

Progressive Democrats of America Sample Endorsement Questionnaire
PDA Maryland 4th District Chapter
2007 Endorsement Questionnaire
U. S. House of Representative

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Return to:
Diane Shamis
Diane@PDAmerica.org

Please fill out this form if you are interested in pursuing an endorsement by PDA Maryland 4th District Chapter. We are part of Progressive Democrats of America a nation- wide grassroots organization of 100,000 members that works inside the Democratic Party and outside in movements for peace and justice.

Please return this questionnaire by the deadline: ?????, 2007.

Altering or deleting the questions on this form may lead to disqualification.

Please note that your answers on this questionnaire may be made public. If you need additional space to answer questions, please attach additional pages to the questionnaire. If you have any questions regarding this questionnaire, please contact Diane Shamis

Candidate and Campaign Information:

Candidate Name: Donna Edwards

Address: Physical Address: 3737 Branch Avenue, Temple Hills, MD 20748

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 441153

City, State, Zip: Fort Washington, MD 20749-1153

E-mail Address: donna@donnaedwardsforcongress.com

Office for which you are running: Representative for Maryland's 4th Congressional District

Date of Election: February 12th, 2008

Registered Political Party: Democrat

Campaign Manager: Adrienne Christian

Phone: (301) 316 1880 Fax: (301) 316-0116

Campaign Consultant: _____ Phone: _____ Fax: _____

Campaign Address: 3737 Branch Ave. Temple Hills, Maryland 20748

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List endorsements from organizations and/or individuals:

Progressive Democrats of America, SEIU, UFCW Local 400, Sierra Club, Progressive Neighbors, Clean Water Action, EMILY's List, Progressive Maryland, League of Conservation Voters, Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now! PAC, Friends of the Earth Action PAC, Democracy for America, Democracy for Montgomery County, Progressive Cheverly, National Organization for Women, Women's Campaign Forum. I have also been endorsed by Delegates Aisha Braveboy, Joseline Pena Melnyk, and Montgomery County Council Member Valerie Ervin.

How would you describe yourself politically (i.e. progressive; moderate democrat, etc.)?

Progressive.

List elective or political party offices you have held, including committee appointments:

Never held elective or political party office

What is your primary occupation?

Currently, my primary occupation is running for Congress in Maryland's 4th Congressional District. I am on a leave of absence as the Executive Director of the Arca Foundation.

Why are you running for Congress? (100 word limit)

I am running for Congress because I believe I represent the hopes and values that are the core of the Democratic Party and Maryland's 4th Congressional District - for workers, for families, for our country. I believe that we need to return the voices of ordinary people to the Democratic Party. I want to stand up for what is right and what is in the best interests of our district and our country. It's what my parents did for me, and what I have to do for my son Jared and his generation.

Issues Specific to Office:

What experiences have prepared you to run for Congress?

I believe my experience in taking leadership roles on a wide range of issues throughout my career have more than sufficiently prepared me to run for Congress and to serve in Congress.

I co-founded and served as the executive director for the National Network to End Domestic Violence. I received national recognition in leading the fight to pass the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 that President Clinton signed into law. This

legislation provided comprehensive funding to provide shelter and services for victims of domestic violence and their children.

After the House banking scandal, I led efforts to reform campaign finance and lobbying and ethics laws first with Public Citizen and then as the executive director for the Center for a New Democracy.

I also created a successful national effort that forced pharmaceutical companies to open markets for generic anti-arthritic medications. In 2003, in my own district, I began a grassroots campaign against a multi-billion dollar development plan in an attempt to improve the quality of life in existing neighborhoods, to protect the natural environment and to bring quality jobs to the area. I ended up bringing \$200 million to the community while protecting the air, water and local wildlife.

If you receive the endorsement of Progressive Democrats of America, how do you intend to use it?

I would be proud to receive the endorsement of PDA. I would use the endorsement to mobilize voters and to talk about the top issues about which I am concerned.

