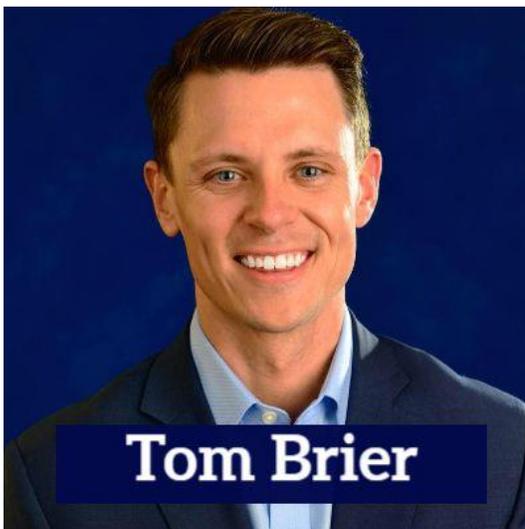


Hershey Indivisible Team planned to present a Congressional District 10 Candidates' Forum on April 8th. All three candidates were invited to participate in the forum. Eugene DePasquale and Tom Brier, both running on the Democratic Primary ticket, agreed to participate. No answer was received from Representative Scott Perry's campaign committee.

Before COVID-19, all arrangements were made. However, when the virus struck, for the safety of all, it was decided to cancel the event. To fulfill our promise to our members, we decided that HIT members could gain information about the candidate's positions on many issues by using a Q&A format. Over the last three years, HIT issue teams have developed positions on various issues and these were selected for questions. HIT's Election team formulated the questions to ask the candidates.

The following are the responses that we received from the candidates. Additional information on the candidates is available on the individual candidate's websites.

While we hoped that all three candidates would agree to take part, we want to share the positions of the participating candidates.



Foreign Affairs: What do you think are the top TWO foreign policy challenges facing the U.S. today?

BRIER: The two biggest foreign policy challenges facing the U.S. are restoring trust in America as a leader of the free world and combatting the spread of authoritarianism. We need to repair our relations with the world so that we can once again incentivize countries to work with us to address international problems with international solutions. This begins with restoring the Iran Deal, joining the Paris Climate Accords, and showing that when America signs an agreement, it is true to its word.

White nationalist violence has become a menace in the U.S. and around the world in the last decade. Internationally, attacks in New Zealand, Canada, the United Kingdom, and Norway among many others have created a pattern that is impossible to ignore. Domestically, the situation is sadly worse. In June 2015 a gunman shot and killed 9 black worshippers at Mother Emanuel church in Charleston after publishing a racist manifesto. In October 2018, a shooter killed 11 worshippers at the Tree of Life synagogue after sharing anti-Semitic threats and conspiracy theories online. Last year, a gunman killed 22 people at an El Paso Walmart to target immigrants. These crimes happened all over our country and the world, but the perpetrators shared the same violent, white-nationalist ideology. To solve this issue, we must collect better data from our law enforcement agencies around the country, make white nationalist-prosecutions federal terrorism cases, standardize those prosecutions, and have our leaders coordinate with countries around the world to address this growing scourge.

DePASQUALE: The number one thing we need to do to improve our national security is rebuild our alliances across the world. Actions taken by the current administration have left us isolated from global allies. The United States should be a leader and example of freedom, decency, and civility. We must reestablish ourselves as a global leader to address the challenges of nuclear proliferation, global terror, threats to cybersecurity, and protecting human rights. We should be reinforcing our relationships with our NATO allies and the UN, not threatening to pull away from them. When we remove ourselves from that role, the world loses confidence in our ability to lead as we once did.

The climate crisis is one of the biggest challenges we face. I believe we must take bold, aggressive action to tackle the climate crisis on a national level, while creating good clean energy jobs to provide a sustainable planet for future generations and demonstrate leadership on this issue. But we cannot do this on our own. It will take an unprecedented global effort and if elected, I will urge whoever is in the White House to rejoin the Paris Climate Agreement.

