

**NATIONAL BLACK AGENDA CONSORTIUM - CHICAGO**  
**January 20, 2016**



**2016 U.S. SENATOR / U.S. REPRESENTATIVE**  
**CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE**



## 2016 U.S. SENATOR / U.S. REPRESENTATIVE CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

### Part I: Instructions and Candidate Details

**Instructions:** This is a fillable form, please answer all questions in Part I (Instructions and Candidate Details) and Part II (Issue Questionnaire). Part II includes yes/no and essay answer questions. Please mark the appropriate box for each yes/no question. If you wish to add comments to a yes/no question, or if elaboration is requested, you may type directly in the box below the Yes/No section. Please answer all essay questions. Each essay box has scrolling functionality which allows you to answer the questions at the length you deem sufficient. ***We appreciate your participation.***

#### Candidate Details

DATE:	<input type="text" value="Jan. 31, 2016"/>	DISTRICT:	<input type="text" value="7"/>	PARTY:	<input type="text" value="Democratic"/>
NAME:	<input type="text" value="Thomas Day"/>				
VOTING ADDRESS:	<input type="text" value="40 East Oak Street, Apt. 406"/>				
HOME PHONE:	<input type="text" value="312-802-3732"/>	BUSINESS PHONE:	<input type="text" value="312-835-6818"/>		
CAMPAIGN ADDRESS:	<input type="text" value="222 West Merchandise Mart Plaza, PO Box 4069, Chicago, Ill. 60654"/>				
CAMPAIGN PHONE:	<input type="text" value="312-835-6818"/>	CAMPAIGN FAX:	<input type="text"/>		
EMAIL:	<input type="text" value="tom@thomasday.org"/>	WEBSITE:	<input type="text" value="www.thomasday.org"/>		
CAMPAIGN MANAGER:	<input type="text" value="Mia Phifer"/>				
NUMBER OF PETITION SIGNATURES FILED:	<input type="text" value="3,500"/>	NUMBER OF PETITION SIGNATURES REQUIRED:	<input type="text" value="1,322"/>		

<b>Candidate Details</b>
<p><b>A) Elective or appointive, public or party, offices previously held.</b></p> <input style="width: 95%;" type="text" value="None"/>
<p><b>B) Other elective offices for which you have been a candidate.</b></p> <input style="width: 95%;" type="text" value="None"/>
<p><b>C) What is your primary occupation?</b></p> <input style="width: 95%;" type="text" value="Non profit consultant"/>
<p><b>D) Briefly list your civic activities of the past ten years.</b></p> <input style="width: 95%;" type="text" value="Served five years in the U.S. Army, helped build a non-profit business incubator for veterans, called 'The Bunker.'"/>
<p><b>E) What experience have you had which will be most helpful to you in the office you seek?</b></p> <input style="width: 95%;" type="text" value="Helping build The Bunker and understanding how entrepreneurs and small businesses create jobs."/>
<p><b>F) Please list all endorsements you have received.</b></p> <input style="width: 95%;" type="text"/>
<p><b>G) What is your campaign budget and how much have you raised to date?</b></p> <input style="width: 95%;" type="text" value="\$55,000 -- nearly all from individuals, many times more than Rep. Davis has raised from individuals."/>
<p><b>H) Please concisely state what goals for the office you seek are most important to you personally?</b></p> <input style="width: 95%;" type="text" value="1. Introduce and pass a bill mandating that the U.S. Attorney General enforce a 1994 directive from Congress that he or she compile and publish an annual accounting of reports of police misconduct, 2. Introduce and pass bills to increase tax incentives for investing in low-income areas, eliminate sentencing guidelines for drug-related offenses, and eliminate the Byrne federal grant program that provides incentives for police forces to make large numbers of drug arrests, 3. Introduce and pass bills to expand SBA lending and support small businesses and job creation."/>

# 2016 U.S. SENATOR / U.S. REPRESENTATIVE CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

## Part II. Issue Questionnaire

GENERAL - Yes/No Questions			
	YES	NO	
1	✓		Legislation has been introduced in Illinois for a process to Recall the Mayor of Chicago. Do you support the passage of that Legislation (HB4356)?
2	✓		Do you support the recently enacted Iran Nuclear Deal, negotiated by the President's State Department?

