

## 2020 Legislative Candidate Questionnaire for Developmental Disabilities

Name: Zack Zappone

District: 6

Position: State Representative

***1. If you have a personal connection or professional experience with someone who has a developmental disability, would you describe its impact on you?***

As a McDonald's employee, one of my fellow coworkers had a developmental disability. She showed me that with the proper support system such as transportation, she could live an independent life, work hard, and contribute to our workplace. As a teacher, I have experience with students with developmental disabilities. Although I was a general education teacher, I had students with developmental disabilities come attend my class. I know from working with these students that it is incredibly important to provide them with instruction and education that meets their individual needs. Students with developmental disabilities continued to work hard, learn, and have a positive impact in the classroom. It was important to provide them the appropriate scaffolding so they can access the material and participate. When we do that, students of all ability levels are able to contribute. One of my classroom core values is inclusion. This is a core value I bring to my campaign and will continue to advocate for as a state representative.

***2. What are your top three legislative priorities and how would you help people with developmental disabilities in them?***

I am running to make sure that all people have a fair shot. My top legislative priorities are building a strong education system, good jobs that protect workers, and protected access to affordable health care and child care. I will fight to protect dedicated funding for mental health clinics and services, programs for children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families. We need to continue supporting people with developmental disabilities so they can continue to live in the community. This means making K-12 education and workforce training programs accessible. We also need to make sure work places will have appropriate accommodations that help people with developmental disabilities. And finally, our healthcare system needs to support the needs of people with developmental disabilities. As a representative, I will listen to the needs of individuals and work to solve issues that are barriers to their lives.

***3. With the current economic crisis, how would you protect services that people with I/DD and their families need?***

I will work to protect services for people with I/DD and their families by fighting to maintain funding for them. I will work to protect Residential Habilitation Centers. Given the unpredictable long term financial impacts of a pandemic, we must continue to support individuals with I/DD and the community that fosters stability. I would fight to advocate for continued resource allocation towards employment, early childhood services, financial asset building programs and behavioral support for those in our population vulnerable to no longer being protected by elected officials concerned about short term budgetary restrictions.

***4. Is there other information you'd like constituents with developmental disabilities and their family and friends to know?***

If elected, I am here to serve the community to help people have a fair chance. Please let me know what barriers that impact your life. I am receptive to constructing legislation that best serves the longevity of support and resources needed to let those in our community impacted by I/DD thrive.