

350 Action 2020 Candidate Questionnaire

Andru Volinsky

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About You

Your Name: Andru Volinsky

What office are you running for, and as which party?: *New Hampshire Governor - Democrat*

Policy Positions

Do you support a Green New Deal that ends fossil fuels and provides an immediate and just transition to 100% renewable energy? Explain what that means to you.

Absolutely. The climate crisis has reached such catastrophic proportions that we have no other choice but to ensure this decade becomes the decade of the Green New Deal. As a grandfather, I see climate through the eyes of my grandchildren and needing to lead a cleaner, healthier planet for them. This means keeping all fossil fuels in the ground and ensuring that workers in the fossil fuel industry are provided with the training to transition to being part of the clean energy economy. I am the only candidate running for governor who has made the pledge to fight for a Green New Deal at the state level, and who opposes new fossil fuel infrastructure.

How will you center racial, economic and social justice in your climate policies?

Climate policies will only be effective if they include and uplift the voices of populations most impacted by this crisis, particularly the millions of Americans experiencing financial insecurity, people of color, and frontline communities. I will appoint experts and community activists to develop policies in consultation with local community advocates and address key issues including energy costs for low income families, ensuring communities impacted by pollution are able to transition to clean energy, and support workers in all energy related industries get access to good-paying jobs centered in clean energy.

Do you support a moratorium on all new fossil fuel infrastructure, including pipelines, fracked gas and oil, compressor stations and coal power plants? Please tell us with specifics what you'd do, if elected to stop the expansion of the fossil fuel industry and keep fossil fuels in the ground?

Yes. I am the only candidate for governor in NH who has always opposed all new fossil fuel infrastructure. My Democratic opponent in the primary has supported fracked gas pipelines, including the proposed Granite Bridge project, and taken money from utilities and fossil fuel lobbyists. As governor, I will make sure to appoint qualified climate champions to the Department of Environment Services and the powerful Site Evaluation Committee that approves energy projects. As Council Executive, I was able to reject some of Governor Sununu's climate denying nominees to these important positions. I will push to accelerate clean energy and community power projects.

Do you support investigation of the fossil fuel industry's role in causing climate change, blocking climate action, and misleading the public? If so, do you have plans for a process to hold the industry financially accountable for that role and related harms?

Yes, I believe we must hold corporate interests accountable for actions that harm our community, New Hampshire workers, and the environment. As governor, I will appoint an Attorney General who is committed to holding the fossil fuel industry accountable for their track record of misleading the public.

Do you pledge to reject any contributions from the fossil fuel industry, as defined by the "No Fossil Fuel Money Pledge"?

Yes

Do you support plans to create an immigration policy that allows a path to citizenship for undocumented people?

Yes. Since its founding, America and our state has been built by immigrants. I am committed to upholding our proud traditions of welcoming and ensuring the American dream is accessible to all. New Hampshire has a growing New American population and we welcome their contributions to our state.

What are your specific plans on addressing the refugees and other migrants at the US borders?

I will work to stop the unconscionable practice of family separation and ensure our state provides resources to refugees in need. I will also work to protect Dreamers and others seeking asylum through legal mechanisms. I believe state law enforcement should inform the public of immigration checkpoints set up by the Customs and Border Protection. It is deeply troubling CBP is setting up checkpoints along I-93 and conducting illegal search and seizures. We should not be giving a blank check to the Trump Administration's abuse of current law by allowing these checkpoints under the guise of immigration enforcement. These checkpoints have also caused traffic jams during high tourist season and are far from the Canadian border. As governor I will prioritize the civil liberties of our citizens from overreaching CBP federal agencies .

How do you see climate change impacting mass migrations and what are your plans to address the increase in refugees as a result of the climate crisis?

The climate crisis is creating climate refugees by impacting water availability, droughts that are pushing farmers off their land and recurring hurricanes and other natural disasters that are a result of intensifying weather patterns. New Hampshire has in recent years welcomed refugees to be part of our community and as Governor, I would create entry pathways for climate refugees and make sure our State agencies had a plan for resettlement and social services to incorporate them.