Economy / Jobs: The current pandemic demonstrates the extent to which we live in an interconnected world and the significance of a global economy. What role do you think the government should play in encouraging and promoting U.S. manufacturing and industry and the U.S. farm system from industrial scale producers to the many small and medium-sized family farms?

BRIER: The pandemic has laid bare a truth many of us already knew—while the topline numbers of our economy looked good following the Great Recession, the majority of Americans never really recovered. As a result, our entire economy—from manufacturing, to farming, to the services industry—became increasingly susceptible to small aggregate demand shocks.

If we want to make things better now and prevent this from happening again in the future, the federal government needs to take action immediately to fix the underlying problems in our economy. The first step is to create demand for manufacturing by passing the Green New Deal and creating millions of jobs focused on developing renewable energy sources. This will create more than a million new jobs and address the existential threat of climate change.

Next, we must reduce the use of high-risk, leveraged loans for corporations and instead enforce lending restrictions designed to prevent banks from issuing such loans in the first place. These loans create systemic risk to the economy.

Finally, we need to reduce the potential for shocks to the economy in the future. That includes establishing a coherent trade strategy with other nations and eliminating the threat of breaching the debt ceiling by eliminating it altogether.

DePASQUALE: Supporting manufacturing and farming is necessary in order to remain competitive in a global economy. The COVID-19 pandemic has made it clear the importance of increasing vital manufacturing in the United States to help protect us from disruptions in supply chains. We also need to invest in innovation, from things like increasing access to high-speed broadband to helping businesses adapt to modern, digitally assisted manufacturing technologies. We need to work with our manufacturers and farmers to make sure our trade policies are fair and not putting American businesses and workers at a disadvantage.

Small and medium-sized farms are the backbone of the agriculture community in the 10th Congressional District. Current policy puts too much emphasis on the large Agri-businesses rather than on the family farm and as a member of Congress, I will fight to ensure the survival of the small family farms. Whether it is through more sound trade policies or subsidy programs, small and medium-sized family farms will be my priority when I am in Washington.

Gun Safety: There is widespread agreement across the country that gun safety does not infringe upon the 2nd amendment right to bear arms. Current background check law only covers licensed dealers. A new piece of legislation expands background checks to private sales and the waiting period to ten days. The House passed this legislation over a year ago; it is languishing in the Senate. Less than one third of the states have an extreme risk protection order, also known as "red flag laws." **How do you plan to address the widespread citizens desire for enhanced gun safety while protecting the 2nd amendment?**

BRIER: Several months ago, I visited a group of students at a local high school. When I asked them what issues concerned them the most, a young girl raised her hand and said, with icy impartiality, "being shot." With more than 365 mass shootings in 2019 alone, with roughly 11,000 people in the U.S. killed in firearm assaults each year, with our children living in fear of being murdered at school.

This past March was the first March since 2002 without a school shooting and only due to the fact that schools had been closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It could not be clearer that we need to adopt meaningful, commonsense, gun violence prevention legislation. That includes universal background checks, red flag laws, and bans on high-capacity magazines and assault-style weapons. My suggestions do not restrict a law-abiding person's right to buy a firearm, nor do they authorize the government to confiscate one's guns. Instead, they are designed solely to limit one's ability to commit mass murder.

DePASQUALE: Reducing gun violence is one area where my experience of taking on tough fights and holding powerful people accountable most prepares me to go to Washington. The gun lobby is powerful, and they need someone like me to take them on. I have been endorsed by the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence because of my record as a leader on this issue.

As Auditor General, I did a Special Report on Firearm Safety and we found that two-thirds of all firearm deaths in Pennsylvania are the result of suicide. We need to do more to expand access to mental health care, especially in rural communities, to get people the help they need to prevent them from making that tragic decision.

About twenty-two percent of all gun sales in the US happen without a background check. I fully support universal background checks, which is also supported by 90 percent of Americans. I support red flag laws and preventing civilians from having access to weapons of war, which will prevent more unnecessary deaths due to gun violence.