Please list the top three issues on which you will take leadership if elected

Iraq War – The war in Iraq is having a tremendous direct and indirect impact on the constituents in our district – In Maryland 71 servicemembers have been killed and nearly 400 wounded. Our servicemembers and their families are making incalculable sacrifices, including emotional and psychological stress, injury, and financial hardship. Moreover, the increasing number of National Guard units that are deployed is jeopardizing our security at home. More than 1,300 members of the Maryland National Guard are serving in Iraq and Afghanistan – depleting our local first responders and weighing on Maryland’s families and communities. Current estimates project the overall cost of the war will be \$1.45 trillion – already the cost to Marylanders is an estimated \$8.84 billion - - \$1.19 billion for the 4th Congressional District. The Iraq War has damaged our credibility in the world and altered our longstanding international priorities. Moreover, the cost of the war has resulted in skewing domestic priorities as well – leading to cuts in programs that benefit working families and keeping us from meeting needs for health care, Head Start, schools, public safety, domestic security and other priorities.

I believe the best solution at this stage of the Bush Administration’s failed Iraq policy is an immediate withdrawal of U.S. forces in Iraq. This direction can and must be pursued in order to prevent further loss of American and Iraqi lives. Once in Congress, I will support legislation calling for immediate withdrawal through mechanisms that ensure troops’ safe and orderly withdrawal from Iraq. Furthermore, I oppose the presence of permanent U.S. military bases in Iraq. The Iraqi people, as well as the rest of the region, will see us as occupiers if we create permanent bases. A continued U.S. presence will undermine democratically elected Iraqi leaders and bring into question the sovereignty of an independent Iraq.

Healthcare – Healthcare costs are skyrocketing and eating increasingly into the budgets of families throughout our district. Affordable health care access for all is sound social and economic policy that needs to be addressed immediately. I will work toward a universal, single-payer health care policy that meets the health care needs of the ever-increasing millions of Americans and the nearly 800,000 Marylanders who are without health care and those additional millions who have inadequate care. I will work to prioritize preventative health care delivery, long-term care, and equal access to affordable prescription drugs. In the current system, I will work to ensure that all large employers pay their fair share of their employees' health care in order to be fair to those who adequately meet employee health care costs.

Environment - I want to lead the fight in Congress to preserve and protect our environment for future generations by promoting new technologies for a clean energy future. The time has come to say “no” to our ever growing reliance on fossil fuels and “no” to subsidies for outdated, last-century energy production. In the 21st Century, a sound environmental policy means good jobs, good business, and good policy. Today, with long-term investments in renewable and clean energy research, development, and production we can begin to provide real solutions to global warming and be the heart of next economic boom in this country -- facilitating service and technology markets all across the globe. The first step towards achieving this end is to make limits on carbon emissions mandatory. Voluntary emission standards are not working. If we are serious about addressing global warming we must create a benchmark of 20 percent reductions of carbon emission by 2020 and 80 percent reductions by the middle of the century. The next step would be to provide real incentives to industries to end subsidies for carbon production and use clean technologies to reduce our dependence on fossil fuels. An increase of car fuel efficiency standards to 40 mpg is more than reasonable and would represent a logical first step towards a future that preserves our transportation system while protecting our environment.

Do you agree with Congress' decision to reauthorize the Patriot Act?
Why or why not?

No. I believe it is time to restore the civil rights and liberties that the current Administration has infringed upon as opposed to reauthorizing the Patriot Act. If we ever hope to mend relationships with foreign countries and again be viewed as a moral leader and fair broker in the world, we must now take immediate action to amend this Act. As executive director of the Arca Foundation, I have led in efforts to use the courts to challenge provisions of the Patriot Act, the Military Commissions Act, and to bring the United States within the compliance of international law. Additionally, I have supported efforts of civil rights and privacy rights organizations to give authority to the courts to review surveillance warrants under the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act.

If elected, which committee(s) would you prefer to serve on and why?

I would prefer to serve on the Ways and Means Committee – Health Subcommittee to focus on the important priority of providing healthcare for all Americans.

Federal Issues:**1) Iraq:**

PDA supports an immediate start to a rapid and complete withdrawal from Iraq of all troops and military contractors, and has championed legislation that would withhold funding for any other military purpose there. In addition, PDA believes that the U.S. must revise its strategy for the region by removing these forces from the Mideast entirely, rather than just "redeploying" them within the region. PDA advocates a shift in U.S. foreign policy from reckless unilateralism toward cooperation and diplomacy--so that people of other countries know us more by our helping hand than our slugging arm. Furthermore, PDA supports the redirecting of resources allocated for military spending to human needs.

Will you pledge to support such immediate and total withdrawal from Iraq of the military forces, including supporting legislation towards this goal?

