**Name: *Darryl Smith***

**District running for: *6th Representative***

**Political party: *Democrat***

**Political/civic background: *Please see attached bio*.**

**Occupation: *Union Laborer***

**Education:** ***Some College***

**Campaign website:** ***dsmith6threp.com***

**Chicago Sun-Times Editorial Board questionnaire responses**

**Taxes/Budget:**

Q. *Illinois has a massive state debt and crushing pension debt. Many elected officials from the governor to state lawmakers have indicated there is a need for additional revenue to help balance the budget.  If Illinois needs to generate additional revenue, which options would you support in a budget package:*

*1.     Increase the state’s income tax on individuals or corporations, either temporarily or permanently.*

*2.     Expand the sales tax to services.*

*3.     Tax retirement income in excess of $50,000.*

*4.     Adopt a progressive income tax.*

*If you oppose all tax hikes, please provide specifics on how you would reduce state spending by $7 billion to balance the state budget.*

A) ***I would support option #1 at a 1% income tax on either a temporary and/or permanent basis. Permanency would be dependent on revenue raised after a fiscal cycle. I would also support option #4. Unfortunately we are the state is in a financial crisis and measures must be taken to fill the gaps.***

Q) *Do you support another legislative attempt at pension reform? If so, which proposed changes in the pension system would you support that you believe would pass constitutional muster?*

A) ***I believe the plan introduce by Senator Cullerton would pass******constitutional muster****.*

Q) *Do you support a budget template developed by a bipartisan, bicameral group of legislators that would allow members to pass a budget without the consent of the legislative leaders?*

A) ***As long as that template did not hurt the residents of the 6th district. While I have an obligation to the state, my main obligation is to the people that elected me. Since July 1, 2015, the cuts made due to the lack of a balanced budget have hurt the most vulnerable segment of my district which is the seniors, children, and working class families. We have to explore new innovative ways or revisit some out of the box initiatives to generate revenue.***

**Education:**

Q) *What, if anything, should we do to change how we fund schools?*

A) ***Seek new revenue sources or revisit recent revenue generating initiatives such as gambling. Millions of dollars cross our state line daily. Those dollars could stay home, generate revenue and jobs. Also a 1% income tax boost.***

Q) *Do you favor the state picking up the pension costs for Chicago teachers, as the state does for teachers outside Chicago? Do you favor school districts outside Chicago picking up their own pension costs, as Chicago does now?*

A) ***I think both State and City should share the pension cost. I don’t think other municipalities have the capacity to absorb their respective pension cost. We should be able to work together to fix the pension problem no matter if you’re in Chicago, Zion, East St. Louis or Peoria.***

Q) *State support for public higher education has declined for two decades. Do you favor the status quo or a significant increase in state funding? What is your plan to restore Illinois’ leadership in public higher education?*

A) **I support an increase in state funding. We have to have well-educated and trained workforce in order to compete in a global market as well as retain businesses.**

**Transportation**:

Q) *Illinois has a tremendous backlog of infrastructure needs: roads, bridges, waterways, transit. What would be a good way to pay for it? Do you support an increased gas tax — and/or other taxes and fees — to finance infrastructure improvements, including public transit?*

A**) *I think the people of Illinois have been over taxed. Besides a 1% income tax and a progressive income tax, I cannot support putting the burden on the backs of hard working residents who are fighting to simply keep their head above water. We need to look at other revenue generating ideas like: new casinos specifically in the Chicago area.***

Q) *Illinois’ public transportation formula provides money for operating costs, but not capital costs. Should Illinois create a reliable funding stream for capital costs?*

***Yes***

**Jobs:**

Q)  *Illinois has long been a strong manufacturing state. Today, Illinois employs fewer than 600,000 manufacturing workers and manufacturing’s share of the Gross State Product has dropped to 12.4 percent.  Our state saw the loss of nearly 10,000 manufacturing jobs in 2015 and announcements from some high-profile companies of job losses. The average manufacturing job pays more than $70,000 and helps create a strong middle class.  Name the top three things that you would do to help attract and retain manufacturing jobs in Illinois.*

A) ***Provide tax credits for existing business that employ over 100 people and also to***

***attract new manufacturing businesses who agree to hire a minimum of 100***

***employees. Lobby the Federal government to purchase and contract with***

***manufacturing companies in Illinois to create more jobs. Work with the businesses***

***to address issues that are causing job losses. Provide extra incentives for businesses***

***that provide “on the job” training to Illinois residents which could be a win/win for***

***all involved parties.***

**Energy:**

Q)  *Illinois has a very diverse energy portfolio and is a net exporter of energy in a deregulated marketplace. Energy is poised to be major issue in 2016 because of federal regulations and possible changes in Illinois’ energy portfolio. Nuclear energy emits zero carbon emissions at a time when the new federal rule requires Illinois to reduce carbon emissions by 44 percent. Do you support or oppose legislation backed by Exelon to create a low-carbon portfolio standard?*

