

Kevin Allen 23rd District Illinois State Senate
1062 Jamey Lane
Addison IL

1. Do you support moving the primary election date?

Yes

The previous February primary date naturally depressed voter turnout, particularly among poorer voters in rural areas, people dependent on public transportation, and seniors. This was most obvious in 2010, when we had higher demand than ever for volunteer drivers in Du Page due to the extremely poor weather. Holding primaries in the Winter at all becomes an issue even with early voting sites in the suburbs and downstate for the same reason. While March is an improvement, it still pushes the election calendar into poor weather conditions for petition canvasses, and into the Holidays for the filing/nominating/challenge period – both of which in theory should benefit well-established political organizations over independent challengers. I would be interested in legislation to separate the presidential primaries from other offices, provided that the additional funding was available.

2. Do you support keeping voters' political party preferences in the primary elections secret?

No

In suburban elections, having this information available has proven to be particularly beneficial for independent and third party organizers in identifying potential supporters. Eliminating declaring at primaries would again potentially benefit only larger established party organizations with greater resources or easy access to other private/controlled access voting databases.

3. Do you support reestablishing straight party voting in general elections?

No

I believe it is important for electors to exercise their personal judgment in choosing who they want to serve in public office, even if this means there would be vote fall-off for down-ballot races.

4. Do you support establishing a signature requirement for independent candidates and new parties equal to the requirement for the major party candidates for the same office?

Yes.

Independent candidates have an extreme burden placed on them by simply not having access to an established party structure and extensive funding resources. The current signature requirements are designed to disenfranchise independent voters and protect established party candidates and incumbents.

5. Should there be a photo ID requirement to cast a ballot?

NO

I would rather see other reforms enacted to protect against actual large-scale organized fraud that would not include re-erecting barriers to individuals' right to vote that took decades to tear down in this country.

6. Do you support legislation granting County Clerks jurisdiction over municipalities in their county regarding filing for municipal office and hearing objections to petitions?

YES

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Currently, local office holders and incumbent supporters have far too much power to remove opponents from the ballot. However, in areas such as Du Page where both the County Clerk's office and the governing election body are closely allied with the political organization that also controls most local offices, this suggested reform may not go far enough in preventing the abuse it appears to be targeting.

7. Do you support restoration of cumulative voting for the Illinois House of Representatives? While I do not have an established opinion on the Cutback Amendment, and am standing as a candidate for the Senate, I would in general support any suggested improvements in the operations of the other chamber.

8. Should Illinois institute instant run-off voting?
I would support IRV for Governor and U.S. Senate as a test case.

9. Do you support holding a special primary to fill a vacancy caused by the nominee withdrawing from the ballot before the general elections?

YES

While the expense has to be accounted for, in cases like Stroger's or Lipinski's it would have clearly been better for the public if the body of general qualified electors who had voted in the initial party primary had an opportunity to choose a replacement instead of a select group of party leaders. Timing would also have to be accounted for, with the ballot set should a vacancy occur less than 90 days prior to the general election.

10. Do you support holding a special election to fill vacancies for U.S. Senate and state constitutional officers?

I believe the Federal courts already have established case law requiring this in the wake of the events surrounding the Obama vacancy in the Senate.

11. Do you support changes in the way judges are selected?

YES

Direct election alone is not designed to provide the best qualified, most objective, and most knowledgeable people to serve on the bench. However, effective alternative systems are not readily available either. A hybrid system of selecting from a pre-qualified and candidate pool may prove to be an improvement, but it would require extensive independence, transparency, and oversight protections to avoid abuses seen in current "slating" systems. There would also need to be a procedure for establishing diversity guidelines to ensure the resulting courts adequately represented the communities they served.

12. If judges continue to be elected, should judicial elections be non-partisan?

YES

I believe judges shouldn't be partisan in any way to begin with. That having been said, I believe that, once again, studying existing alternative systems and other states' best practices should be part of any reforms in how we select judges in Illinois.

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Addison IL

13. Do you support popular election of University of Illinois trustees?

NO.

We need to drastically reform the current system, not replace it with one that would potentially create new problems of its own.

14. Do you support any other changes in Illinois' election laws?

We need to continuously look at additional reforms to ensure greater ballot access and establishing real reform in Illinois politics. One of the primary issues that became readily apparent in the wake of the Reform Commission report and how its recommendations were subsequently handled by the General Assembly is that asking governing bodies of elected officials to be self-policing means that the results will always be watered-down and that the work will never be finished.