Gender Justice: Broadly speaking, gender justice is a human right. Women and children bear the brunt of inequality, living on the edge of economic, social, political and cultural opportunities. **What do you see as the key to addressing this issue and its effects of harassment, violence, exploitation, poverty and related issues?**

BRIER: The lack of equal economic opportunity serves as both an expression of our unequal culture and a driver of it. Resolving that is essential to addressing the cultural disparity and all its effects. Our country has systemic issues in the way we pay men and women. And this problem is only exacerbated more with the addition of race. While women on average make around 80 cents on the dollar compared to men, black women were paid 61 cents for every dollar white men made, Native women made 58 cents to a white man's dollar and Latinas earned just 53 cents to a white man's dollar. This problem is only getting worse. The gap in weekly earnings between white and black women is higher today than it was forty years ago. We must push the EEOC to confront these issues head on and require anyone taking federal money to provide equal pay and benefits for equal work to all workers.

A key part of any initiative going forward means guaranteeing paid parental leave and affordable child care. Among the 41 developed countries, the U.S. is the only one that does not mandate any paid parental leave. We ask our young parents to choose between spending time with their newborn and putting food on the table. That is wrong. If countries like Italy, Poland, Germany, and Japan can all mandate more than 20 weeks of paid leave, we can too. In more than half the states, a year of childcare costs more than a year of in-state college tuition. We are burdening young families and also missing an opportunity to provide quality education from a young age to promote cognitive skills, sociability, and self-control. On average, these burdens and missed opportunities fall far more on women than men, stunting their professional growth and exacerbating the gender gap. The federal government should be partnering with local providers to create a network of child-care options available to every family, free of charge to any family making less than 200% of the poverty line and for limited costs for families above that so no family must spend more than 10% of its income on childcare expenses.

DePASQUALE : Standing up for the rights and protections of women and children is something I have always done. As Auditor General, I uncovered 3,200 untested rape kits in Pennsylvania and because of that work, the backlog of untested rape kits in the state has been nearly eliminated. This is an issue across the country and if elected to Congress, I will sponsor legislation to fund elimination of the backlog nationwide. I also uncovered 58,000 unanswered calls to the child abuse hotline, but my work didn't stop there. I worked with agencies, caseworkers, and social workers across the state to issue a State of the Child report and recommendations to ensure at-risk children are effectively protected from abuse and neglect.

I was disappointed earlier this year when our current congressman Rep. Scott Perry voted to block ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment, which would ensure American women equal protection under the law. It is past due for these protections to be codified in our Constitution. It is critical that the Violence Against Women Act, which was passed in the U.S. House over a year ago but has stagnated in the Senate, is passed and sent to the President's desk to be signed immediately. I support strengthening equal pay laws to protect against sex-based pay discrimination. I support increasing the minimum wage and strengthening our labor laws.

Health Care: The Coronavirus pandemic has illustrated the inequity of our health care system and the problem with access to health care and health coverage for so many Americans. Proposals to address health care inequity range from Medicare for All, to Medicare with a private option, to building on the Affordable Care Act. Where would you place yourself on this continuum. Why?

BRIER: I support building on the ACA with a strong public option that is priced to make sure everyone can afford their healthcare premiums, deductibles, and copays. I believe this is a necessary first step towards establishing meaningful change in our healthcare system. When we remove the profit incentive from our healthcare costs, I believe we can actually help people get the healthcare they need. If the public option proves successful as I believe it will, it will put us on a glidepath towards a single-payer system.

DePASQUALE: If there is an issue that I take most personally it is making sure folks have affordable healthcare and taking care of those with pre-existing conditions. I had a brother with muscular dystrophy and my family was never able to get health insurance for him. I know what it is like for those families who struggle with paying medical bills and funeral costs for their loved ones.

When the Affordable Care Act was passed, I thought that families would no longer have to go through what my family and many others went through. It would not have prevented my brother's death, but it would have prevented insurance companies from denying coverage based on a pre-existing condition. Rep. Scott Perry has voted to repeal the Affordable Care Act twelve times. If I am your next member of Congress, I will work to protect the most vulnerable in our society with everything I've got, not vote to strip away protections.

