

ServeNext

Citizen Action

2008 Candidate Questionnaire

General

(1) If elected, will you publicly and prominently call on all Americans to serve their communities and their country?

Yes _____

No _____

(2) Have you posted, or will you post, your national service platform on your campaign website?

Yes _____

No _____

(3) The Corporation for National and Community Service is charged with coordinating national service programs in the United States. If elected, will you support making the Chief Executive Officer of The Corporation for National and Community Service a cabinet-level position?

Yes _____

No _____

Service in Education

(4) Service-learning allows students of all ages -- from kindergarten to college -- to learn about real-world issues while discovering how to make a genuine difference in their communities. Currently, about one-third of all schools incorporate service-learning into their curriculum. If elected, will you support legislation that ensures service-learning is incorporated into at least 50% of all public schools?¹

Yes _____

No _____

(5) Teach for America has a successful 18 year history of placing high-level college graduates in low-performing schools in an effort to end educational inequity in the United States. If elected, will you support federal grants specifically for Teach for America to expand its teaching program as outlined in the Teach For America Act?²

Yes _____

No _____

¹The Corporation for National and Community Service in its Strategic Plan 2006-2010 outlines the goal of integrating service learning into 50% of all public schools: http://nationalservice.gov/pdf/strategic_plan_web_03.pdf

²According to H.R. 1971, the cost of the Teach For America Act would run from \$15 million in fiscal year 2008 up to \$20 million in fiscal year 2010: http://thomas.loc.gov/home/gpoxmlc110/h1971_ih.xml

International Service

(6) Peace Corps volunteers help create a positive image of America throughout the world and empower communities in developing countries. Currently there are about 8,000 Peace Corps volunteers serving abroad, significantly fewer than the 16,000 volunteers who served in 1967, six years after the program was founded by President Kennedy.³ If elected, will you return the number of Peace Corps volunteers to 1967 levels?⁴

Yes _____

No _____

AmeriCorps

(7) Currently, there are 75,000 citizens serving in AmeriCorps. If elected, will you support legislation that expands AmeriCorps to at least 250,000 – an increase of 175,000 members from current levels?⁵

Yes _____

No _____

(8) The Segal AmeriCorps Education Award is currently given to AmeriCorps members after the completion of one year of full-time service (the equivalent of 1,700 hours). The amount of the award has remained stagnant since 1992 at \$4,725, while the average cost of a college education has increased significantly. If elected, will you support increasing the value of the education award?⁶

Yes _____

No _____

(9) The Segal AmeriCorps Education Award can be used only to pay for educational expenses at qualified institutions of higher education, for educational training, or to repay qualified student loans. Unlike Pell Grants and other financial aid given to students, the education award is counted as taxable income.⁷ If elected, will you support making the Segal AmeriCorps Education Award a tax-free grant?

Yes _____

No _____

Service Opportunities for American 55 Years of Age and Older

(10) There are currently 60 million citizens over the age of 55, living healthier and longer lives than ever before. The potential for positive impact among this demographic is tremendous. If elected, will you expand service opportunities for Americans 55 years of age and older?⁸

Yes _____

No _____

³According to PeaceCorps.gov there are 8,079 current volunteers:

<http://www.peacecorps.gov/index.cfm?shell=learn.whatispc.pctoday>

⁴The More Peace Corps campaign organized by the National Peace Corps Association is calling for doubling the number of Peace Corps volunteers and its budget of \$331 million by 2011: <http://www.morepeacecorps.org/about/bigger>

⁵The Voices for National Service Presidential Candidates Memo estimates the cost of 250,000 AmeriCorps members per year at \$1.47 billion: http://www.voicesforservice.org/vns/presCandMemo_signOn.htm

⁶The Dodd-Cochran AmeriCorps: Together Improving our Nation (ACTION) Act (S.3037) would raise the education award to \$6,185, rising each year to reflect tuition increases and costing approximately \$1,460 per member above the current award level: <http://www.opencongress.org/bill/110-s3037/text>

⁷The Segal AmeriCorps Education Award Tax Relief Act of 2008: http://thomas.loc.gov/home/gpoxmlc110/h6407_ih.xml

⁸The Voices for Service Presidential Candidates Memo estimates that maintaining an expanded senior service program will approximately cost \$990 million: http://www.voicesforservice.org/vns/presCandMemo_signOn.htm

(11) Many Americans 55 years of age and older are willing to commit themselves to full-time service, yet have little need for the Segal AmeriCorps Education Award. If elected, will you allow these volunteers to transfer the education award to their children and/or grandchildren for educational costs and/or loan repayment?

Yes _____

No _____

Public Service Leadership

(12) Legislation authorizing the creation of a US Public Service Academy has gained significant momentum and bi-partisan support.⁹ The undergraduate institution -- devoted to developing civilian leaders and modeled on the military academies -- will offer four years of tuition-free education in exchange for five years of civilian service following graduation. If elected, will you support the creation of the U.S. Public Service Academy?

Yes _____

No _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Name of Candidate: _____

District: _____ State: _____

Campaign Manager: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Press Contact: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Respectfully submitted by ServeNext Citizen Action.

Please mail responses to:
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⁹The Public Service Academy Act of 2007: <http://www.uspublicserviceacademy.org/HR1671.pdf> and <http://www.uspublicserviceacademy.org/S960.pdf>. Both proposed bills appropriate \$164 million for each of the next five fiscal years in order to fund the US Public Service Academy.