

# 5<sup>th</sup> Congressional District Election Questionnaire

Name: Paul Bryar Birth date: 1969

Political affiliation Democrat

Home address Chicago, IL 60613

Do you live in the district? Yes

E-mail [info@bryarforcongress.com](mailto:info@bryarforcongress.com) Blog None

Marital status Married Spouse's name Jennifer McHale-Bryar

Occupation/Firm name: Ophthalmologist/Northwestern School of Medicine

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Campaign manager Joe Woodward

Press Secretary Carrie Romano Media consultant Ben Chao – Chao Strategies

Pollster David Fako – Fako & Associates Direct mail consultant – Jon Anderson – Mad Dog Mail

Finance directors – April Valdez & Francis Rienzo

Other campaign staff/consultants Elin Boyle (Operations Director) Brendan O’Sullivan (Field Director) & 7 Field Organizers

Name of any relatives on public payrolls

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Jessica Bryar (sister) Cook County Public Defender’s Office

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Name of your federal campaign committee Bryar for Congress

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Campaign treasurer Matt Gallagher

Please attach sheets with names of your finance committee; dates, locations and names of hosts of fundraisers, and copies of solicitation letters issued by your committee.

Have you had any kind of program for top donors or fundraisers (for example seminars, briefings, golf outings)?

We are having a Cocktail Reception Fundraiser for top donors on February 17<sup>th</sup>.

List lobbyists assisting you, directly or indirectly, in raising money for your campaign.

None

Will you pledge to disclose in advance where and when your fund-raising events occur? If the answer is no, please explain

Yes, they are posted on my website at: <http://www.bryarforcongress.com/events.html>

Please explain how your occupation and your life experience qualify you for the 5<sup>th</sup> Congressional District seat.

As a doctor who sees patients in both a university and community health clinic settings, I am on the front lines every day. I know what challenges my patients face, and can lend much more to the process of solving this crisis than an entrenched politician who is looking to advance his or her political career. As a teacher, I know the struggles my students have with student loan debt. I see the results of federal mandates for students and teachers, and how they often prevent students from learning and teachers from teaching. As a professional, I do not have any ties to a corrupt Illinois political system where pay to play politics is business as usual. These experiences will make me an effective Congressman, who has the best interests of people, not politics in mind.

Issues:

Please attach any materials you wish describing your key issues.

### **DOMESTIC ISSUES**

What are your top three district-specific priorities?

I am a professor at Northwestern University medical school and an eye surgeon. Since my first day in practice 10 years ago, I have dedicated one day each week to providing medical care in a community health center that serves patients regardless of their ability to

pay. I will take my real life experience as a teacher, doctor and community advocate to Congress. My top three priorities will be to:

- Lead by example with honesty and integrity
- Use my experience to ensure that health reform creates access for all, and preserves quality, choice, and efficiency
- I will support rebuilding our economy, create jobs with new infrastructure projects and fight for legislation to keep people in homes they can afford

Do you feel TARP has been effective so far? Why or why not? If not, what would you change? Are you satisfied with the transparency and accountability of the program?

I would use the majority of the remaining \$350 billion to reduce foreclosures otherwise housing prices will decline until these foreclosures are stabilized. I would then further create a government backed loan program for a 30 year fixed mortgage rate program that will offer a 30 year fixed mortgage rate of 4% for new home purchases up to \$1 million. Taking these steps will stimulate new home buying as well as put more money back into people's pockets.

Before becoming President Obama's chief of staff, Rahm Emanuel, was on track to be speaker of the House, which would be a coup for Chicago and Illinois. There have been persistent rumors that Emanuel might wish to return to the 5<sup>th</sup> Congressional seat for that very purpose. Yes or no, in those circumstances, would you be willing to step aside?

If Emanuel wished to return to his seat in the 5<sup>th</sup> Congressional District I would be happy to run against him and have the seat for 20 years.

Do you support President Obama's proposed stimulus package? Explain.

I do support President Obama's stimulus package. I fully support President Obama's stimulus plan to re-build our economic infrastructure. I believe that the priority of this package should be to end ban pet political projects and wasteful spending of our tax dollars, such as the pork-barrel projects. By ensuring funding in this bill, we will be able to jumpstart our economy by creating more jobs.

Do you have a plan to ensure access to higher education? Explain.