The COVID-19 pandemic has laid bare the problems and inequities within our health care system. I support a public option that builds on and expands the Affordable Care Act. It would allow those with private insurance to keep it, and provides the option to buy into Medicare at an affordable rate. I also support automatic enrollment into Medicaid for those who cannot afford insurance. I have also called on the President to open a Special Enrollment Period during the pandemic to remove barriers to accessing care for those that are uninsured should they become sick.

Some states are taking action to protect women's access to reproductive health care, including family planning and abortion. For example, 13 states (but not Pennsylvania) protect the right to abortion if *Roe v. Wade* were overturned. Currently, Pennsylvania has a number of restrictions designed to reduce access to abortion care. **What would you do in Congress to ensure that women will not only continue to have the legal right to abortion but also will be able to access abortion care if needed?**

BRIER: I will always defend a woman's right to choose. Toward that end, I will support preserving the status of *Roe* in federal law to prevent an activist Supreme Court from stripping protections from American women. I will also support an increase in federal funds towards organizations like Planned Parenthood that preserve critical access to abortion care if needed. I also believe we must do more for the healthcare of women, particularly black women, during pregnancy and childbirth. The CDC reports that black women in the US have a maternal mortality rate that is 3.5 times higher than the rate for white women in the US. That is shameful. The maternal mortality rate for black women in the US on its own would rank worse than countries like Vietnam, Egypt, Thailand, and Mexico. We must do better by offering direct funding to healthcare systems where these racial inequities exist.

DePASQUALE: I have been endorsed by NARAL Pro-Choice America and Planned Parenthood because of my 100% commitment to protecting reproductive health care and the right to choose. As we are seeing increased attacks across the country to take away reproductive freedoms I will oppose TRAP laws that seek to place undue burdens on reproductive health care, efforts to strip away funding for health care providers like Planned Parenthood that provide critical services like cancer screenings, and oppose any effort to overturn *Roe v. Wade*.

There has been a lot of talk but little progress on controlling pharmaceutical costs. What do you think are the top two or three drivers of the rise of the cost of vital drugs and what would you do to address these causes?

BRIER: Simply put, the driving force behind the cost of pharmaceuticals is the greed of pharmaceutical companies and their willingness to exercise political power towards satisfying that greed. I would take a two-pronged approach to tackling pharmaceutical costs. First, I believe that if the government is providing the money to a drug company to develop a drug via public grants, the government should be able to reap a percentage of the profits. We cannot allow drug companies to privatize their gains while socializing their losses. More details on that proposal can be found on our [Medium blog](#).

Second, I support allowing the HHS secretary to directly negotiate with pharmaceutical companies. Current federal law prohibits HHS from doing this and instead outsources the negotiations to insurance companies. The reason this hasn't happened already is because of the enormous financial influence the drug industry has in Washington. Too many politicians in our capital have taken money from the corporate PACs of drug companies and are willing to stand by while those companies reap billions of dollars in profit at the expense of the American people.

DePASQUALE: We need to work to bring down the cost of prescription drugs. As Auditor General, I audited Pharmacy Benefit Managers (PBMs) who make billions of dollars to negotiate drug prices while prescription costs continue to rise. I demanded more transparency, oversight, and accountability to help lower the cost of prescription drugs and doing the same thing on a national level would be one of my top priorities in Congress.

I support H.R. 3, the "Lower Drug Costs Now Act" which is common-sense bipartisan legislation to lower the cost of prescription drugs for all families and seniors. The legislation gives Medicare the power to negotiate for lower drug prices on behalf of Medicare recipients and those on private insurance, saving families thousands of dollars per year.

Election Security: Fair and free elections are the hallmark of a representative democracy. Foreign election interference, cybersecurity, the spread of misinformation, and the reliability of voting machinery are all threats to our electoral process. **How will you advocate for election integrity?**

BRIER: As your representative, I will always push to protect our elections from foreign interference. This includes supporting bills like the Elections Security Act or the PAPER Act which provide funds for states and localities to upgrade security practices, create paper records of votes, and establish annual audits as well as bills like the Honest Ads Act which require additional disclosures for television and digital ads so that the funding sources of political content is transparent.