15-19. Campaign Contribution Limits

The most recent "reforms" to come out of Springfield once again failed to address fundamental problems with money and influence in Illinois. I believe a system that incorporates all of these suggestions to some degree - including at least some public financing component - will not only help curb the influence money has on specific legislation and policy decisions, but will also free elected officials to concentrate on their primary job responsibilities. Leveling the playing field overall will also bring desperately needed change the dynamics in Springfield.

20. Will you accept or have you accepted campaign donations from current or potential suppliers, employees, or outside contractors?

I do not believe the practice of taking money from people whose business you subsequently oversee or influence should be allowed, and reasonable prohibitions should be included into any future campaign finance reforms. As a challenger currently without party support, I will need to solicit funding through all means allowed by law. However, it is my full intention to refuse or return any money that comes from sources I am morally opposed to.

21. Do you support a ban on hiring, firing and promotion based on political considerations for non-policy making positions?

YES

I believe any workplace decisions based solely on or heavily influenced by politics is wrong. I have some personal experience with this issue. However, any ban should not supersede other protections already in place regarding harassment, hate speech, or related forms of intimidation.

22 & 23. Staff Employment

I will certainly not hire or employ any lobbyists for my personal staff, but may employ people who have other public sector employment if they are the best people available for

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a particular job. My first responsibility is to serve the people of the 23rd, and investing the district office allowance in providing them with best team possible has to be my overriding requirement in any hiring decisions.

24. Do you support legislation to prohibit incumbency and political affiliation as criteria in the mapping process for Congressional, Legislative and local government electoral districts?

NO

25. Do you support creation of a non-partisan Commission to draw maps instead of the General Assembly?

I would be willing to look at computer based modeling systems or other fair map principles to protect individuals' voting rights in Illinois. Commissions in and of themselves do not guarantee any protections for disadvantaged communities, or for preventing the dominance of one party over all others.

26. Do you support term limits for legislative leaders?

YES

27. Do you support term limits for members of the General Assembly?

Again, this is something that should be studied in the context of states that already have some form of term limits to see what works and what doesn't. Term limits on their own do not necessarily bring about the change they seek and, if over applied, can actually lead to unintended consequences including dysfunctional government and the increased control and influence of an unelected bureaucracy. However, in concept, having at least some forced turnover in the legislation and certainly among constitutional officers would be beneficial.

28. Do you support amending the constitution to institute a graduated income tax?

The way in which government is paid for in Illinois needs to be completely overhauled. The current tax system is both unfair and unwieldy, and our overall tax structure is absurdly dependent on property taxes. This places a ridiculous burden on our families' least-liquid assets. A fair tax based amendment would need to be a component of a greater comprehensive reform package that addresses taxes as a whole.

29. Do you support amending the constitution to allow the legislature to change the corporate/individual ratio in income taxes?

Again, we need to look at taxes as a total subject. Piecemeal individual changes in the tax structure will not give us a fair tax base, a stable revenue stream, a progressive economic climate, or an improved business profile that will in turn attract the private investment necessary for creating the long-term good paying jobs with benefits. We need to be talking about taking the bold steps necessary to provide for the healthy, growing tax base that comes with an improving economy.

30. Do you support increasing income taxes to relieve or replace local property taxes and increase state funding of education?

Kevin Allen 23rd District Illinois State Senate
1062 Jamey Lane
Addison IL

Again, this needs to be part of overall tax reform. The state must fulfill its constitutional obligations to our education system – which is a central issue to my campaign and a personal commitment I have made to the people in my district.

31-37. TIFs

TIFs, in general, should be used in limited form with strict sunsets as one of many tools available to promote geographic economic development as originally designed. TIFs, particularly as established in the City of Chicago, have become widely abused.

38. How would you fully fund the state pension systems?

This is an issue that is 40 years in the making, and cannot be solved by blaming the victims of the state's mismanagement. We need to make it impossible for the state not to pay its obligations without severe, automatic penalties. We also need to look at implementing tiered structures that DO NOT eventually force most current plan participants into untenable choices prior to retirement, while still addressing revenue requirements. Changing accrual and actuarial formulations to reflect real requirements, removing elected and appointed officials from pension roles, eliminating all forms of double dip, and setting attainable goals for gradually bringing all plans/plan participants to full funding must be included in fixing the problems we made for ourselves. I would also like to see us stop calling addressing these issues called "reform".

