

Women's Economic Priorities Candidate Information

GENERAL INFORMATION:

Prepared By: Eryn Mitchell Date: 8/14/14

Candidate Name: Suzanne Bonamici

Office Sought: Oregon CD-1 District: House of Reps

Campaign Address: PO Box 1632

City: Beaverton State: OR Zip: 97075

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CANDIDATE AUTHORIZATION & SIGNATURE:

I have read the attached 2014 Candidate Questionnaire and affirm the survey answers represent my position on the issues addressed.

Date: 8/14/14

Suzanne Bonamici

Candidate Name (Printed)

Suzanne Bonamici

Candidate Signature

**U.S. Women's Chamber of Commerce
Candidate Questionnaire 2014**

1. Fair Pay - AAUW Reports "The Paycheck Fairness Act takes meaningful steps to create incentives for employers to follow the law, empower women to negotiate for equal pay, and strengthen federal outreach and enforcement efforts. The bill would also deter discrimination by strengthening penalties for equal pay violations and by prohibiting retaliation against workers who inquire about employers' wage practices or disclose their own wages."

Do you support or oppose the Paycheck Fairness Act (S. 2199)?

Support

If elected, what specific actions will you take regarding fair pay programs?

Equal pay for equal work is not a new idea, and yet women today are still victims of wage discrimination. Nationally, women working full-time are paid about 77 cents for every dollar paid to men. That gap is even more pronounced for African American women and Latinas. This wage disparity puts the economic security of women and their families at risk. For these reasons and more, I am an original co-sponsor of the Paycheck Fairness Act (H.R. 377) and will continue to advocate for equal pay for equal work if reelected to Congress this coming November.

2. Minimum Wage - The Women's Chamber recognizes that raising the minimum wage is good for women, businesses and America. Two-thirds of minimum wage workers are women. For women-owned small businesses, raising the minimum wage levels the playing field for fair competition. Minimum wage increases raise productivity and commitment of employees, reduce training costs and turnover, decrease absenteeism and increase morale. Raising the minimum wage increases consumer spending and improves the quality of products/services, customer satisfaction and company reputation.

Do you support or oppose legislation to raise the minimum wage to \$10.10 or more?

Support

If elected, what specific actions will you take regarding minimum wage?

I am an original cosponsor of the Fair Minimum Wage Act (H.R. 1010) and support of raising the national minimum wage to \$10.10 an hour and connecting it to the rate of inflation. That small change would make a huge difference for millions of families across the country. If reelected, I will continue to work in my role on the Education and Workforce Committee to support an increase in the federal minimum wage and other initiatives to ensure that working Americans do not live in poverty.

3. Birth Control - The National Women's Law Center states, "Contraception is critical preventative healthcare for women. The ability to determine the timing of a pregnancy can prevent a range of pregnancy complications that can endanger a women's health, including gestational diabetes, high blood pressure, and placental problems, among others." The Women's Chamber recognizes the economic impact on a family that can plan to have children when they are financially prepared.

Do you support or oppose mandatory coverage of birth control in the Affordable Care Act?

Support

If elected, what specific actions will you take regarding mandatory coverage of birth control?

I have been a lifelong advocate for family planning, access to contraception, and other reproductive rights for women. Having the ability to make informed and planned choices around pregnancy has a significant impact on women's lives, their livelihoods, and their economic stability. As a society, we should be doing all we can to prevent unwanted pregnancies.

I have received endorsements from Planned Parenthood Action Fund and am an active member of the pro-choice caucus. I am also an original cosponsor of legislation to reverse the Supreme Court's Hobby Lobby decision (H.R. 5051: Protect Women's Health From Corporate Interference Act), which was a step backward for women in the workplace. Closely held corporations employ thousands of people across the country, and although the owners of these companies have the right to their own beliefs, they should not be able to tell their employees what kind of health care they can receive in the name of personal religious beliefs. I am also an original cosponsor of H.R. 782: The Access to Birth Control Act

to protect an individual's access to legal birth control by requiring pharmacies to fill valid birth control prescriptions and over-the-counter emergency contraception in a timely manner regardless of the business owner's personal beliefs.

As a member of Congress, I will continue to advocate for women to have the ability to make private choices regarding pregnancy with their doctor, partner, and family, and no one else.