DePASQUALE: Protecting our elections from threats and addressing security vulnerabilities in our voting systems is necessary to ensure the integrity of our elections and maintain faith in our government. I support increased federal funding for states and municipalities to replace antiquated voting machines, address cyber vulnerabilities in election systems, and provide cybersecurity training and best practices for election officials. We also must make sure we routinely audit our election service providers to know who has ownership and control of our elections systems. With the threat of foreign governments attempting to interfere or influence our elections, it is urgent we take common-sense measures to ensure voters are confident in their votes.

Voting Rights: The Voting Rights Act of 1965 has been called the single most effective piece of civil rights legislation ever passed by Congress. In June 2013, the U.S. Supreme Court struck down the requirement that jurisdictions with significant histories of voter discrimination “pre-clear” any new voting practices or procedures, i.e., get federal approval from the Department of Justice, and show that they do not have a discriminatory purpose or effect. Since then states have been implementing voting restrictions, some say aimed at disenfranchising specific voters. **What can be done at the federal level to bring about fairness in voting and in our elections?**

BRIER: Voting should be one of the easiest and safest things to do in America. Yet claims of preventing voter fraud have provided cover for those who simply wish to see a smaller electorate each year. I believe our democracy functions best when everyone has a voice. Toward that end, we must: make Election Day a federal holiday, provide funds for every state to provide no-excuse mail-in voting, reform signature-matching laws to protect voters, allow for same-day registration, and minimize the effects of gerrymandering by amending the Voting Rights Act to include either a statewide match requirement or an efficiency gap requirement.

DePASQUALE: The right to vote rests at the core of our democratic system. The U.S. Supreme Court’s decision in 2013 to dismantle important protections in the Voting Rights Act opened the door to voter suppression laws across the country that have created barriers to voting which disproportionately impact people of color, low-income voters, students, and the elderly. The House of Representatives has already passed H.R. 4, which would restore the Voting Rights Act. This is critical in Pennsylvania and across the country to ensure that everyone has the right to cast their ballot. When I was a state legislator, I introduced a bill to allow early voting in Pennsylvania. In Congress, I would fight to expand early voting and vote-by-mail, to enact automatic voter registration, oppose voter ID laws, and ensure we have modern, secure, and streamlined voting systems. I support implementation of independent redistricting commissions to ensure voters are picking their representatives and not the other way around.

Criminal Justice Reform: The bipartisan First Step Act was signed into law 12/21/18. NYU Brennan Center's Justice program said at the time, "...lawmakers are backing long-overdue fixes to some of the most broken parts of our justice system that for too long have been overly-punitive and downright unfair." Although a good first step, those working for criminal justice reform say more needs to be done. **What reforms do you support for our criminal justice system?**

BRIER: First and foremost, I support the elimination of mandatory minimums from sentencing guidelines. As a law clerk on the Third Circuit Court of Appeals, I saw firsthand that mandatory minimums don't work. They were intended to create a deterrent effect and that has simply proven to not be the case. Thirty years of empirical evidence tells us this is the case and instead, mandatory minimums exacerbate the structural racism of our criminal justice system. 54% of white defendants facing drug offenses receive a mandatory minimum but 67% of black defendants facing drug offenses receive one. Beyond removing this racially disparate impact from our system, I would also advocate for eliminating private prisons and ending the prison-industrial complex, eliminating cash bail, and legalizing marijuana. By taking these steps, we can begin to restore the justness of our justice system.

DePASQUALE: We all know that our criminal justice system is not equal. Unlike most elected officials, criminal justice reform is an issue that is personal to me. I am the only child of a convicted felon elected to statewide office in the United States. My father was wounded in Vietnam, got addicted to painkillers that were prescribed to him by the VA, which led down a path of substance abuse and eventually a federal drug conviction and a mandatory minimum sentence.

Mandatory minimum sentencing is not fair and does not make our communities safer. We must reform mandatory minimum sentencing laws, particularly for non-violent offenders, to give judges the flexibility to consider the reality of what individuals are going through.

