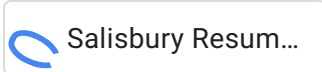


1Hood Power 2024 **General Assembly** Candidate Questionnaire

Please upload your bio and resume.



Campaign Contact Information

Candidate Name *

Abigail Salisbury

Office candidate is seeking *

State Representative District 34

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Campaign Tik Tok

N/A

Campaign Youtube

N/A

Other Social Media

N/A

Background Info & Questions

Please list all public service positions held over your career including unpaid public service. *

In terms of elected public service, prior to serving as District 34 State Rep, I served on Swissvale Borough Council 2018-2023 (See uploaded resume for other community involvement.)

Please describe the general background of your public service during your professional career. *

In terms of elected public service, I ran for borough council in 2017 because I wanted to take action in my community when I felt that people weren't being listened to. For other volunteer public service, I have primarily been engaged in small business and legal development efforts.

Please describe your accomplishments in promoting the concept of equity for all people. *

Whether it was being ejected from the country of Ethiopia for advocating for human rights and academic freedom, fighting for neurodiversity to be included in DEI efforts, changing police hiring practices to be more inclusive of the broader community, protesting antisemitic remarks and policies in local government, or pushing to get grant writing services and training for low-income communities, I have worked to promote the concept of equity for all people. There is always more to do, however.

Please describe any particular qualification you possess which was developed either through your career or in your community that would enhance your ability in the office you seek. *

My master's-level work in intermunicipal cooperation agreements, coupled with my experience in borough government, has been invaluable in preparing me for representing the 13 municipalities (12 boroughs and townships plus the edge of Pittsburgh) that make up District 34.

Please describe any particular qualification you possess which was developed either through your career or in your community that would enhance your ability to serve in government. *

Learning how to navigate the workplace, local government, society, community involvement, and entrepreneurship as a person with autism has given me a unique perspective on serving in government. While autism certainly presents many challenges, it also provides a special sort of empathy for the ways in which many people are left out or just not considered in forming policies. The fact that my brain just works very differently forces me to try to understand the lives and perspectives of everyone around me on a constant basis. My bluntness might not be for everyone, but I like to think that people enjoy an elected official who is just frank with them.

Please list all endorsements you have received *

Victory Fund, LPAC, Steel City Stonewall Democrats, Allegheny County Democratic Committee, Allegheny County Building Trades, Allegheny/Fayette Labor Council, PFT, PASNAP, 8 local mayors in my district and various council members in my district.

If elected, what are your top three priorities? *

High-quality constituent services, safety in all forms (freedom from harm to one's person, safe infrastructure, safe reproductive health decisions, etc.), success as each person defines it for themselves (business, education, intermunicipal cooperation, etc.).

Questionnaire

Please answer the questions below to the best of your ability. Please select **no opinion** if you believe your position prevents you from answering a question. Comments are provided **only IF** you would like to expand on your multiple choice answers.

1. Do you feel the government has done its job of making our region more equitable? *

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- No Opinion
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

2. What is within the government's ability to make our region more equitable, and what in your view, is its role? *

The biggest glaring issue is our unconstitutionally-funded system of public education, which we are obliged to fix or have the courts fix it for us.

3. Do you believe the government has a role to play to address our region's longstanding racial, gender and sexual identity inequities? *

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- No Opinion
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

4. What is that role? What specific policy decisions could help address these inequities? *

At my level of state government, we have to provide equal protections to all through efforts such as the Fairness Act. Housing must be available to all, without renters being able to be thrown out because their landlords do not "approve" of their identities. Children must be able to get an education without fearing they will be beaten to death by their peers for being different.

5. Should individual members of government focus on addressing the root causes of the racial and other inequities within the Pennsylvania region? *

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- No Opinion
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

6. How do you feel you may do this for your district and the people you represent?

I believe that many of the racial and other inequities are due to multi-generational, intentional policymaking that was designed to limit the opportunities of certain groups. It is up to me and to other elected officials to remove and remediate those cruel limitations.

7. Do you support efforts to increase the minimum wage? *

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- No Opinion
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

8. Do you support efforts to legalize cannabis in PA? *

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- No Opinion
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Comments

We also need to legalize psilocybin.

9. Do you support the expungement of records related to cannabis sale, possession, and or/usage? *

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- No Opinion
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Comments *

We also need to unlink the connection between concealed carry permits and medical cannabis use.

10. Do you support the expansion of our public transit system (ex. Pittsburgh Regional Transit) into neighboring counties and the potential use of new methods of transit (Rail rapid transit, light rail expansion etc)? *

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- No Opinion
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

11. Do you support a pathway for immunity for those with cannabis related conditions and an inclusion of such individuals in the emerging cannabis industry? Why? Why Not? *

Absolutely. To do otherwise would be to intentionally limit opportunities for some while enriching others.