39. Do you support legislation to increase electric rates outside of the ICC to build a Smart Grid?
NO.

The bill that just went through Springfield did virtually nothing to invest in any redundant distribution systems to improve service, reduce outages, or reduce costs – and essentially created a decade-long end-around of the ICC for industry at the expense of consumers.

40. Do you support legislation to ban Pay Day loans?

I believe in regulation, and monitoring - not outright bans.

41. Do you support legislation to regulate ATM fees and service charges on credit cards and other consumer loans?

I believe this is being/should be addressed at the Federal level.

42. Do you support legislation to cap interest rates on credit cards and other consumer loans?
YES

48. Will you vote to increase state funding to at least 50% of public education costs?

I previously addressed this in the discussion of the overall tax reforms necessary to make this possible. A 50%+1 level of funding is required under the state constitution. We need to reduce administrative costs in the system and have the bulk of our investments in education drop directly to students in the classroom. An increased level of funding at the state level should come with a different type of accountability and oversight that partners with educators to ensure a quality educational experience for every student in every school district. Our increasing "teaching to the test" trend isn't the children their

Kevin Allen 23rd District Illinois State Senate
1062 Jamey Lane
Addison IL

money's worth now.

49. Do you support vouchers or other means of public funding for private or parochial schools?
We need to provide a quality education to every child, not undermine the public school system. Economically disadvantaged areas that are already severely underfunded would suffer even more under any of the voucher plans that have been widely discussed to date.

50. Do you support public funding of charter or contract schools?
Again, this should be part of a discussion of how we provide a quality education to every child in Illinois. Using this subject as a breech for subtly going after existing contracts or teachers' unions and collective bargaining rights in general is unacceptable.

51. Do you support abolition of the General Assembly scholarship fund?
NO

I would rather see a complete overhaul of how the scholarships are awarded. If the system can be returned to one that benefits the truly deserving and not the politically connected, it should be maintained.

52. Do you support Affirmative Action?
YES

We have learned that the struggles of the Civil Rights movement are not as far-won as we would like to believe. Discrimination in any form should be opposed. Unfortunately, it has also has been transferred into more subtle or socially acceptable forms that have in turn become endemic in our society. Until we truly progress into a society that judges each other based on the content of our character, there will still be a need for at least some basic rules to prevent us from abusing each other on the basis of a variety of intrinsic prejudices.

53. Will you vote to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment to the U.S. Constitution?
If I ever have the opportunity, I would proudly vote for equal and full rights for all Americans.

54. Do you favor legislation legalizing civil marriage between two people of the same gender?
I publically advocated for the current civil unions legislation, understanding that it did not go far enough. In general, I would like to see the state get out of the marriage business entirely, offering only civil unions as a way of two adults contractually combining households into a single entity for tax, survivor, and other legal benefits and protections. While I understand the common law history of government issuing marriage licenses, I find the practice personally questionable. So long as Illinois or U.S. law grants exclusive rights and privileges to the legal state of marriage, then I would not just support but sponsor legislation to extend those rights to any two adults willing to join each other in marriage. In my opinion the government actually has no right to legislate against it

Kevin Allen 23rd District Illinois State Senate
1062 Jamey Lane
Addison IL

55. Do you support mandatory AIDS testing for insurance or employment?

NO

56. Do you support legislation to prohibit discrimination in housing against unmarried individuals residing together?

YES

57. Do you support the decriminalization of Marijuana?

In general, we need to revisit all laws regarding possession versus distribution and sales of currently illegal drugs. How marijuana specifically would be classified and in what amounts it might be allowed for personal or medical use would be integral to this discussion.

58. Do you support mandatory drug testing?

In the context of very specific personal or public safety issues, in regards to accidents, or in professions where even a slight impairment could be hazardous to individuals or other people, yes. However, again we need to include this as part of a greater discussion of the health epidemic that drug abuse represents in this country, and not just simply broken down into individual component issues.

60. Should state police be allowed to stop vehicle operators to test for DUI on grounds other than probable cause?

NO

I believe this issue is addressed and prohibited by the U.S. Constitution.

61. Would you support legislation to include data on pedestrian, as well as motor vehicle, stops by police for the purpose of gathering statistics on racial profiling?

Again, abuses of law enforcement agents are part of a larger discussion, and would not necessarily be prevented by merely compiling statistics. Plus, intentional offenders would be likely to record the races of individuals incorrectly in order to avoid being accused of racial profiling.