I was the first state-wide elected official in Pennsylvania to come out in favor of taxing and regulating marijuana. Not only would it generate \$581 million tax revenue for Pennsylvania, continuing to incarcerate people for marijuana possession makes no sense.

We need to treat drug addiction like the disease it is and get people into the appropriate treatment instead of incarcerating them. As the Auditor General, my office has audited all of the drug rehab programs in Pennsylvania to find which are working and which are not and that is the same approach I will take to Washington.

Equality: How will you address income inequality? What federal policies do you support to protect the civil rights of LGBTQ people? How would you combat the rising tide of racism and homophobia in the country? As a white male, do you feel that you know enough about what people experience in their daily lives?

BRIER: The political and moral health of America rests on the promise of equal access to economic opportunity. As your representative in Congress, I will promote common-good capitalism that offers Americans the ability to pursue their own form of happiness. That includes raising the minimum wage to \$15 an hour and creating new job training and apprenticeship programs to help us transition into a green energy economy. That includes investing in the redevelopment of our country's roads, bridges, and waterways to create good jobs for American workers. That also includes adopting a fair tax system that doesn't allow billionaires to pay lower effective tax rates than the working class or let the wealthiest corporations avoid paying taxes altogether. If we do these things, we can create an America that works for all of us, not just the top one percent.

But resolving economic opportunity alone does not resolve the problems of racism, homophobia, and bigotry. We must strive to be a more compassionate America. That's why we must pass legislation like the Equality Act, which creates a nationwide standard for non-discrimination. Creating strong federal protections for the LGBTQ+ community is the only way we can effectively combat prejudice and discrimination. As a white cisgender male, I know that I do not face the difficult challenges that many Americans face. What I can do, however, is listen and act on what I've heard. Together we must take up the legacy of Dr. King, the rioters at Stonewall, Nancy Wechsler, and so many others to make sure that the voices of all Americans are heard in the halls of government so that policy can respond to the unique difficulties faced by minority groups in America. From healthcare, to housing, to sexual violence, minority communities have been ignored and marginalized by our society for far too long.

DePASQUALE: Income inequality is a problem across the country. In Congress, I would fight to strengthen our labor laws and protect the rights of working people to join together in collective action to improve their working conditions. We need to increase the minimum wage and strengthen equal pay laws to protect against sex-based pay discrimination.

We need to ensure our tax code rewards working and middle-class families and is not a giveaway to the ultra-rich. I support expanding the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC).

The best long-term way to fight income inequality is to make sure that everyone has access to a quality, affordable education. We need to make sure that our public schools get the resources they need. I believe that our public universities should be free for in-state students who meet certain eligibility requirements based on strong academic performance. We also need to promote attending community colleges and trade or technical schools that may provide a lower-cost alternative to earning a degree.

I have a long record of being an outspoken advocate for the LGBTQ community from publicly supporting the campaign for marriage equality to protecting members of the LGBTQ community in the workplace. I am proud to be endorsed by Equality PAC for my commitment to fighting for full LGBTQ equality. In Congress, I would support the Equality Act that would protect LGBTQ people from discrimination in housing, the workplace, and public accommodation.

While conducting the Pennsylvania School Safety Task Force with Gov. Tom Wolf, every single student we spoke to asked for more and better mental health services. It was heartbreaking to find out that 1 in 10 of our young people in

Pennsylvania had attempted suicide and I know the rates are higher for LGBTQ youth. I would support any legislation to increase support services and safety and prohibit harassment and bullying in our schools and institutions of higher education.

I support protecting health care providers like Planned Parenthood that provide quality, affordable, and affirming health care for members of the LGBTQ community. I also support legislation that would require insurance plans to cover PrEP and other HIV prevention services.

I believe anyone who is called to serve this country should be able to do so and I support legislation to reject the Trump ban on transgender military service.

I support any effort to bar discriminatory practices in adoption and I support paid family leave that would include provisions to allow for care for chosen family.