12. Should the Commonwealth pass new laws to protect voting rights in light of new challenges against the recently passed ACT 77? *

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- No Opinion
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

13. What, if any, is the biggest threat to voting rights in Pennsylvania? *

It is difficult to just pick one. As a Jew, I was horrified that the legislature's inability to get anything done in a bipartisan way will likely disenfranchise those of my religion in the upcoming primary, scheduled for Passover. The requirement for a stamp on the mail-in ballots is an unconstitutional poll tax. Refusing to count ballots of those who made tiny, inconsequential errors in assembling their mail-in ballots is a heinous form of disenfranchisement. The ongoing refusal to make election day a holiday is a threat to the voting rights of those who cannot get time off to vote. I could go on at length, but there are dozens of threats that all need to be addressed.

14. Do you support the creation or continuation of universal health programs, such as Medicare for All? *

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- No Opinion
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

15. If you answered yes, do you believe this should be permanent or a stepping stone to single payer healthcare?

We need a permanent solution, certainly, but what that looks like might be closer to single payer health care ultimately. What is clear is that the existing system is untenable.

16. Should the government require local law enforcement agencies to ban chokeholds and no knock style raids in order to receive assistance? *

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- No Opinion
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Comments

17. Do you believe the affordable, fair housing crisis includes having the government address issues with zoning, rent control, and eviction alternatives? *

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- No Opinion
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

18. What do you believe the solutions to the housing and eviction crisis should be?

It is a complex issue, but these are a few of my thoughts on the matter. Pennsylvania operates under the Universal Construction Code, which means that so-called "tiny houses" are largely illegal across the Commonwealth. This form of housing could provide opportunities for downsizing seniors or the housing insecure, among other groups. Evictions (particularly so-called "social evictions" and those that revictimize survivors of domestic abuse) need to be sealed and I am proud to have hosted the policy hearing on that issue in my district recently. I am a cosponsor on that legislation and will be supporting it. The types of small communities that I represent need assistance dealing with blighted properties and returning them to productive use, because we currently have a paradox in which we have areas with little to no affordable housing but also 50-90% vacancy rates in uninhabitable or "twisted title" properties.

Comments

19. Should pennsylvania end qualified immunity for government officials, including law enforcement agents, in civil actions alleging deprivation of rights? *

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- No Opinion
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Comments

20. Should Pennsylvania pass legislation requiring the commonwealth to focus on the ability to release net-zero carbon emissions into the atmosphere by the year 2050? *

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- No Opinion
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Comments

21. Do you support public investment and funding of the public schools and public community schools? *

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- No Opinion
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Comments

22. Do you support investment into green energy and green energy jobs at the local level? *

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- No Opinion
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Comments

23. Do you support investment into business education and sustainability into underserved and and underrepresented communities ? *

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- No Opinion
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Comments

24. Should the ICE detention facilities in the United States be subject to greater local oversight? *

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- No Opinion
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Comments

25. Should the Commonwealth work within its power to ensure access to banking for locally regulated cannabis businesses? *

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- No Opinion
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Comments

26. Do you believe there should be any new gun legislation to combat the health epidemic of mass shootings and gun violence? *

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- No Opinion
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Comments

27. Do you support a path to citizenship for “dreamers”? *

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- No Opinion
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Comments

28. Do you support creating incentives for green technology innovation in opposition to working to revive the coal industry? *

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- No Opinion
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Do you believe in a hybrid model?

I wasn't sure what this question was asking. Hybrid coal and green tech? I think we may be in that model until green tech takes over, if that is what the question was after.

29. Do you support expanding access to affordable, accessible housing for low-income people? *

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- No Opinion
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

If you answered yes, through what means? If no, why not? *

For one, we need a large-scale initiative to clear titles to empty properties and fund their renovation by regular people in our communities, not just wealthy developers who don't live in our neighborhoods.

30. Do you promote diversion of people with mental illness from the criminal justice system, and to increase access to community mental health services? *

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- No Opinion
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Comments

31. Do you believe the Commonwealth has a role to play in reducing the maternal and infant mortality rates for the Black community in Pennsylvania? *

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- No Opinion
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Comments

Proud to be a member of the Black Maternal Health Caucus.

32. According to the FBI, White Supremacy is on the offensive both in government and in our socio-political rhetoric. What can be done to protect communities of color, LGBTQ folk, Women, Immigrants and other at risk communities from this very real threat? *

Research has shown that hate diminishes when people interact with real people from other communities and groups and that it increases when people are isolated and exposed to dramatic media messages about the "other." We need to work on this with children from a very young age, because otherwise children learn hate from their parents and the media messages they are exposed to. We also need to take reports of white supremacy seriously, as it is on the rise in SWPA, and we need to work together in an intersectional way so that no community feels alone in dealing with this vicious rhetoric and danger.

33. How do you define community safety? How can your position work to keep the community safe? *

When I think of the term "community safety," I think of a place where anyone feels comfortable to go out at all times of day and night, where they do not fear unregulated police violence, and where they do not wonder whether a bridge will fall down before they reach the other side.