4. Family Friendly Workplaces - The US Women's Chamber of Commerce recognizes that the FAMILY Act will strengthen the economic security of working people, their families, and businesses. The FAMILY Act provides eligible employees with up to 12 weeks of paid leave to care for situations such as their own serious illness, the serious illness of a child, parent or spouse (including a domestic partner), and the birth or adoption of a child. Employees and employers would contribute to a self-sustaining fund, and contributions would amount to less than \$1.50 per week for the average worker or two cents for every \$10 of an employee's salary. Fund contributions would cover both benefits and administrative costs.

Do support or oppose the FAMILY Act?

Support

If elected, what specific actions will you take regarding family-friendly workplace?

I am a cosponsor of the FAMILY Act (H.R. 3712) and a firm advocate for expanding coverage to permit leave to care for a spouse, domestic partner (including same-sex couples), parent or parent-in-law, child or adult child, sibling, grandchild, or grandparent who has a serious health condition. For many families, a medical emergency or illness has devastating impacts on their ability to earn a living and provide financially. If reelected to Congress, I will continue to work on legislation that expands paid leave to provide more economic certainty for workers without or with limited access to paid leave.

5. Small Business & Access to Capital - The US Women's Chamber of Commerce hears stories everyday about the challenges women face when seeking capital to maintain and grow their businesses. The Small Business Administration lending programs consistently fail to provide adequate access for women-owned firms. HR 2451 directs the Administrator of the SBA to establish and carry out a direct lending program for small businesses (businesses with fewer than 20 employees).

Do you support or oppose legislation HR 2451: Strengthening Entrepreneurs' Economic Development Act of 2013 or other legislation that provides access to capital for small businesses?

Support

If elected, what specific actions will you take regarding access to capital for small businesses?

Small businesses are a critical part of our nation's economy, and it's important to give them the tools they need to be successful. The first job I held was in my mom's small business, and I understand from her experience the unique challenges faced by women- and minority-owned companies. I regularly hear from small businesses in my district that credit is tight and they don't have the resources needed to help their companies thrive. For this reason, my first act in Congress was to cosponsor H.R. 1418: the Small Business Lending Enhancement Act to get more capital into the hands of small business owners. I continue to champion this issue and am a cosponsor of the Credit Union Small Jobs Creation Act. I am an active member of the Congressional Caucus on Access to Capital and Credit and have led roundtable discussions with small business owners and entrepreneurs in Oregon so I can stay connected with the small businesses in my district and help directly when I can. Access to capital is an issue I have been working on since my days in the Oregon Legislature and one I will continue to champion if reelected to Congress.

6. Small Business & Access to Federal Contracts - The Women's Chamber has fought for over a decade to ensure women-owned firms have equal access to federal contracts. Women own one-third of all businesses, yet the federal government has never met the 20-year goal of 5% and, to date, women business owners have lost over \$100 Billion dollars in federal contracting opportunities.

Do you support or oppose legislation HR 2452: Women's Procurement Program Equalization Act (House) and S 2481: Women's Small Business Procurement Party Act of 2014 (Senate)?

Support

If elected, what specific actions will you take regarding increasing access to federal contracts for women-owned small business suppliers?

Women-owned businesses (and minority-owned businesses) deserve to be solid competitors in the federal contract marketplace. I support H.R. 2452 and I also support the Small Business Administration's programs that increase access to governmental contracting opportunities for women-owned businesses. Additionally, as an Oregon State Senator, I was a part of an effort to assess the disparities between the availability and use of disadvantaged, minority and women-owned business enterprises in public contracting.

7. Retirement - Social Security is a vital economic bedrock for women in the United States. The National Women's Law Center reports: (1) The average Social Security benefit for women 65 and older is about \$13,000 per year, (2) Social Security is virtually the only source of income for nearly three in ten female beneficiaries 65 and older, (3) Without Social Security, nearly half of women 65 and older would be poor. Women have longer life expectancy than men and consequently run a greater change of exhausting all other sources of income.

Do you support or oppose applying payroll tax to income above \$250,000, which extends Social Security solvency for 75 years?

Support

If elected, what specific actions will you take regarding ensuring Social Security solvency?

Social Security is one of America's greatest successes and is needed to safeguard economic security for our seniors and people with disabilities. In the long-term, we must work hard to find ways to maintain our commitment to seniors and people with disabilities by making targeted, needed adjustments to ensure the program's solvency - as we have done throughout its history. If reelected, I will support legislation raising the cap on the payroll tax to strengthen Social Security for future generations. I will not support any attempt to divert Social Security funds into the hands of Wall Street private accounts that could jeopardize the long-term solvency of the program and leave vulnerable seniors in danger of living in poverty.