I also know that members of the LGBTQ community exist in all of our communities so the fight for affordable health care, housing, an increase in the minimum wage, common sense firearm regulations, protecting voting rights, and environmental protection policies also impact the life and liberty of LGBTQ people in South Central Pennsylvania and across the country.

Bigotry and hate have no home in this country and we must address the growing threat of white supremacist extremism and domestic terrorism. I grew up in the Squirrel Hill neighborhood of Pittsburgh where the shooting at Tree of Life synagogue claimed the lives of 11 people. I support legislation to improve interagency coordination so federal, state, and local law enforcement can work in a coordinated manner to assess threats and protect American lives. I would also work to ensure the Department of Justice was working with law enforcement agencies to report accurate statistics on hate crimes to ensure we have data driven policy.

I would support legislation to increase federal funding for inclusivity and anti-bias education in our schools and proper implementation of anti-bullying policies and procedures. The federal government also needs to encourage states to pass comprehensive hate crime and anti-discrimination legislation.

As the former state representative of the 95th house district, I know how to balance the needs of a diverse district. As a public servant, it is my job to continually learn from and listen to communities who are marginalized in our society. It is not enough to simply state that I recognize my own privilege. I must also continually refine my understanding of systemic causes of oppression and in conversation and partnership with marginalized communities use the power of my office to the best of my ability to change it.

Climate Change and the Fossil Fuel Industry: Climate Change is a defining issue of our time. It is a crisis with ramifications on a global scale. **What do you support to reduce greenhouse gas emissions? How can we lay a solid foundation for a lower carbon future?**

BRIER: I support the Green New Deal. It is the only bill on the table that recognizes the magnitude of the coming climate crisis and takes appropriate steps to address it. Through the Green New Deal, we have the opportunity to significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions, create the foundation for a green energy future, and provide economic restorative justice to the poor and minority communities who we have forced to live next to our dumpsites, our oil refineries, and our fracking. Those communities have borne the brunt of the costs towards their health and life expectancy as they live in these cancer alleys. They should be the first areas our federal government extends grants to in order to develop new green energy production. I also believe we need an immediate moratorium on all future fracking. One cracker plant, which relies on fracking, in western PA has the potential to eliminate almost overnight all of the progress the city of Pittsburgh has made over the past few decades towards reducing pollution. We should not be subsidizing or supporting fracking in any way.

DePASQUALE: I believe bold, aggressive action must be taken to clean our environment and we can do it while creating good-paying jobs to provide a sustainable planet for future generations. Addressing climate change is one of my top priorities and I am proud to be endorsed by League of Conservation Voters and Clean Water Action Pennsylvania.

Throughout my career, I have been a leader on this issue fighting for our environment, including my role as Deputy Secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, where I was part of the team that helped secure the Alternative Energy Portfolio Standards Act. As a state legislator, I sponsored and passed with bi-partisan support the Alternative Energy Investment Act which led to Pennsylvania being a leader in wind energy East of the Mississippi.

As Auditor General, my first audit was to assess the impact of fracking on the environment and drinking water quality. We found that the Department of Environmental Protection was not prepared to protect drinking water and enforce environmental protections, which led to the hiring of more inspectors. Last year, I released the first ever special report on the fiscal impact of climate change on the state of Pennsylvania. We found the state is spending millions of dollars annually on climate-related costs and called for an urgent, proactive, and comprehensive strategy to combat climate change.

Right here in South Central Pennsylvania, we have some of the worst air quality in the country and the Susquehanna River is suffering from over-pollution. I support improving our stormwater infrastructure and increasing stream buffers to protect our waterways from agricultural runoff. If elected, I will demand, regardless of who the president is, that the EPA enforce anti-idling regulations along

trucking corridors in the district, which is a major contributor to the air-quality problem.

In Congress, I will focus on investment in alternative energy, including research on smarter energy storage for solar and wind, and a more durable grid. I support tax credits to incentivize the use of solar. We need to work towards a 100% clean energy economy as quickly as science will allow while ensuring good-paying, family-supporting union jobs.