34. Outside of policing and prisons, what are some of the solutions to reducing the amount of violence that happens in the commonwealth?

I believe that reducing income inequality and giving people access to opportunities that have been kept from them would go a long way toward reducing violence. Also, we need common sense gun legislation.

35. Do you support expansive ballot access to include drop boxes, ballots translated into multiple languages, and extended voting opportunities on the weekends? *

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- No Opinion
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Comments

I fought for the additional drop boxes for this election and was happy to see the Innamorato administration come through with them.

36. Do you believe the process to reinstate the right to vote for returning citizens (those returning from government detainment) should be streamlined and automated to inform participant upon release? *

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- No Opinion
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Comments

37. What can you do to improve the quality of life of the average Black 22 year old in your district?

I think we have to start when that Black 22-year-old was not even born yet, by providing quality black maternal health care that includes prenatal and other ongoing health care that doesn't bankrupt families. We then have to provide quality, affordable (ideally free) childcare, safe and accessible lead-free housing, universal pre-K, exceptional public schooling in safe facilities free from fear and filled with culturally-appropriate educational and educators, and overall give that Black 22-year-old an amazing background that sets them up for whatever they want to do in life. Until we do that, I don't know that we can just expect to change the world for someone if we have already failed them every year they have been alive.

38. Why should voters trust you to operate differently? How will you ensure transparency if elected?

Trust? Never trust your elected officials. Keep an eye on us and hold us accountable. I have autism and find it challenging to lie, so I am a fairly transparent person anyway, but trust is not a word that you should necessarily use when dealing with elected officials. I have never trusted elected officials less than since I got involved in government myself. Government is a wild place.

39. Do you believe art is a vital resource for education, tourism, violence intervention, and cultural competency ? *

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- No Opinion
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Comments

I am a member of the Arts and Culture Caucus and I majored in Art History in college.

40. Do you believe in funding the arts as a general practice of community investments? *

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- No Opinion
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Comments

I created an artist in residence program while on Swissvale Borough Council.

41. How do you define governmental transparency?

People should expect to be able to access information, records, meetings, etc. There should be a proactive effort to provide those things to the public, whether they ever even get used. For instance, I pushed to livestream our borough council meetings, because I was against the belief that someone should have to locate childcare and find time to attend a council meeting if they wanted to participate in public comment and the like.

Comments

43. What does reproductive justice mean to you?

People need to be able to take charge of and financially afford their own reproductive health, including whether or not to have children, without being told what is best for them based on cultural beliefs (e.g. being refused sterilization by a doctor because a husband might come along and want the woman to have children), without being refused care based on politicians' opinions, without being denied access to IVF or other treatments based on pseudoscience.

44. The medical result of pregnancy decision should not result in a criminal arrest * or prosecution of the individual or their doctor.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- No Opinion
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Comments

45. Do you support reparations for the descendants of those who were enslaved or denied governmental services based upon their racial classification? *

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- No Opinion
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Comments

46. Do you support an end to lifetime parole in Pennsylvania? *

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- No Opinion
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Comments

46. Do you support a restoration of gun rights to those who have completed their * sentence of incarceration and who have not committed a violent act within a minimum 10 year time period following their release?

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- No Opinion
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Comments

47. Do you support protections from discrimination that would allow members of the LGBTQIA+ community protection from eviction, employment opportunities, and medical discrimination? *

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- No Opinion
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Comments

Proud to have voted for the Fairness Act.

48. Pennsylvania has one of the largest aging populations in the country. Do you believe our government can do more to improve the conditions of the facilities and the overall quality of life for our seniors ? *

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- No Opinion
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Comments

49. How do you define disability justice and how have you worked in the past to uphold its principles?

As a person with autism and an autoimmune disease, I understand disability justice on a daily basis. We must incorporate neurodiversity and physical limitations into daily life so that people and their valuable contributions are not excluded based on bias. Sadly, I had to literally beg and cry in order to get an accommodation for my disability that would allow me to dictate my communications when I joined the PA House Democratic Caucus, so we have a long way to go.

50. How have you worked in the past to engage youth, particularly those who have been considered at risk?

When I was on Swissvale Borough Council, we did a survey on what people wanted in the community. The top two things were environmental programs and things for kids to do. I therefore always tried to incorporate a youth element into all my programs. Worm composting? Kids love worms. Let's get the children's librarian involved. Likewise for the anaerobic food digester and the Allegheny Goatscape visit. I created a youth theater camp. I don't have kids myself, so I try to figure out what the want/need is and respond to it.

51. Artists, cultural spaces, and artist practitioners provide a vital partnership and resources to government agencies. *

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- No Opinion
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Comments

Thank You

Thank you so much for applying. We appreciate your commitment to public service and working to ensure the people of the Commonwealth are well represented.

Google Forms