62. 62. Do you support repeal of legislation that permits employers to eavesdrop on the telephone conversations of their employees?

I was not aware that we had such legislation in Illinois. Unless we were specifically talking about public officials in the public execution of their duties, or those customer service employees where conversations are listened to as part of evaluations or specific training programs, it should not be allowed. I would not be in favor of maintaining a blanket allowance for anyone to access essentially private communication in any format.

63. 63. Do you favor detention of suspects and material witnesses without charges and/or probable cause?

Once again, it would depend on context. There also needs to be immediate access to legal aid and subject to continuous judicial oversight – along to very specific rules for manner, circumstances, and length of detention. Any procedure for the holding of

Kevin Allen 23rd District Illinois State Senate
1062 Jamey Lane
Addison IL

material witnesses or potential suspects would have to conform to all established habeas corpus rights anyway.

64. Do you favor restructuring the wage scale of state employees to correct disparities based on gender by instituting equal pay for jobs of comparable worth?

I am for the principle of equal pay for equal work in all public or private contexts. I am unsure if this question is intended to suggest that Illinois needs something that goes beyond the Federal Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act.

65. Do you support privatization of state services?

If a private contractor or even private owner can provide better services at a lower cost for a public service, then my immediate question would become one of why wasn't the current public provider able to do the same thing? If it is a question of raising short-term revenue by actually selling-off public assets, it would depend on the specific circumstances, but in general I am strongly against most such schemes. I also tend to be as suspicious of private entities taking over public operations as I am of public ones trying to turn themselves into for-profit entities. However, I am very interested in exploring any public/private opportunity where the equal partners are both able to bring their special capabilities to bear to solve problems or create services for the community.

66. Do you support the right of public employees to strike?

YES.

I believe collective bargaining, organizing, the ability to seek redress to grievances, and - when necessary - striking are all essential American rights. Effective labor unions that exist to promote fairness, safety, and healthy workplace environments have benefitted all workers - not just those in organized labor.

67. Do you support legislation banning the replacement of strikers in private employment?

I would support legislation to make it easier for workers to organize in the first place, and would oppose any establishment of right-to-work in Illinois. The details of specific contract prohibitions should be left to employers and employees as part of their individual bargaining process.

68. 68. Do you support family leave legislation for employees of private companies not currently covered by federal law?

If this question is intended to address extremely small operations, I believe it would become very difficult to place general requirements on them that all could meet - financially or organizationally. If this question is directed at other classifications of businesses, then I would need more information to answer accurately.

69. Do you support raising the minimum wage to establish a living wage for Illinois workers?

Illinois needs jobs. Good paying jobs. We need stable, long-term jobs, provided by profitable companies that are growing and reinvesting in our communities. We need jobs with benefits. Establishing and maintaining true living wages becomes a requirement if we are going to have similarly stable and profitable households that are also growing and

Kevin Allen 23rd District Illinois State Senate
1062 Jamey Lane
Addison IL

reinvesting in their community. The current economic malaise that is gripping our state and our nation is the direct result of a fall-off in consumer demand, a devastating loss of consumer confidence, and a drastic reduction in household income. We need to understand that strong families and strong businesses are interdependent. The fuel of our economic engine is wages. We need to stop trying to pit wage earners and wage payers against each other, and recognize that living wages are ultimately beneficial to everyone.

70. Do you support establishing a lower minimum wage for minors?

You would have to put this in some context. If you are talking about training wages, or specific jobs that are somehow more suitable for younger workers just coming into the workforce – like working a paper route – then I might consider it. If, however, you are talking about creating a special classification for younger workers so they can simply replace older, minimum wage workers - then of course not. We can't help anyone by undermining juvenile labor laws or the establishment of minimum living wage requirements.

71. Do you support including farm workers and household employees under existing labor laws?

Again, this is a broad question that requires additional context. If we are discussing if these types of employees should be classified as exempt, non-exempt, or independent contractors for strictly wage purposes it would be difficult to make an equally broad statement that would cover every type of job under every type of circumstance. If, however, we are talking about workplace safety rules, leave of absence requirements, discrimination, harassment, right to organize, etc. – subjects that cover general worker rights and basic workplace guidelines – than of course they should be extended to these workers and workers in all fields as intended.