Yes. I opposed the war in Iraq from the beginning, believing it to be a foreign policy mistake and the military quagmire it has become. Nonetheless, we must act decisively now so that a political solution can be achieved by and for Iraqis. I will support legislation to set a firm date to begin withdrawal as soon as possible. The best military estimates suggest that if we begin today, it would take 9 months to fully withdraw personnel and equipment from Iraq. This is why I believe we must establish a date certain and begin withdrawal now. The war in Iraq is having a tremendous direct and indirect impact on the constituents in our district – In Maryland 71 servicemembers have been killed and nearly 400 wounded. Our servicemembers and their families are making incalculable sacrifices, including emotional and psychological stress, injury, and financial hardship. Moreover, the increasing number of National Guard units that are deployed is jeopardizing our security at home. More than 1,300 members of the Maryland National Guard are serving in Iraq and Afghanistan – depleting our local first responders and weighing on Maryland's families and communities. Current estimates put the overall costs of the war at \$1.45 trillion – already the cost to Marylanders is an estimated \$8.84 billion -- \$1.19 billion for the 4th Congressional District. The Iraq War has damaged our credibility in the world and altered our longstanding international priorities. Moreover, the cost of the war has resulted in skewing domestic priorities as well – leading to program cuts that benefit working families and keeping us from meeting needs for health care, Head Start, schools, public safety, domestic security and other priorities. I believe one of the most important responsibilities of Congress is the power of the purse. Therefore, it is Congress' obligation to use its authority to stop writing blank checks to the President for this war.

In addition, will you forswear any preemptive military attacks upon any nation?

Yes.

Will you commit to fully support investigations into the White House's false claims justifying the invasion of Iraq, and would you support impeachment of Bush, Cheney and other administration officials for these and other high crimes?

Yes.

Have you participated in or spoken at any events, demonstrations, meetings or teach-ins opposing the Iraq war and occupation?

Yes. I have participated in several events, demonstrations and meetings including protests on the Mall in Washington DC. I have led nonpartisan funding of the leading efforts to oppose the war, including Win Without War, Iraq Veterans for Peace, and Military Families Speak Out.

Have you organized any such events?

Yes. As a volunteer, I organized local coalitions to attend anti-war efforts.

2) Health Care:

There are over 46 million uninsured people living in America, the majority of which are working Americans. Every year, nearly 18,000 people die unnecessarily as a direct result of their lack of health insurance. Millions, with health insurance, maintain inadequate, overly expensive coverage and face the peril of denials of claims or termination of benefits if a family member becomes seriously ill--one of the leading causes of bankruptcy in the U.S. While spending twice as much on health care as any other industrialized country, our system performs poorly, spending more money for less coverage, maximizing profits by finding ways to deny care. The private insurance bureaucracy expends one-third of health care money on waste, administrative paperwork, advertising and corporate profits. The current Medicare program for senior citizens spends under 4% of its budget for its overhead costs. Meanwhile, poor health, escalating health insurance premiums and spiraling health care costs impair our economy and job creation in the U.S.

PDA has endorsed HR 676, the National Health Insurance/"Expanded and Improved Medicare-for-All" Act. To guarantee comprehensive health care for all, PDA supports the replacement of the current profit-driven system, publicly financed, privately provided health care program. This "Medicare for All" national plan would save more than \$350 billion per year, enough new money to provide guaranteed comprehensive health care for all. This system would insure portable and uniform benefits regardless of income. With no deductibles or co-pays, this plan would encourage preventive care and restore a doctor and patient controlled health care system affording choice of providers and fair, publicly negotiated payment for both treatment and medication.

What is your approach to the health care crisis?

Unavailable and unaffordable healthcare coverage is one of our most pressing challenges and now, more than ever, there is a necessity to create comprehensive, progressive solutions to address this growing problem. As a Representative, I will provide bold leadership to bring the United States in line with every other developed nations to ensure that all Americans have access to affordable, quality healthcare. The first step towards

accomplishing this goal is to no longer confuse expensive insurance with quality healthcare and to shift our investments to preventative care in order to reduce the number of deaths caused by curable diseases. It is alarming to discover that chronic diseases, many of which are preventable, cause 70 percent of deaths in the United States and are responsible for 75 percent of healthcare spending. We also must allow states and the federal government to negotiate prescription drug prices. Consumers, not pharmaceutical companies, should dictate the price of prescription drugs, especially if we wish to make the healthcare system accountable for the people it protects. We cannot allow advertising and marketing to determine which drugs are appropriate for treatment purpose – that's the job of independent, individual treating physicians and medical professionals. I know firsthand what it is like to not have healthcare coverage and I believe, as a member of Congress, I have the tools and the knowledge to address this problem.

