lower level of dependency on foreign oil. While recognizing these benefits, fracking also presents significant harmful effects upon the environment – polluting our air, water and soil, and efforts to combat climate change. Climate change is real, and our energy sector must embrace the innovation and technology that exists to transition away from fossil fuel production and consumption to clean energy sources, i.e. wind, solar, geothermal, hydroelectricity, biomass, and hydrogen. The simple question to ask citizens is if they would welcome a new fracking operation in their community?

10.) Do you support preventing federal dollars from going to Planned Parenthood?

NO. The federal funding that Planned Parenthood receives provides health care services for mostly low-income women – preventative health care screenings and services. The fact is that the Hyde Amendment mandates no federal Medicaid funding of abortion – except for situations involving the endangerment of the mother’s health, or the pregnancy resulted from rape or incest. Through education and making contraception accessible to women and families, the number of unplanned pregnancies can be reduced while in turn reducing the decision to have a safe, legal abortion.