

**Name:**

Phil Fortunato

**Email**

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**District:**

31

**Title And Position Number You Are Seeking:**

Senator

**1. Are you an incumbent?**

yes

**2. If yes, what policy or budget item that supports people with disabilities who are employed or seeking employment are you most proud of advancing during your tenure?**

Made sure the budget included funding for DD issues and housing. Drafted a bill to have transit companies provide transportation within their taxing district as opposed to along bus lines. They testified that it would cost "hundreds of millions of dollars".

**3. If you are not an incumbent, what will you do to support individuals with disabilities find and keep jobs and contribute to our economy?**

In passed years I ran a bill to provide a dedicated funding source for DD housing so people can live more independently.

**4. Do you personally know anyone with an intellectual/developmental disability? I/DD includes people who have cognitive disabilities such as Down syndrome, Autism, Cerebral Palsy, etcetera.**

My sister

**5. Have you ever worked alongside anyone with a developmental or intellectual disability?**

Yes

**6. Nearly 80% of people with a developmental disability are not employed or are underemployed. What can you do in your role to address this issue?**

I consider employment to be essential for people with DD. When my sister had a job she felt productive and walked to work every day. She lost her job. Got depressed and started eating more and gained weight. Went from walking with a shuffle to a cane to a walker to a wheel chair for dying of diabetes. I contribute all that to her losing her job.

**7. Many people with developmental and intellectual disabilities who do work are worried about losing critical lifeline benefits such as medical care and social security because of earnings. Will you commit to working with CEA and other stakeholders to bridge this gap in coverage for people who want to work?**

Yes

**8. It is estimated that 12,560 people with developmental disabilities receive NO paid services from the Developmental Disabilities Administration. If you are elected, what will you do to ensure services for all?**

This was part on my campaign statement in 2014. to provide that funding

**9. If elected and during your campaign, will you commit to meeting with businesses in your**

**community and across the state who have benefited from having a diverse work force which benefits their bottom line?**

Yes

**10. Community Employment Alliance members work hard every day to secure and retain competitive employment, increased wages, benefits and job training for people with disabilities. The impact of community employment on individuals and families is substantial. During your campaign, will you commit to meeting with families whose sons and daughters have benefited from employment services and hear their stories of inclusion, autonomy, and independence?**

Yes

**11. Is there any other information pertaining to this topic that you would like your constituents with developmental disabilities, their friends and their family members, to know about you?**

My campaign manager has a severely disabled adult child. Providing services and respite care is very important for families with DD children.

**12. Do you have any questions about people with intellectual and developmental disabilities that we can help you with?**

No. Been there and lived it growing up.

**Thank you for remitting your candidate questionnaire. Your feedback will be posted on our website exactly as you have written it. Your responses will help inform thousands of constituents in your district and across the state of your positions on these very important issues. Your responses will not be edited. If you have questions or if you need help completing this form, please call or email Executive Director, Adrienne Stuart, at the contact information below. Thank you for your time.**