

<b>Timestamp</b>	6/21/2014 14:01:00
<b>Name of Candidate</b>	John Mackenzie
<b>Office Sought</b>	House 22nd District
<b>Submission Date</b>	'Jun 21
<b>E-mail Address</b>	john@mackenzieforstaterep.com
<b>Phone Number</b>	3023733723
<b>Website (if applicable)</b>	mackenzieforstaterep.com
<b>1. Why do you want to serve (or continue to serve as) a state legislator?</b>	<p>Throughout my career, I have been focused on issues that affect all of us in Delaware: strengthening our public education system, reinvigorating our economy, and safeguarding our environment. I served on the Christina School Board for 7 years, trying to help our public schools serve our kids better, and I am a career teacher myself. I have served on the faculty of UD for almost 30 years, teaching and conducting research in the department of applied economics and statistics, teaching two generations of students how our policy choices determine whether our economies grow or stagnate. And I served 18 years as a trustee of the Delaware chapter of the Nature Conservancy, and 5 years on Delaware's Open Space Council, trying to protect our landscape and its ecosystems from continued degradation.</p> <p>Becoming a grandfather, turning 60 and seeing my youngest child finishing college got me thinking hard about the future. After 30 wonderful years at UD, it's time to "take it to the streets." I can do a lot more good in the General Assembly, serving as your Representative, than in a UD classroom or an academic journal article. I hope to spend the rest of my career giving back to the community that has been so good to me and my family.</p>
<b>2. What social justice, economic justice, and/or good government issues are you passionate about? What experience do you have working on these issues?</b>	Homelessness, food security, mobility, a livable wage, educational opportunity. I have been involved with homeless programs for years, and created the Triple Crown trail races as a fundraiser for Friendship House, NAWC and other local programs. I taught ag & natural resource policy at UD, including SNAP, WIC and school lunch programs, and I understand the links between the Farm Bill, ethanol, poverty, nutrition and health. I also taught GIS at UD, analyzing land-use patterns and the geography of poverty and race. As an economist, I am well versed in the theoretical arguments against a minimum wage and the practical arguments in favor of it. Finally DE needs to broaden higher education opportunities for residents; too many SEED program students are failing to make the transition to UD or DSU, and too many careers are hobbled by heavy student loan debt.
<b>3. How do you plan to engage your constituents in the legislative process and continue ongoing communications with them (or continue to do so)?</b>	An effective legislator is an educator. We share similar visions and goals for our community, but we differ on how to achieve them. That's constituent service is about: you and your constituents identify problems and find solutions together. My opponent does not even hold regular open meetings for 22nd RD constituents; I will host weekly gatherings to listen to constituent concerns and share information on pending legislation. With email, websites, Facebook, Twitter, etc. there's no justification for not staying in close touch with the people you're supposed to represent.
<b>4. Is there anything you would like to share as we evaluate your candidacy (e.g. information about your biography, your candidacy, your district or voters)? Note: This question is optional.</b>	
<b>1. Delaware should increase our state minimum wage to at least \$10.10 per hour and index the minimum wage.</b>	Champion

<p><b>Optional: If you would like to elaborate or explain your position, feel free to add commentary.</b></p>	<p>Conventional economic theory says a minimum wage reduces employment of low-skill workers, although the empirical evidence for this is very limited. In practice, a minimum wage increase can boost aggregate incomes and purchasing power, although the effect is usually small. A higher minimum wage also motivates investments to improve labor efficiency. There is no evidence that a minimum wage slows economic growth.</p> <p>This issue is part of a broader economic development question: what kind of businesses do we want to attract to our state? A sub-standard minimum wage signals a sub-standard workforce. Do we really want Delaware to be the Bangladesh of the Mid-Atlantic?</p>
<p><b>2. Delaware should work with community organizations to help enforce a sector-specific minimum wage of at least \$15 for employees of big box retail, large chain restaurants, and warehouses.</b></p>	<p>Undecided</p>
<p><b>Optional: If you would like to elaborate or explain your position, feel free to add commentary.</b></p>	<p>This would involve more rules and arbitrary criteria, motivating employers to try to game the system. Most chain restaurants are franchises that qualify as small businesses.</p>
<p><b>3. Delaware should commit to ensuring all public employees and employees working under public contracts are making a living wage, with a timeline for accomplishing this goal. Furthermore, funding should be allocated in the budget each year to make progress towards this goal for state employees.</b></p>	<p>Supporter</p>
<p><b>Optional: If you would like to elaborate or explain your position, feel free to add commentary.</b></p>	<p>The basic idea is fine, would complement DE's "prevailing wage" provisions (although prevailing wage is based on very flawed surveys by Dept. of Labor). But again, lots of rules, arbitrary criteria, political impracticality. What's a "living wage?" Does this apply to seasonals, temps? It's unlikely the GA will follow through on a multi-year timeline; each year's budget is its own quagmire.</p>
<p><b>4. Delaware has a graduated state income tax system, with a top marginal tax rate of 6.6% applied to taxable income above \$60,000. Delaware should establish an additional marginal personal income tax bracket or brackets above the \$60,000+ level at progressively higher tax rates than 6.6%.</b></p>	<p>Strong Supporter</p>
<p><b>Optional: If you would like to elaborate or explain your position, feel free to add commentary.</b></p>	<p>About 1/3 of DE filers have AGI &gt; \$60K. The fact that we still have tax brackets of \$0-\$2,000, \$2,000-\$5,000, \$5,000-\$10,000 indicates how out of date these are. I would definitely support a higher tax bracket at AGI &gt; \$100K because gross salary &gt; \$117K doesn't pay any Social Security tax (regressive!). I would also support expanding the zero-tax bracket upward to an AGI of \$5,000.</p>

