

5th Congressional District Election Questionnaire

To the candidates: Please complete the following questionnaire and attach a short bio. Feel free to use more than the space allotted if you would like to address an issue in more depth.

The deadline to return the questionnaire is by **5 p.m. Feb. 4**. The questionnaires will be posted on-line shortly afterward at the Chicago Sun-Times web site for voters. Personal information, such as home address and phone number, will be redacted. Any candidate who does not meet the deadline will not have their answers posted.

Name: Jan H. Donatelli

Birth date: 1960_____

Political affiliation Democrat

Home address Chicago, IL 60614

Do you live in the district? Yes

E-mail jan@donatelliforcongress.com Blog _____

Marital status: Married Spouse's name: Mike

Occupation/Firm name Former Delta Pilot and Transportation Consultant

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Pollster: Alan Secrest Direct mail consultant: Anil Mammen

Finance director: Kara Ratliff

Other campaign staff/consultants: Andy LaVigne, Field Director

Name of any relatives on public payrolls

Name of your federal campaign committee Donatelli For Congress

Campaign treasurer: Jan Donatelli

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)?

No.

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

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

I will be happy to provide this information.

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

As one of the first female Naval aviators entrusted with Strategic Nuclear Mission Command, as an airline pilot and union member, and as a small business owner and working mother of six, my life experience has led me to understand the value of service. It has also taught me to blaze a trail in the pursuit of progress and to understand the struggles of our working families. During the Obama campaign, I had the honor to work as a transportation, infrastructure and veterans policy advisor, and I will take with me a unique knowledge of those key issues to Congress. This is a crowded field, but I am the *only* candidate with experience on a national level.

We all know we need to spend to stimulate our economy, but we must spend wisely, and make sure we're left with a lasting benefit to our society and infrastructure that will help us for the next decade and beyond.

Issues:

Please attach any materials you wish describing your key issues.

DOMESTIC ISSUES

What are your top three district-specific priorities?

The top three priorities are:

- Getting our economy back on track and making sure that the stimulus package and TARP funds work to keep homeowners in their homes, to create sustainable, green economic growth that ends our dependence on foreign oil, and provides accessible and affordable physical and mental healthcare for all Americans.
- Delivering transportation and infrastructure improvements to Chicagoland as part of our economic recovery effort—we are the transportation powerhouse of the Midwest, and we need new technology to keep us growing! New Air Traffic Control systems and additional controllers to modernize O'Hare; high-speed rail, and multi-modal surface transport improvements.
- Ensuring that our District's veterans and their families receive the full support and care they have earned and deserve. "The heart of a nation is measured in how it treats its veterans."

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 am not satisfied with the progress of TARP, and the voters have a right to demand much more oversight and control on their behalf. Clearly, the infusion of capital into the market has not been sufficient to address the crisis of economic confidence in our market or to release the necessary credit for homeownership, small business or car loans and other everyday concerns for average Americans. This crisis began with bursting the so-called "housing bubble," and our construction industry is a basis of our regional growth. This must be addressed first, in order to rebuild our economy. I also do not believe that the transparency and accountability have been acceptable for the release of the second \$350 billion in taxpayer dollars, and would not support that expenditure unless clearer safeguards are implemented and guaranteed. NO CEO bonuses, no expensive retreats, just accessible credit for our hard-working families.

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 5th Congressional seat for that very purpose. Yes or no, in those circumstances, would you be willing to step aside

No.

The number one question I get from voters is, “Are you a politician?” It’s only when I say, “No,” that they’ll get enthusiastic. Illinois is ready to get rid of the old-style “machine” system that tries to control the choice of the voters. Am I related to anyone important in Chicago politics? No, and I’ll never be part of a deal to step aside, but at the same time, I’m not a permanent, career politician. We all deserve candidates who are regular people, who step up to share their experience, and who also are willing to step aside when it’s time. Rahm Emanuel has been a great asset to Illinois, and I believe all this talk is just trying to create controversy.

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

I do support President Obama’s proposed stimulus package, though I recognize it is far from perfect. **The issue here is not the details of the package, but the same concerns regarding oversight and accountability that I listed in discussing the massive TARP payouts.**

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

As a middle-class mother of six age children, with two in college for basically every year for the next decade, I am particularly and acutely aware of the difficulty in paying for college. I believe we need to expand access to Pell Grants and student aid, and develop programs which allow students to help pay for needed degrees—General Practice MD, for example.

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

I strongly support universal health care, but I just don’t believe America is ready for a single-payer government healthcare system. I believe we should work toward goals which are supported by most Americans, and which are actually attainable. We need to be pragmatic, and work in steps which we can all support.

How do you propose we fix Social Security?

One, we need to quit raiding the trust fund. Whether it’s national or state pensions, we need to keep that money sacred. Next, after getting through our current economic crisis, I believe we should look at creating a bubble between the currently tax-free \$97,000 in

income and \$250,000. Those who are earning over \$250,000 should be able to pay the same amount as those at the bottom threshold.

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

Look, anyone who lives in Chicago understands flooding and potholes. My own Alderman has heard me often about how the sewer drains fill with leaves, and need to be cleared to allow drainage. As a small business developer, I have dealt first hand with sewers, and the antiquated system we have. Stimulus infrastructure dollars need to be spent wisely, especially for a city like ours that hopes to hold the Olympics. Chicago 2016 is our goal, but we need the infrastructure to shine.

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?

As a pilot whose profession was used as a weapon on 9/11, I recognize the needs of security in our border crossings, airports and ports. National defense will never take a backseat with me, but as someone who has lived around the world, I appreciate the many cultures that make up our district. Yes, we need to ensure our borders and VISA programs are safe, but we also need to recognize the millions of wonderful members of our society who participate and support our economy everyday.

Additionally, as an American who has marched for immigrant rights, we need to end the criminalization of persons who have committed no other offenses other than being undocumented; we need to create a path to citizenship for the millions of productive members of our society who are here already, we need to stop IMMEDIATELY the separation of families through deportation.

We need to provide the funds necessary to support active and “easy” immigration systems. Like the VA, we need to re-vamp our bureaucracy to become cost-efficient, supportive of the end user, and satisfy our security needs.

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

I believe a cap and trade system is the most feasible methodology for limiting carbon emissions in the short term as we rebuild our economy by focusing less on fossil fuels and more on new, green forms of energy.

FOREIGN POLICY

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

We must remove our troops as soon as conditions allow. As a veteran, I am very cognizant of the need to safely and securely redeploy our forces. We must make certain that all security precautions are taken, but also must remove our troops as quickly as possible – and not undermine the political process that is taking shape in Iraq.

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

The United States should take a leading role in achieving a stable and secure two state solution by engaging in aggressive diplomacy. We must be clear that Israel's security is not in play, and must work with the Israelis to make them feel comfortable in allowing a free and independent state for the Palestinian people that is not under the control of Hamas.

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 would support a redeployment of troops from Iraq to Afghanistan in order to focus on the growing threat from Al-Qaeda in the mountainous region between Pakistan and Afghanistan. I would support an increase in smart power that combines a strong military presence and increased aid to Afghanistan to build an infrastructure and stability that can be sustained after we leave.

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

The United States must work to overhaul our economy from a dependence on fossil fuels, particularly oil, to one that can diversify its sources of energy to include bio-fuels, solar, wind and geothermal technologies. While the private sector must ultimately consume these new sources of energy, the federal government must play a role in investment, research and incentive to build their viability.

Please e-mail the completed questionnaire, a candidate biography and a recent photograph to swarmbir@suntimes.com.