A) ***I would have to look further into this issue. I am concerned about the motives of a***

***huge corporation such as Exelon. I would really have to take a close look at the***

***pros and cons of this particular issue***.

Q)  *Illinois’ current Renewable Portfolio Standard calls for Illinois to procure a certain percentage of renewable power by the year 2020.  The state is only halfway to its goal, and there is a proposal to increase the required amount of renewable energy and extending the time period to meet that goal. Do you support or oppose increasing Illinois Renewable Portfolio Standard even if the cost of power increases slightly? Do you support or oppose the Illinois Clean Jobs bill?*

A) ***I oppose any further increase in energy cost. Residents of Illinois and particularly my district have and continue to be having a difficult time as it is with rising energy cost. The freeze on funds to programs such as LIHEAP, have hurt thousands of Illinois residents. I would not want to burden residents with higher cost if at all possible.***

Q)  *Illinois has to reduce carbon emissions by 44 percent under the federal rule.  Do you support creation of either a cap-and-trade program or a carbon tax to help mitigate carbon emissions in Illinois?*

A) ***I support a carbon tax that will reduce carbon emissions and generate much needed revenue from those that don’t meet the standards***.

**Gun safety:**

Q) *Do you support tighter gun background check laws? Do you support limiting straw*

*gun purchases?*

A) ***Definitely yes. The flow of guns especially in urban areas like the 6th***

***district is alarming.***

Q) *Do you support or oppose state licensing for all firearms dealers?*

A) ***In support***.

Q) *Do you support or oppose allowing families to petition the courts to temporarily*

*remove guns from people in crisis?*

A) ***If I’m correct there are already measures in place depending on the crisis. But in the event, I have faith that the courts will make just decisions on a case by case basis.***

**Criminal justice:**

Q) *Do you support or oppose legislation to promote the transparency and preservation of police disciplinary records?*

A) ***Support. In light of recent events, this is one way of mending the bridge between***

***police and community***

Q)  *Do you support the goal of reducing the Illinois adult prison population by 25% by 2025? Would you support sentencing reform such as reducing or eliminating prison terms for non-violent drug offenses? Would you support early release of aged and disabled prisoners predicated on an assessment of risk to public safety prior to release?*

A) ***I support this measure. Our jails are busting at the seams with non-violent offenders who in some cases are in need of preventative treatment instead of incarceration***. ***Yes I support the early release if there were a panel of professionals to make a correct assessment***

Q) *Do you support automatic expungement and sealing of criminal records for all crimes after an appropriate period during which the former offender commits no crimes?*

A) ***Yes with the exception of sexual offenders and some violent crimes with a sliding***

***scale depending on the crime.***

Q) ***Given that there are more empty beds than youth now in the juvenile prisons, do you support closing one or more juvenile prisons?***

A) ***Yes especially if it would save the state money***.

Q) *What is your view on a proposal to end the placement of juveniles on the state’s sex offender registry based on assessment of their risk and likelihood to reoffend and/or benefit from treatment? For adult sex offenders, what is your view on delivery of rehabilitation therapy and limiting sex offender registry restrictions only to those men and women assessed to pose a danger to others?*

A) ***While I believe in second chances, I understand that sex offenders have issues that***

***sometime, cannot be corrected. I think it would be a disservice to the communities***

***of the state. In this particular instance, it is better to be safe than sorry.***

Q) *Do you support a form of merit selection of judges?*

A) ***Yes***

**Other:**

Q) *Do you support the pending constitutional amendment to create an independent commission to draw legislative districts?*

A) ***Yes.***

Q) *What changes in workers’ compensation or tort reform do you favor?*

A) ***If any I would make the equitable for both parties. Understanding that large corporations to mid size business have the luxury of lawyers, while the average worker is not equipped for such a fight if there is one.***

Q) *Do you support or oppose automatic voter registration?*

A) ***Support.***

Q) *What sort of ethics and campaign-funding reforms does the state need?*

A) ***There should be a cap on amount given to candidates by a corporate entity, special***

***interest groups, its employees and immediate family members i.e. spouses, husbands etc..***

Q) *2016 is going to be a big year in education, as both state and the City of Chicago wrestle with fundamental issues of funding and school policy. Who was the most important teacher in your life and why?*

A) ***There were actually two. My 5th grade teacher Ms. Hardy, who pushed us to be the best and would allow us to be mediocre students. My Sophomore History teacher, who taught me the importance of history and how it typically repeats itself. It raised my level of awareness of current events and how they could be shaped by the past.***