<p><b>5. Delaware should increase its operating budget to provide additional funding to schools with higher percentages of students who are enrolled in free and reduced price lunch programs.</b></p>	<p>Champion</p>
<p><b>Optional: If you would like to elaborate or explain your position, feel free to add commentary.</b></p>	<p>High-poverty schools already get Title 1 money, but it's not very efficient. DE needs a comprehensive overhaul of its entire school funding system. Our infamous "unit count" system is from the 1940's. A big problem with high-poverty schools is the constant exodus of teachers to schools in wealthier communities. So the average teacher in our high-poverty schools has less seniority and experience and lower salary. A new funding model should reverse this, providing incentives for teachers to work in these schools.</p>
<p><b>6. Delaware should reform the process for authorizing charter schools such that new charter schools can only be authorized by the local school district in which the potential charter school would be located.</b></p>	<p>Supporter</p>
<p><b>Optional: If you would like to elaborate or explain your position, feel free to add commentary.</b></p>	<p>Charters are re-segregating DE schools; socially divisive; cherry-picking passively if not actively. DOE and the state board of ed have really made a mess of this, but I'm not sure local districts and school boards will manage this a lot better.</p>
<p><b>7. Delaware should establish a driving card for undocumented residents.</b></p>	<p>Champion</p>
<p><b>Optional: If you would like to elaborate or explain your position, feel free to add commentary.</b></p>	<p>A driver's license has nothing to do with citizenship. It simply means the person has passed a basic test of driving competency. Denying undocumented immigrants licenses doesn't prevent them from driving, it just makes our roads more dangerous.</p>
<p><b>8. Delaware should establish a single-payer health care system.</b></p>	<p>Strong Supporter</p>
<p><b>Optional: If you would like to elaborate or explain your position, feel free to add commentary.</b></p>	<p>Your car insurance is lower because the law requires every driver to have insurance (and you still have to pay a bit extra for uninsured motorist coverage). Same principle applies to health insurance: when uninsured people use emergency rooms and hospitals the costs are passed on as higher health insurance premiums for the rest of us. The Affordable Care Act simply requires these free-riders to have their own insurance, and subsidizes it for low-income people. In hindsight, with all the Tea Party screaming over the ACA, which makes the existing system a little more efficient, the Obama administration might as well have gone for a single-payer system, which would have eliminated an enormous amount of bureaucratic inefficiency.</p> <p>The profit margin in health care insurance is based on denial of provider billings for medical care. Providers and insurers both have armies of bean-counters battling over diagnostic codes and reimbursements. That's why health care costs so much more in the US than in any other country, while our health metrics (longevity, infant mortality, etc.) are pretty mediocre.</p> <p>I would like to see Delaware follow Vermont's lead in establishing a single-payer system.</p>

<p><b>9. Delaware should join Oregon, Vermont, Washington, and Montana by allowing mentally competent, terminally ill, adult residents to end their lives through voluntary self-administration of lethal medications that have been expressly prescribed for that purpose. Furthermore, Delaware should require health care practitioners to provide education regarding appropriate palliative care, hospice, and death with dignity options to patients with terminal illnesses or conditions.</b></p>	<p>Champion</p>
<p><b>Optional: If you would like to elaborate or explain your position, feel free to add commentary.</b></p>	<p>We should use the Oregon law as a model: The patient is of sound mind, two doctors concur on a terminal diagnosis with &lt;6 months to live, the patient makes two requests at least 15 days apart in front of witnesses, and there is legal immunity for assisting medical personnel.</p>
<p><b>10. Delaware should make it illegal, within state limits, to transport, possess, dispose, or process flowback water from hydraulic fracturing that contains toxic or undisclosed additives.</b></p>	<p>Supporter</p>
<p><b>Optional: If you would like to elaborate or explain your position, feel free to add commentary.</b></p>	<p>Exemptions from disclosing what chemicals are used in fracking are inexcusable. But there's no fracking going on in DE.</p>
<p><b>11. Delaware should amend its Renewable Portfolio Standards (RPS) law to (1) increase the amount of Solar Renewable Energy Credits required and (2) eliminate the ability for large industrial users and municipalities to opt out of the RPS.</b></p>	<p>Strong Supporter</p>
<p><b>Optional: If you would like to elaborate or explain your position, feel free to add commentary.</b></p>	<p>Frankly I believe a carbon tax would be a lot more efficient than RPS. But if we're reforming RPS, yes, increase the solar component, make it apply to everybody, and don't count Bloom boxes as credits!</p>