I would support legislation that would require more grant aid for higher education. Every day I see college students burdened with large amounts of student loan debt. In addition to the significant financial burden, this debt directly effects decisions such as which job sector to enter or whether to pursue graduate level study. I will fight to make sure that our college graduates can make these decisions without huge levels of debt hanging over their heads.

Are you in favor of universal health care or some other plan?

Each week over the last 10 years, I have spent one day per week going to a community health center, Near North Health Services Corp., to provide care for patients regardless of their ability to pay. I have used my skills as a doctor to provide desperately needed services to working families, retirees, unemployed, and immigrants. I believe that we do need to reform our health care system, and we can offer healthcare to every person in America at an affordable price.

My plan mirrors the Obama health care plan which guarantees universal access to health care, and provides a health plan for the millions of uninsured people in America today.

How do you propose we fix Social Security?

There is no single solution to the looming Social Security crisis. I would consider raising the cap on earnings subject to social security tax to address future shortfalls. I believe that our Social Security System should remain public. I oppose privatization of Social Security by making Social Security accounts public.

Flooding has been a persistent problem in some areas of the 5<sup>th</sup> District. As its congressman, what steps would you take to help your constituents?

To help my constituents, I would make sure that there was help from Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA) in times of disastrous flooding as well as make sure that federal assistance information is sent to the people of the 5<sup>th</sup> District. I am committed to securing all assistance possible for those in need of flood information. I would strongly value the opinion and input of the citizens of the 5<sup>th</sup> District and I would make sure my office was open to them for shelter information and any other concerns and questions people might have.

What should Congress do about immigration? Should it pass a border-enforcement bill first and then vote on a guest worker program and a measure to provide a means to legalization for illegal immigrants? Or should it pass one comprehensive bill?

I support legislation regarding penalties for employers who habitually break immigration laws. I believe that overall we cannot support and reward illegal activity, and we must hold employers accountable for breaking the law in hiring undocumented immigrants.

I believe that Congress should pass one comprehensive bill regarding border-enforcement and legalization for illegal immigrants.

To reduce carbon emissions, do you favor a carbon tax or a cap-and-trade system or neither? Explain.

I believe that a cap and trade system would be the best plan to reduce carbon emissions. Caps in greenhouse emissions will allow the United States to make a step in the right direction to combat global warming. This should be done as part of a comprehensive energy plan that includes efforts to transition from fossil fuels to green, renewable energy sources. I believe that providing legislation to cut back on emissions is extremely important and I would support this legislation.

## **FOREIGN POLICY**

What is your timetable for withdrawing U.S. troops from Iraq?

I support President Obama's plan of a phased withdrawal of our troops in order to minimize further destabilization of the region. It must be done in a way that ensures the safety of our troops and helps the Iraqi government assume responsibility for its own security.

What role should the United States have in bringing about peace in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict?

I support Israel's right to defend themselves against the Palestinians in Gaza. Israel has been a constant ally of ours, and I feel that we need to protect this friendship. I support the goal a sovereign Palestinian state, with respect for its borders and its right to defend itself. The United States should facilitate re-implementing the framework of the Oslo Accords, because lasting security for Israel and a Palestinian state will only come about with peace in the region.

Do you support a proposed troop surge in Afghanistan? How long are you willing to have troops stay there? How do you propose to bring stability to the nation once most of the troops are withdrawn?

I believe that the war in Afghanistan should be one of our top foreign priorities, and I support the U.S. involvement there. I am willing to have troops stay there as long as we need to relinquish the reign of all terrorist groups in the region and give freedom back to the people of Afghanistan. Once our troops are withdrawn, we need to continue to

provide our support with helping them making the necessary decisions to have a functioning government, infrastructure, and the proper homeland security.

What steps should the United States take to reduce its dependence on foreign oil?

I believe that we need a comprehensive energy plan that includes efforts to transition from fossil fuels to green, renewable energy sources. The U.S. has to start to end our dependency on foreign oil, and we need to implement an aggressive plan to produce and harness renewable energy sources, such as solar, wind, and water. Not only will this create more jobs and boost our economy, but renewable energy will allow the people of the U.S. to lead a cleaner, healthier, and more efficient way of life.

Please e-mail the completed questionnaire, a candidate biography and a recent photograph to [swarmbir@suntimes.com](mailto:swarmbir@suntimes.com).