What are your plans for criminal justice reform?

The Vera Center for Justice found that New Hampshire had experienced a 380% increase in the number of incarcerated people from 1983 to 2015, with a disproportionate concentration of Black and Latino people. This over-incarceration is unacceptable. I would support legislation to institute "good time" and allow inmates to earn time off their sentences for good behavior. HB1611, a bipartisan bill, is a good example. We must however go beyond that: legalize marijuana and treat drug addiction as a public health problem, not a criminal justice one. We need more diversion programs and reform parole and probation policies. The opioid crisis is causing a strain on resources as our prison guards work overtime

and find themselves short staffed because we cannot hire people to work in prison. More drug treatment programs is critical to addressing the problem of overincarceration.

Do you support a worker's right to unionize?

Yes, absolutely, and am proud to have organized against right-to-work efforts here and have represented unions as an attorney trying to protect their pensions.

Do you support a \$15/hour minimum wage?

Yes. I'm the only candidate for governor who has consistently advocated for a \$15 minimum wage.

How do you plan to address the resurgence of white supremacy in the public discourse? Please tell us your plan to respond to white nationalist terrorist acts in this country?

As the legal counsel for over five years for ACLU-NH with a lifetime of dedication to civil rights issues, I believe the Civil Rights Unit should be codified in statute and given the budget and resources to pursue hate crimes and white nationalist terrorist acts. The Attorney General also needs to work with the Human Rights Commission to address the backlog of complaints and ensure no duplication. There is no evidence this is currently occurring despite being outlined in the Executive Order. As governor, I would also appoint an Attorney General who is committed to combating white supremacy and does not use his office for political purposes. We must also collect better data on and monitor groups operating in New Hampshire, and nationally, so we better predict and stop these acts before they happen.

What is your plan to reduce gun violence and mass shootings?

We must expand background checks, close loopholes, limit or ban the sale of automatic weapons, and ensure violent actors like domestic violence abusers aren't able to acquire or hold on to weapons. Governor Sununu has vetoed all common sense gun reform bills. I will make it a priority to sign those bills into law if I'm governor.

Do you support the payment of reparations and/or related structural adjustment to remunerate the descendants of enslaved African Americans to addressing America's history of codified and systemic racism?

As Governor I believe we need to systematically address historic and present day racial inequities across a range of areas including addressing the present day impacts of slavery, redlining, and exclusion of African Americans from today's economy.

The attempted lynching of a biracial boy in Claremont just a few years ago shows that we have a long way to go in New Hampshire. We need to put resources behind our anti-discrimination laws and directly address the continuing impacts of racism in our society.

Do you support the return of unceded lands and territory or related royalties to Indigenous Populations as a form of redress for America's history of codified and systemic racism?

Yes

Do you support Medicare for All?

Yes. COVID-19 exposes the folly of our broken for-profit health care system and why we urgently need Medicare for All. I am the only candidate for governor advocating for Medicare for All.

Do you support a woman's right to choose?

Yes

Race:

Caucasian

Gender:

Male

More about Andru:

Andru grew up in Levittown, Pennsylvania, a town that has much in common with many of New Hampshire's struggling mill towns. His father worked as a mechanic and maintenance man. He was once a union shop steward, until he lost that job. Andru's father worked as many as three jobs at once to make ends meet. Andru's mother was a homemaker who raised four kids. Andru, nurtured by a couple of elementary school and religious school teachers, did well in school. He earned a college scholarship and became the only one in his family to attend and graduate from college. Andru graduated from college in three years. He planned to take a service position with VISTA, but his father's heart attack brought him back to Levittown where he worked days as a framing carpenter and ran a bookstore at night. He applied to law school and attended George Washington Law School the next year. Andru's working class background and Jewish faith are foundational values for why he fights for justice and equality for all.