<p><b>12. Delaware should prohibit private employers within state limits from inquiring into or considering the criminal record or history of a job applicant during the initial applicant process and require said employers to follow Equal Employment Opportunity Commission guidelines in evaluating whether to disqualify said applicant from employment.</b></p>	<p>Strong Supporter</p>
<p><b>Optional: If you would like to elaborate or explain your position, feel free to add commentary.</b></p>	<p>this issue is pretty much settled.</p>
<p><b>13. Delaware should eliminate the sentence of capital punishment.</b></p>	<p>Champion</p>
<p><b>Optional: If you would like to elaborate or explain your position, feel free to add commentary.</b></p>	<p>This is a red-meat issue, and you won't win this debate unless you acknowledge the natural human instinct for revenge that is triggered by any horrible crime. If somebody raped and murdered my wife, or one of my children, I would want to kill that person, and I might be willing to sit in prison the rest of my life for it—my life would be pretty much over anyway. My revenge would be for me to take, or not. That's not the same as expecting a judge, jury, lawyers and prison officials to take my revenge for me, using some allegedly painless, "humane" execution method. [Before the 1992 presidential election, Bernard Shaw asked Mike Dukakis a hypothetical question: if his wife Kitty was raped and murdered, would he support the death penalty for the killer? And Dukakis's wimpy, dispassionate answer ("I don't see any evidence that it's a deterrent...") lost him the election.]</p> <p>Around the world, the death penalty is mostly a political tool for totalitarian governments. North Korea's Kim Jong-un had his ex-girlfriend executed. It doesn't deter crime; it just deters dissent.</p> <p>In the US, the death penalty is mostly targeted at African-American males...for lots of bad reasons. The appeals process is absurdly long and expensive. And the Justice Project proves how our criminal courts often sentence innocent people to death.</p>
<p><b>14. Delaware should prohibit the manufacture, sale, purchase, transfer, delivery, and public possession of large capacity magazines, defined as ammunition feeding devices with the capacity to accept more than 10 rounds.</b></p>	<p>Supporter</p>
<p><b>Optional: If you would like to elaborate or explain your position, feel free to add commentary.</b></p>	<p>Unfortunately, dickering over the specifics--hollow-points? silencers?--kind of legitimizes the gun nuts. Most of these people who "need" cop-killer bullets, concealed carry or high-capacity magazines are deviants and should be identified as such. The most effective gun control would be media campaigns that call out and isolate the gun fetishist paranoid wackos from mainstream gun-owners. And call out the NRA as just another industry lobby. If the NRA was really about self-defense, how come they never made a peep when Tasers were outlawed?</p>
<p><b>15. Delaware should legalize, tax, and regulate cannabis.</b></p>	<p>Strong Supporter</p>

<b>Optional: If you would like to elaborate or explain your position, feel free to add commentary.</b>	Looks like we'll be doing this the Delaware Way, giving away an inefficient monopoly franchise to somebody with political connections. I'm tracking the Colorado experience.
<b>16. Delaware should divert nonviolent defendants, probationers, and parolees charged with simple drug possession or drug use offenses from incarceration into community-based substance abuse treatment programs.</b>	Champion
<b>Optional: If you would like to elaborate or explain your position, feel free to add commentary.</b>	Simply incarcerating addicts is a huge waste of money. Current detox/rehab programs are short-term, underfunded. We need a serious commitment to recovering lives that are lost to addiction.
<b>17. Delaware should adopt Same Day Registration that is inclusive of primary, general, and special elections.</b>	Supporter
<b>Optional: If you would like to elaborate or explain your position, feel free to add commentary.</b>	But this is likely to involve a lot of administrative costs, and it's not likely to enfranchise many more people.
<b>18. Delaware should create an independent redistricting commission that is subject to FOIA.</b>	Strong Supporter
<b>Optional: If you would like to elaborate or explain your position, feel free to add commentary.</b>	I wrote a couple of academic papers on redistricting and gerrymandering. You can't take all the politics out of it, but an independent commission helps. (The Republican majority in the US House depends on gerrymandered districts in just three states: PA, NC and MI)
<b>19. Delaware should establish a program that provides public funds for use in election campaigns.</b>	Undecided
<b>Optional: If you would like to elaborate or explain your position, feel free to add commentary.</b>	This isn't really working at the federal level in presidential elections. There's surprisingly little money behind most local elections in DE.
<b>20. Delaware should amend its constitution and pass legislation to allow for "no-excuse" absentee voting.</b>	Champion
<b>Optional: If you would like to elaborate or explain your position, feel free to add commentary.</b>	Unlike same-day registration, this could really increase voter turnout. The current system requires you submit an affidavit indicating the reason you need an absentee ballot, and a lot of people (student at out-of-state college, etc.) have to have their affidavit signatures notarized. This arbitrary barrier to voting is ridiculous.