What is your view of Guaranteed Health Care through an Expanded and Improved Medicare-for-All system?

I am a strong proponent of comprehensive, quality, accessible and affordable health care for all – a universal, single-payer healthcare system or Medicare-for-All system. Medicare is a proven system – we know it works. We need to move swiftly toward a major overhaul of our health care delivery system that does not rely on an insurance model. In the interim, I would support a plan with shared financing that doesn't penalize the companies that have worked hard to provide good coverage for their employees. I grew up in a single-payer system as the daughter of a military servicemember. My father was a Veterans Administration patient – we know how to afford quality, comprehensive healthcare.

If elected, would you support a publicly financed, privately provided national health care program, which insures access to comprehensive health care for all in the U.S.?

Yes.

Would you support a not-for-profit, doctor-patient controlled system which would eliminate the private health insurance industry (with protection for eliminated workers) as the intermediary determining access and the level of care?

Yes.

Would you support the government's ability to negotiate fair prices for treatment as well as drugs, as it does for those covered by the Veteran's Administration's plan?

Yes.

3) Economic Justice:

The current generation has seen unprecedented levels of economic disparity, both among individuals (the richest 1% of Americans own almost 35% of all wealth; the bottom half, only 2.5%) and in the ratio of CEO pay to employee wages. Thirty-seven million people

(equal to the population of California) are living in poverty in the U.S. These immoral levels of poverty, which disproportionate impact communities of color and women, can be significantly reduced through concerned legislative effort - including a living wage for all workers, expanded earned income tax credits, childcare assistance and housing vouchers. Specifically, the federal government must fulfill its promise of resources to Hurricane Katrina survivors so they can return to rebuild their communities in the Gulf Coast.

Tax burdens on the middle class can be eased if the wealthy pay their share. In addition to working to roll back Bush's tax breaks for the wealthy, PDA endorses the Equity in Income Act, limiting the amount of CEO compensation afforded federal corporate tax deductions. In emphatically supporting the workers' right to organize, we also endorse the Employee Free Choice Act, which establishes unions in any workplace where a majority of workers sign union cards to join. In the global arena, PDA supports anti-sweatshop legislation and fair trade agreements which protect workers' rights as well as the environment, while opposing wage-reducing "free trade" agreements that protect only corporate rights to exploit unprotected labor. PDA also advocates for humane and comprehensive immigration reform, which insures a fair, attainable path to citizenship and the rights of undocumented workers in the workplace, affirming the dignity and integrity of immigrant families.

What is your position on "Fair Trade" versus "Free Trade" agreements?

I believe that expanding trade agreements like the NAFTA model to dozens of additional countries in bilateral and regional trade agreements will only accelerate the loss of U.S. jobs, while doing little to address poverty and inequality in our trade partners countries. I believe we need Fair Trade agreements that protect workers in the global marketplace and ensure that they receive essential services like education, healthcare and wages that allow them to fulfill their responsibilities and realize their dreams. Any trade agreements must also include environmental, safety and labor standards and strict adherence to international human rights. Without these protections, U.S. workers are further undermined.

Will you have pledge to reverse the tax cuts on the wealthiest Americans?

Yes.

Do you support the right of workers to organize, in any situation?

Yes.

What is your relationship to labor nationally and in your district?

I have worked closely with organized labor for 20 years – on healthcare, labor rights, sweat shops, minimum and living wages and other issues. I have received the endorsements of national and local labor organizations in SEIU and UFCW Local 400. I participated recently in the Smithfield Justice Labor Rally where I joined thousands of

individuals to show their solidarity with workers at the Smithfield Tar Heel Plant who are working to unionize.

Do you have union endorsements and supporters in your district?

Yes. I have received the endorsements of SEIU and UFCW local 400.

What is your approach to bringing communities "out of poverty"?

The first step towards reducing poverty is making the minimum wage a living wage. Working people across the country deserve to be paid a salary that will help lift them out of poverty and into the middle class where they can support their family without having to work multiple jobs. A living wage is a commitment to our values for work, for workers and for families.

Other policy examples include providing affordable housing for low-income families so people can move to neighborhoods with more entry-level jobs and better schools for their children, strengthening unionization laws, providing quality, affordable healthcare, and improving our public schools. I would also support efforts to expand the Earned Income Tax Credit and the Child Tax Credit to make them available to more low-income families.