Immigration Reform: For decades there has been an effort to address the growing problems with illegal immigration; in 2013, a bipartisan plan passed the Senate that included legislation for stronger border enforcement and a pathway to citizenship. House Speaker John Boehner refused to bring it up for a vote in the House of Representatives. Today there are an estimated 11 -12 million undocumented immigrants in the United States. Two-thirds have lived here less than ten years, and 8 million participate in the work force. To date, over 324 billion dollars have been spent on immigration enforcement, including border security and interior enforcement such as ICE and CBP. There are strong opinions on both sides of the aisle regarding the best approach to immigration reform. **What do you see as the top three priorities to focus on while addressing this issue? What is your vision for realistic evidence-based reform?**

BRIER: We need a comprehensive immigration policy centered on compassion and forward-thinking. Our top priorities must be: fixing an asylum system that fails to live up to its promise; resolving the status of undocumented persons living in the United States today; and ensuring that our border security has the resources and funding to retrain with humane methods. If we really believe that America can be the shining city on a hill, then we cannot turn our backs on refugees fleeing death and destruction nor can we separate families or treat as less than us the people who have worked in this country for years to create better lives for their loved ones. America is at its best when it defends the downtrodden, no matter what language they speak or where they were born.

DePASQUALE: Our immigration system is broken and years of inaction have been exacerbated by the Trump Administration's harmful actions which have left our immigrant communities living in fear and uncertainty. We must modernize border security with smart, targeted technology and practices to assess and address threats. We must create a fair pathway to citizenship for the nearly 11 million undocumented immigrants already in the United States. As Auditor General, I audited the Berks detention center, which is housing families seeking asylum, and have called on the federal government to shut it down. Seeking asylum is not a crime, and we need to place more immigration judges on the bench so those who are trying to come into our country legally are able to follow the appropriate process to do that.

Education: What, in your view, are the most significant changes to education policy that have been made under the Trump Administration? What do you support with regard to federal education policy? What should be done to address the problems of high student loan debt?

BRIER: There are a multitude of terrible things that Betsy DeVos has done as Secretary of Education that left the nation's students worse off. She allowed predatory lenders to run free by gutting regulations intended to protect students. She dismissed civil rights complaints and prevented students from receiving fair hearings. She even cut funding for special education including the Special Olympics. In short, I support everything she does not, and I oppose everything she supports. We need to invest in public education and protect our students' physical, mental, and financial health. As someone with six figures in student loan debt, I know the burden that young people are facing today. To address the \$1.6 trillion student debt crisis in our country, we need to prioritize debt-free education for all Americans, expand access to student loan forgiveness programs, and cap interest rates for students and parents. We must also invest in Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and Minority-Serving institutions (MSIs). Access to trade school and apprenticeship programs should also be expanded.

DePASQUALE: I have been recommended by the National Education Association (NEA) Fund for my record of holding public, charter, and cyber-charter schools accountable to make sure that kids are getting a quality education and that our tax dollars are being used in the right way.

The Department of Education under the leadership of Secretary Betsy DeVos is taking us in the wrong direction from policies that would strip money away from public school classrooms, to rolling back protections for LGBTQ students, to rescinding guidelines on how college campuses should handle sexual assaults.

I support the Every Student Succeeds Act which represents the federal government's largest investment in K-12 education. I also support high-quality early childhood education programs like Head Start and Early Head Start. In Congress, I would fight to ensure the federal government is fully meeting its commitment to fund special education under the IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education) Act.

Making higher education accessible is one of the best ways to increase opportunity and access to the American dream. Currently, Pennsylvania students have one of the highest college debt levels in the nation. As Auditor General, I audited all of Pennsylvania's state universities and Pitt, Penn State, Temple, and Lincoln University to ensure the hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars they receive each year is actually going towards keeping down the cost of tuition.

I believe that our public universities should be free for in-state students who meet certain eligibility requirements based on strong academic

performance. We need to lower interest rates on student loans and stop the practice of interest accruing on loans while students are still in school. We also need to promote attending community colleges and trade or technical schools that may provide a lower-cost alternative to earning a degree.