### Additional Explanation for Yes/No Responses:

I think in a democracy, voters should have every opportunity to hold their elected leaders accountable. Their must be an electoral pathway toward removing an elected official from office if that elected official has engaged in criminal behavior. I cannot support recalling Mayor Emanuel until the federal investigation into the events surrounding LaQuan McDonald's murder is complete. However, we know enough to know that no leader should be used by anyone for a photo op. Shortly after the release of the LaQuan video, Rep. Davis appeared side-by-side with the mayor to announce a grant enabling ex-offenders to gain temporary work cleaning up CTA buses. I think a true "second chance" for ex-offenders is a career. That's why I support introducing ex-offenders to job training programs and manufacturing apprenticeships so that they can compete for jobs and careers of the future.

GENERAL - Essay Questions	
3	<p>What do you see as your primary responsibilities and duties as a U.S. Senate/House member?</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 5px;"> <p>As the representative of the 7th Congressional District in Washington, I will be responsible for constantly coming up with new ideas to create jobs for our residents. That will require that I constantly engage with our people. Our district right now has three times the unemployment rate as the national average; we need to put people back to work.</p> <p>Within the first 90 days in Washington, I will propose bills to expand job training programs in advanced manufacturing technologies, expand apprenticeships in manufacturing, and make sure underserved communities are a part of these programs.</p> <p>I will also take responsibility for providing proper oversight of federal agencies operating in the 7th District. Federal programs like the Neighborhood Stabilization Program have not delivered on their promises to our neighborhoods. In Washington, I will call for a full investigation into what happened with the massive amount of federal support that was promised the 7th District but never delivered under the NSP program.</p> </div>
4	<p>*For those seeking re-election. What legislation did you sponsor or co-sponsor that addressed the issues of importance to African Americans in Chicago?</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 100px; margin-top: 5px;"></div>
5	<p>There has been a lot of attention, for good reason, on physical violence. However, many observers argue that abstract violence (the failure for citizens to obtain the resources necessary for a good quality of life) is just as pervasive and debilitating (i.e. high unemployment rates, poverty, poor education, poor housing, food deserts, et. al.). Do you agree that abstract violence is just as debilitating as physical violence? If so, have you introduced or proposed any legislation that deals with the abstract violence confronted by African Americans in Chicago?</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 5px;"> <p>Violent crime claims the lives of too many of our citizens, and I will be a strong voice for measures to fight it. Issues of civil inequality also require attention, as they have had a strong destructive impact on under-served neighborhoods as well.</p> <p>This district, which is about half African American, has three times the unemployment rate as the national average. The lack of investment in our low-income neighborhoods has undermined African Americans in Chicago. So has funding schools based on a formula that weighs property taxes way more than it should. So too has the uneven enforcement of drug laws, enabled by federal programs like the Byrne Federal Grant program, which provides federal dollars for police forces based on how many drug-related arrests they make. This system is as legal scholar Michelle Alexander calls it, "The New Jim Crow."</p> <p>Here's what I propose to end the era of the New Jim Crow: We need to grow the CDFI fund and expand the new markets tax credit to incentivize investments into low-income areas. We need to fund meaningful rehabilitation programs, and provide ex-offenders with opportunities to gain skills that are needed in the job market today -- not just opportunities to clean CTA buses. We can also provide tax incentives for employers to hire ex-offenders. And we should have long ago ended all federal sentencing guidelines for drug offenses. We should also employ more African American-owned businesses to do federal government contract work in predominately African American neighborhoods.</p> </div>

# 2016 U.S. SENATOR / U.S. REPRESENTATIVE CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

## Part II. Issue Questionnaire

<b>ECONOMY / ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - Yes/No Questions</b>			
	YES	NO	
6	✓		The US Dept of Transportation's Federal Railroad Administration spends billions on projects such as High Speed Rail. There are no Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) requirements for FRA funded projects. Would you be willing to sponsor / support a bill that would create a DBE program for FRA projects?
7	✓		Would you be willing to sponsor / support a bill that targets funding for black economic development in under-served / unserved areas of Illinois?
8	✓		Do you support the revival of the Glass-Steagall Act?

### Additional Explanation for Yes/No Responses:

As mentioned in the previous section, I will be a strong voice for economic development for under-served and low-income areas of the 7th District.

For more than 60 years, under Glass-Steagall, we insisted that banks keep their banking activity separate from investment activity. I support reinstating it. Absent reinstating Glass-Steagall, I support a law that would bar banks from investing in high-risk hedge funds, and would support an tax on financial firms that escalates with the firms' assets under management.

<b>ECONOMY / ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - Essay Questions</b>	
9	<p>In May 2015 CNBC ranked Chicago as the second best city for small business. What will you do to ensure that African Americans have access to the capital needed for small business development?</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 5px;"> <p>Right now small businesses are not getting the capital they need from the big banks. Into the void has come online commercial banking institutions that charge outrageous interest rates to small businesses. We need to more strongly regulate online commercial lenders, and expand SBA loans, particularly to African American-led small businesses and African American entrepreneurs.</p> <p>We also need to ensure the Community Reinvestment Act is enforced, and that the big banks are required under CRA to actually invest in low-income and under-served areas, not just simply sponsor a community program.</p> </div>
10	<p>What is your plan to increase job growth in Illinois and how does your plan enhance the quality of life for minorities?</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 5px;"> <p>In addition to the ideas discussed in previous questions, I support a renewed effort to train and "upskill" our workers in advanced manufacturing technologies, and ensure that these programs meet rigid diversity requirements. Illinois has lost hundreds of thousands of manufacturing jobs in the last two decades. What we need to do is make sure Chicago workers are the most well-trained, qualified, and employed work force in the entire country. We need to expand certification programs in advanced manufacturing; Daley College has such a program that receives federal dollars. We also need to have a greater commitment to apprenticeship programs. And we need to provide an equal access to a strong, rigorous education, from pre-Kindergarten through college.</p> <p>Employers in Chicago right now have posted tens of thousands of jobs that they claim they cannot fill because they can't find qualified workers. This is how we fix that.</p> </div>
11	<p>What areas in Illinois do you view as undeveloped and having great potential for development?</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 5px;"> <p>Manufacturing. We are a manufacturing state and city, and we need to get back to manufacturing by investing in our workers and ensuring that Chicago is a hub of advanced manufacturing technologies.</p> <p>Last year the Digital Manufacturing and Design Innovation Institute (DMDII) opened on Goose Island. This facility has the potential to be a magnet for companies looking for low-cost, precise manufacturing processes and workers qualified to operate advanced manufacturing platforms.</p> <p>We also need to make sure we're building an ecosystem of entrepreneurs in advanced manufacturing. That's why I'm such a fan of Catalyze Chicago, a coworking space for entrepreneurs with companies that manufacture physical products.</p> <p>Put simply, this district has all of the resources to dramatically grow our advanced manufacturing economy, except leadership.</p> </div>

# 2016 U.S. SENATOR / U.S. REPRESENTATIVE CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

## Part II. Issue Questionnaire

EDUCATION - Yes/No Questions			
	YES	NO	
12	✓		Would you support legislation making public higher education free to all graduating highschool seniors?
13	✓		Do you support making 'improving the public education of children' a major federal mission comparable to the President's challenge to cure cancer or our mission to land a man on the moon?

**Additional Explanation for Yes/No Responses:**

I support President Obama's plan to make the first two years of community college free.

### EDUCATION - Essay Questions

14	<p>What is your position on charter schools? Please explain the pros and cons of charters versus public schools.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 5px;"> <p>On the topic of public education, I have two top concerns: That we make sure all of our kids have access to a strong, rigorous education from pre-K through college, and that we provide parents with the option of moving their child out of a failing school.</p> <p>I'm not ideologically opposed to charters, though given how charters have performed in Chicago, it's hard not to be. To be clear: No school has a 100 percent graduation rate if they've expelled five or ten percent of their students. It's this kind of behavior we have seen repeatedly from our charters.</p> <p>I support what works for all of our students. If a school is privately funded and that school is effectively teaching its students and preparing them for college, I'll fearlessly support it. But charters need to be more honest and transparent about their records.</p> </div>
15	<p>What do you do with a school that is failing to meet basic standards? Do you cut funding or increase it? What happens to those who are left in a failing school?</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 5px;"> <p>In Washington, I will be the strongest possible ally for our public schools.</p> <p>I am acutely aware that in Washington, I will have no direct impact on the decisions made by Chicago Public Schools on school closings. My opinion as a Chicagoan is that there have been enough school closings in Chicago. I don't support closing any more. If a school is failing, I support enabling the appropriate officials to step in and change that school's leadership.</p> </div>
16	<p>Approximately 51 percent of Illinois school children are from low-income households and 86 percent of children that attend Chicago's public schools are low income. What can you do to ensure these students receive a quality education that prepares them for college and/or skill training and development?</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 5px;"> <p>Equal opportunity means providing an equal opportunity to receive a rigorous, wholistic education that prepares students for the jobs of tomorrow. In less than five years, a third of all jobs will require at least a bachelor's degree, and another third will require at least some college work. That means for our high school students, simply graduating is not enough anymore.</p> <p>Let's work on this problem from both ends. Every child should have access to pre-Kindergarten. Every high school student should have the option of at least attending two tuition-free years of community college. High school students should also be provided apprenticeship opportunities, and have their work count for college credit toward a college degree in engineering.</p> <p>We should also be providing our students schools where they can received individual attention with smaller class sizes.</p> <p>In the 7th District, Austin Polytech has provided a model for how we can strengthen our public schools. The standards at Austin Polytech are high, and its curriculum is tailored for the modern economy. Students are required to attain at least two industry certifications to graduate Austin Polytech.</p> </div>

## 2016 U.S. SENATOR / U.S. REPRESENTATIVE CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

### Part II. Issue Questionnaire

<b>PUBLIC SAFETY and JUSTICE - Yes/No Questions</b>			
	YES	NO	
17	✓		Do you support the Department of Justice expanding its investigation of the Chicago Police Department into a potential Cover Up of the murder of LaQuan McDonald?
18	✓		Do you support legislatively restoring parts of the Voting Rights Act struck down by the Supreme Court?
19	✓		Do you support legislation mandating background checks of purchasers of weapons at gun shows, through the internet and through print advertisements?
21	✓		Do you support legislation prohibiting racial profiling in law enforcement?
22	✓		Do you support US Rep John Conyers HR40 Bill "Commission to Study Reparation Proposals for African-Americans Act"? Note: Numbered in recognition of the unfulfilled promise to freed slaves of "40 acres and a mule".

#### Additional Explanation for Yes/No Responses:

I strongly support the DoJ investigation into the LaQuan McDonald murder. I strongly support restoring the Voting Rights Act. I strongly favor mandatory background checks. I strongly favor prohibiting racial profiling by law enforcement officials. And I strongly support Rep. Conyers commission.

### PUBLIC SAFETY and JUSTICE - Essay Questions

23	<p>Do you support President Obama's executive order on gun control? If yes, explain how this will reduce the number of illegal guns in Chicago. If no, explain what steps you support to reduce the number of illegal guns in Chicago.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 5px;"> <p>Yes, I wholeheartedly support the president's executive order. As someone who served five years in the U.S. Army, I am familiar with responsible use and ownership of guns, and am committed to preventing people who should not be able to purchase guns, including suspected terrorists, from being able to do so. Many of the guns used in crimes in Chicago are purchased out of state. Expanding background checks to gun shows where many of these guns originate will help squeeze the pipeline of guns coming into Chicago.</p> <p>I would ask the president to expand that executive order. In California, all guns sold in that state must include microstamping technologies. Microstamping leaves the make, model, and serial number on the cartridges of all bullets fired from that gun. The President can say to the gun manufacturers, "the federal government, including the U.S. military, will not purchase your guns until you leverage microstamping on all of your firearms sold in the U.S."</p> </div>
24	<p>Please explain what you believe to be the primary causes of gun violence in Chicago and the steps you propose to deal with the causes of gun violence.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 5px;"> <p>As the representative of the 7th District in Washington, I will be a strong voice for addressing the root causes of gun violence in Chicago. I firmly believe these root causes are the widespread availability of guns, the lack of investment in under-served neighborhoods in Chicago, unequal access to education, and poverty.</p> <p>A vast majority of gun murders in Chicago go unsolved. Let's have a federally-funded pilot program to employ a quick reaction force to respond to every gun murder in Chicago within the first 24 hours. This QRF will include a representative from the State's Attorney's office. Deploying a QRF with a representative from the State's Attorney's office will help effectively share information from law enforcement and prosecutors, and potentially lead to more convictions.</p> </div>
25	<p>What would you do to reduce the size of the Prison Industrial Complex? In other words, reduce the significant numbers of black men and women that are disproportionately sent to prison.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 5px;"> <p>We have more than 2 million prisoners in the United States right now. Our incarceration rate is much, much higher than countries with appalling human rights records, like Iran and North Korea. As the representative of the 7th Congressional District, I will do everything in my power to release prisoners who pose no threat to public safety. I will advocate for the end of all federal sentencing guidelines for drug crimes. In 2010 President Obama signed the Fair Sentencing Act, reducing the disparity of federal sentencing guidelines on convictions related to crack cocaine relative to cocaine from 100-to-1 to just 18-to-1. Since it's the same thing, let's make it just 1-to-1.</p> <p>We can also end the Byrne Federal Grant program, which provides strong financial incentives for policing drug crimes, often enforced unevenly in underserved areas. And we can outlaw any and all for-profit prisons. Government can imprison people; companies can't.</p> <p>In Washington, I will be a strong voice for closing prisons that we no longer need open. No more opening prisons, and then going to find people to fill them.</p> </div>

# 2016 U.S. SENATOR / U.S. REPRESENTATIVE CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

## Part II. Issue Questionnaire

POVERTY - Yes/No Questions			
	YES	NO	
26			Do you support an increase in the federal minimum wage?

**Additional Explanation for Yes/No Responses:**

I support a \$15 minimum wage, and then indexing the minimum wage to inflation.

### POVERTY - Essay Questions

27 One in three African Americans in Chicago live in poverty and 18% of Black Chicagoans live in deep poverty (below 50 per cent of the federal poverty line). Explain why African American communities are hit the hardest and what you will do to help eradicate poverty.

From slavery to Jim Crow to mass incarceration, the African American community has been systemically abused by this country. In Chicago, we have abused this community since the days of redlining and housing covenants. As a leader in the City of Chicago, I will be unafraid to say this publicly, and propose a long-term gameplan to provide the kind of equal opportunities that the African American community has never had in Chicago and throughout the United States. Equal opportunities will, of course, not come overnight; rather this will require a sustained multi-generation effort.

I will propose repealing laws that have led to this era of mass incarceration, including federal sentencing guidelines. I will also propose funding rehabilitation programs and job training programs for ex-offenders. I will be a voice for "move to opportunity" housing choice vouchers, investments in education like universal Pre-K and free community college, and for tax credits to invest in under-served areas.

28 Poverty is a persistent problem in America and politicians routinely state that their plans will help eradicate poverty. Explain why voters should trust you to make headway in addressing poverty.

I understand that I am not the first politician to express concern about issues of poverty and inequality. Please look at my record of public service. Promises mean something to me. Oaths mean something to me. As a young man, I took an oath when I enlisted in the Army. It was an oath I kept for five years, including a year in Iraq.

In Washington, my office will run the most open and transparent office of any member of the Illinois delegation. We will post explanations of every major vote I take on our Facebook page. No more should we hear, "What does my congressman does for me?"

NBAC will always, always have an open line of communication to our office. I pledge to you to have regular conversations with your leadership, if elected.

### HEALTH - Essay Question

29 What changes should be made to the Affordable Care Act to cover a greater number of individuals? Or would you replace the ACA and why?

The Affordable Care Act is far from perfect, but it represents an important and historic step forward for our country and should remain law and strengthened.

The new healthcare law does not go far enough to control costs. It does not do enough to invest in prevention and cures. The Affordable Care Act does not allow the federal government to negotiate drug prices with pharmaceutical companies. I would vote to revise the Affordable Care Act to lift the prohibition on Medicare drug price negotiations. I would also support the creation of a public-private partnership, funded by publically-issued bonds, to bring the finest minds in medicine to find cures for diseases like diabetes and cancer.

Lowering costs expands access. Finding cures lowers costs. Offering more people health insurance is a good and noble policy goal, but what is denying many people coverage, even after the Affordable Care Act, is affordability.

All Questions derived from the [2016 National Black Agenda](#)



***"NBAC Chicago appreciates your timely response and your support of our efforts to improve the overall quality of life for our Community..."***