Would you support the legislation of the "out of poverty" caucus?

Yes.

What efforts would you support to provide meaningful resources to Katrina survivors?

I support efforts that provide comprehensive solutions that seek to rebuild lost infrastructure in terms of housing development and the growth of small businesses that were lost after the hurricane.

Do you support comprehensive and humane immigration reform as outlined above?

Yes.

Have you reached out to immigrant communities and advocates in your district?

Yes. I participated in the Mid Atlantic Hispanic Chamber of Commerce debate and other activities. I have also received the endorsement of Hispanic leader Delegate Joseline Pena-Melnyk.

4) Clean, Fair, Transparent Elections:

The U.S. election system is in crisis. Not only are the usual corrupting factors of money and corporate lobbying as rampant as perhaps at any time in U.S. history, but the new millennium – along with the fallout from the contested 2000 election - have ushered in a

qualitative change in the conduct of our elections: Centuries of tradition in which citizens, government officials and Party representatives oversaw physical evidence of voter intent have fallen to the rise of the machines. This sea change, from paper to ephemeral electrons, brings much more than the implicit demand to trust the invisible: the move to computers means that 85% of America has ceded control of its elections to third-party vendors, whose legal claims regarding proprietary software bring corporate control of the entire voting process. PDA thus supports federal legislation that would ban the use of touch-screen (“DRE”) voting machines.

Will you pledge, if elected, to support only voting methods in which ballots are cast on paper?

Yes. I am a strong advocate of using paper ballots with optical voting systems to ensure the elimination of election error and tampering. Creating a paper trail ensures that every vote is counted and that there is a concrete, comprehensive record should a recount be needed.

Do you pledge to support “Clean Money” public financing of public elections?

Yes. I do not believe that the only individuals that run for office should be either independently wealthy or have close ties with special interest groups. In my view, public funding of elections would result in public policy that reflects the public interest and not just corporate special interests.

Would you accept public financing for your current campaign?

Yes. Public financing would reduce significantly the influence campaign contributors have on elections and place the emphasis back onto the voters. Public financing contributes to a fairer election process by helping candidates who do not have access to ‘big money’ contributors and by allowing candidates to spend more time with voters and less time at fundraisers.

Do you support the restoration of voting rights to past felony offenders?

Yes.

Do you support same-day voting registration?

Yes.

Would you oppose the onerous requirement of official photo identification before affording citizens access to the polls?

Yes.

5) Environment/ Global Warming:

No issue reveals more clearly the flaws of the U.S. political-economic system than global

warming - the dominance of greed and corporate power over the public good, and the near-sighted focus on the short-term over the welfare of future generations. It is known that the U.S. has the natural resources to power the entire country solely from clean, "alternative" sources of power- whether with solar cells that would require a miniscule fraction of the California desert, or from wind turbines on the Great Plains and in the Great Lakes. It has also often been said that we need a new Apollo Program for clean energy (if not Manhattan Project), in which science, industry and government would cooperate on a crash course to produce novel results in a limited period. Immediate action would include raising the auto fuel economy and impose mandatory caps on carbon pollution while investing in public transportation, energy conservation technologies and alternative energy development--in the process, creating new jobs which pay well. .

PDA calls on the Democratic majority in Congress to lead boldly in reducing our country's oil dependence and use of fossil fuels.

Will you pledge to take an uncompromising leadership role on legislation to enact the enormous changes and sacrifices that will be required to stem Global Warming?

Yes. Once a member of Congress, one of my first priorities is to pass legislation to preserve and protect our environment for future generations and to promote new technologies for a clean energy future. For example, that means forget voluntary limits on carbon emissions – they don't work and we're in a crisis. It's time to set mandatory limits on emissions with a goal of 20 percent reductions by 2020 and 80 percent reductions by the middle of the century.

Will you pledge to enact an Apollo Program for clean energy?

Yes. As I said earlier, I believe that in the 21st Century a sound environmental policy means good jobs, good business, and good policy. With long-term investment today, renewable and clean energy research, development, and production will provide real solutions to global warming and be the heart of next economic boom in this country.

What kind of personal vehicle do you currently drive? Is it rated ZEV, or PZEV?

Volvo S40 (2006). PZEV.

Finance:

Please estimate your campaign costs:

Primary Election: _____ General Election: ____

How much money have you raised to date? _____

Please list independent expenditures that may impact your race: