



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



2018 CANDIDATE RESPONSE  
Florida Senate District 14

**Melissa "Mel" Martin (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:** *As a parent, I completely understand the desire to know and be able to engage such a difficult issue with my children. As a statesman, however, I have to look at the bigger picture and realize that some young women would resort to suicide, running away or some unsafe/unregulated procedure before bringing it up with their parent(s). I'm against the government unnecessarily intruding on family affairs, so I can only hope that parents have an open, safe channel of trust and communication with their children -- which behooves everyone concerned.*

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

**SUPPORT**

**Optional Candidate Comment:** *I wholeheartedly believe that it is in EVERYONE's interest -- the patient, the welfare of his/her family, the production success of his/her employer, and society in general -- to ensure Floridians receive the health care they need to remain productive, especially the working poor (those under the Federal poverty line and asset-limited, income-constrained, and employed). It's the moral, ethical, and socioeconomically smart thing to do.*

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

**SUPPORT**

**Optional Candidate Comment:** *As a retired Major in the Marine Corps, having a career as a Judge Advocate, I am well-versed on how fiscal law SHOULD be constraining the management of public funds. Federally, we had the "Purpose Statute" (31 USC 1301a) which helped to ensure this; that once purposed, every red cent allocated had to go to achieving that purpose. Lo and behold, that is not how Tallahassee runs Florida's government. Raiding the Sadowski Trust Fund over the years has caused rippling detriment in so many communities throughout Florida. It would be nice to have some retroactive mitigation, but we absolutely need to end the practice of "raiding funds," immediately.*

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

**SUPPORT**

**Optional Candidate Comment:** *I don't feel (divinely) authorized to take someone's life, especially knowing that the justice system is not perfect.*

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

**NO RESPONSE**

**Optional Candidate Comment:** *I haven't seen the data on this issue yet, but it seems like such a soul-relevant issue would deserve more consideration and process than a blanket ban. While I understand the idea of protecting life at all cost, I'm aware of certain situations where such an option would help preserve the dignity and integrity -- the "sanctity" of such life. I'd love to talk more about this issue with someone for a deeper understanding of all sides.*

**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:** *As a faith-based nonprofit or private group, I'd agree with their right to maintain the integrity of their message. As businesses, however, they're treated as a public member (providing goods/services) regulated under laws and regulations of commerce, etc. That's the public expectation. The taxes paid by such businesses go toward public programs and services, regardless of the gender orientation/identity of the "end user." So, from a legal/constitutional perspective, it doesn't make sense. As a Christian, I have to say that it counters the message of the New Commandments, and we should be very careful -- and ideally prevent -- the unintended but clear and resounding message that we should love others -- conditionally.*

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

**SUPPORT**

**Optional Candidate Comment:** *Across all parties, there's a clear public mandate for Congress to enact comprehensive immigration reform.*

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

**SUPPORT**

**Optional Candidate Comment:** *Do transfer children to adult systems and facilities is, in my book, institutional child abuse/neglect.*

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

**OPPOSE**

**Optional Candidate Comment:** *If the education savings account is publicly funded, then no. Public funds must remain in the public system, else we cross constitutional lines. If the idea was, however, for the government to facilitate in community coalitions of private citizens, organizations and local industries, without cost to the taxpayer, that would be appropriate and I'm sure useful.*

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

**OPPOSE**

**Optional Candidate Comment:** *I'm sorry that it sounds harsh, but taxpayers expect their hard-earned money to be managed in a constitutional manner, funding public systems, programs and services dedicated to the public interest...only.*