



## FLORIDA CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS *Candidate Questionnaire Project*



2018 CANDIDATE RESPONSE  
Florida House of Representatives District 55

**Audrey Ascitutto (DEM)**

*Do you support or oppose...*

**ABORTION REGULATION:** Requiring parental consent before a minor child's abortion, notwithstanding previous judicial concerns?

**OPPOSE**

**Optional Candidate Comment:** *Florida law already dictates that the parents must have notification of a minor child's abortion. This is dangerous in cases of incest. Florida needs to focus on prevention through sexual education and outreach to minors who may be being abused in the home. Furthermore sexual education needs to be comprehensive and not abstinence-only until marriage. Though abstinence-only behavior is ideal, it is simply not a realistic truth for our children and it has dangerous consequences such as unintended pregnancies and risk of STD and STI exposure. Let's keep children from getting pregnant in the first place so that abortion would not need to even be a consideration for them.*

**ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE:** Increasing access to care for uninsured Floridians, especially the working poor?

**SUPPORT**

**Optional Candidate Comment:** *I fully support Medicaid Expansion. FL HD 55 is largely rural and economically depressed with areas having income inequality gaps. I find it unmoral that our state has not expanded Medicaid even though we would not pay more than 10% of the expansion cost. We have fallen behind at the expense of our families and working poor. We need to join the 33 other states that have chosen to expand Medicaid.*

**AFFORDABLE HOUSING:** Using all state housing trust funds as intended to address affordable housing needs in Florida?

**SUPPORT**

**Optional Candidate Comment:** *Yes. Currently many officials in Highlands County have addressed affordable housing needs to be the first step to over come in order move forward with economical development. The working class needs affordable housing or we cannot attract working class employment to our district.*

**DEATH PENALTY REPEAL:** Ending Florida's use of the death penalty while preserving the alternative of a life sentence without parole?

**SUPPORT**

**END-OF-LIFE PROTECTION:** Preserving Florida law that bans physician-assisted suicide?

**SUPPORT**

**FREEDOM TO SERVE:** Allowing individuals and organizations the freedom to serve the public in accord with reasoned conscientious beliefs related to sexuality and marriage?

**OPPOSE**

**Optional Candidate Comment:** *This question relates to both the employer health insurance provided birth control debate and LGBT rights. In the case of birth control ALL employers need to offer this to their employees. It is between a woman and God if she will use birth control and at the end of the day we all want to see abortions being prevented. In the case of LGBT rights I do not support any discrimination to this group.*

**IMMIGRATION:** Urging Congress to undertake extensive immigration reform, rather than adopting piecemeal state policies?

**SUPPORT**

**Optional Candidate Comment:** *Yes. We are having a humanitarian crisis which needs to be addressed.*

**JUVENILE JUSTICE:** Establishing that children under 14 shall not be transferred to the adult criminal justice system?

**SUPPORT**

**Optional Candidate Comment:** *Yes. They are children and I believe in them*

**PARENTAL EMPOWERMENT:** Creating education savings accounts to use for nonpublic school tuition?

**OPPOSE**

**Optional Candidate Comment:** *Currently Florida has one education savings account (ESA). This particular ESA is specifically designed for students with disabilities. The local school district is required by federal law to provide a free and appropriate education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE) to all students identified as disabled. Students with special needs require a variety of specialization services and instruction to successfully participate with their non disabled peers in the general education setting. My concern is when local and state dollars are pulled from local school boards and it financially minimizes their ability to provide these federally mandated services for deserving children with disabilities.*

**SAFETY OF SCHOOLCHILDREN:** Expanding existing legislative initiatives to harden the physical security of nonpublic schools?

**NO RESPONSE**

**Optional Candidate Comment:** *I would need more information on this.*