71. Will you support Single Payer or Extended Medicare healthcare plans?

The “Medicare for all” model is still the most intriguing solution to healthcare costs that are out of control for individuals and companies alike. Anywhere there is a baseline for universal access to quality affordable healthcare would address the two primary problems with the current system - coverage and cost. The truth is, the American public likes the idea of employer-subsidized health insurance that is the basic standard most people are familiar with. The problem is that this system is untenable in both the near-term for both employers and employees and in the long-term for the general economy because it has no capacity to control either insurance premiums or the cost of care. At bare minimum, we must establish some form of extended Medicare system, or a hybrid combination public/private insurance program before we reach a crisis where we no longer have a variety of solutions to thoughtfully choose from.

71. If not, what is your plan for providing health care for Illinois residents without insurance?

The Affordable Care Act establishes some framework that the state can build on. Extending the idea of the state exchanges to creating insurance co-ops that pool uncovered companies, employees, and self employed/independent contractors into groups whose business can be bid for on an annual basis would provide another vehicle for extending coverage and controlling costs in Illinois. Working to establish at least one non-profit insurance provider in Illinois would also be helpful in establishing a more

Kevin Allen 23rd District Illinois State Senate
1062 Jamey Lane
Addison IL

competitive market here while offering more affordable choices to the currently employed but still uninsured. Currently Illinois is the only state without any non-profits. Finally, use the benefits from so-called foreign insurance companies (that do business in Illinois but are not based here) and other insurance licensing schemes to create dedicated funding to cover the cost of extending public health benefits to everyone who qualifies, but yet somehow still falls outside of all other existing plans/programs.

72. Do you support the Affordable Care Act?

YES

In general. At least it is a step down a path that Teddy Roosevelt put us on a century ago. Rather than pick it a part for all the things it isn't, I prefer to think that we have at least established a foundation that we can build from. Three years ago, this nation had never passed anything like it since the establishment of Medicare, and nothing as sweeping since Social Security. Yes, it is an example of the "sausage making" aspect of the legislative process, and having the insurance industry at the table had a significant aspect on the result. But at least there WAS a result, and now the fight becomes one of building and reforming, and improving what we have instead of still blindly fighting for the day when we might at least have something, anything that would address our basic healthcare needs.

72. What are your priorities involving implementation in Illinois?

I am afraid I will miss the majority of the work being done at the state level, as much needs to be completed in 2012. Unfortunately, from people directly involved in the process, I understand there are too few people in the current legislature making decisions and far too few legislators on the committees responsible who are adequately educated on the issues or alternatives they will be voting on.

73. What is your plan to provide sufficient funding to provide community based services for discharged mental health patients?

Even having community-based services for many patients simply isn't an answer anyway. This is a battle we've been fighting since the first Regan administration. There is also the issue of Illinois being a donor state at the Federal level. We must use the Illinois Congressional delegation to ensure that we are getting all of the dollars available for mental health programming we having coming. Again, fixing the tax system will provide immense financial benefits to the state. Working to consolidate redundant operations and services could also cut up to 15% of current operating costs that come out of the General Fund. The relatively small cost to pay for the community services we are underfunding now, and for establishing new centers in rural and suburban communities where access is already an issue could easily be found from such savings and increased revenues. We also need to end the practice of pushing-off payment to independent and/or non-profit service providers to the following fiscal year as a way to "balance" the budget.

74. 74. Do you support repealing the Illinois Abortion Law of 1975 and replacing it with a law stating that decisions about reproductive matters are to be made privately between a woman and her

Kevin Allen 23rd District Illinois State Senate
1062 Jamey Lane
Addison IL

doctor, without governmental interference?

YES

75. Do you support repealing the Illinois 1995 Parental Notice of Abortion Law?

YES

76. Do you support allowing the government to decide what medical care a physician may provide to patients during pregnancy?

As a rule, the General Assembly seems ill equipped in both constituted scope and actual expertise to be making decisions about what should and should not go on in a physician's office in terms of actual care provided. I am also generally suspicious of legislative activity directed solely at women, and especially at pregnant women in particular.

77. Allowing pharmacies or pharmacists to refuse to fill prescriptions based on their own conscientious objections and send customers away without being served?

NO.

78. Do you support legislation to authorize medically accurate, age-appropriate sex education in public schools?

YES

I support sex education in schools. This should include information about contraceptives. We are seeing an increase in teenage pregnancy, unintended pregnancies in general, and STD's in our under 25 population for the first time after decades of decline. Obviously, we need to do more – not less.

79. Do you support increasing appropriations to the Department of Children and Family Services to increase the number of caseworkers?

YES

Too many children are suffering from being in the system, but not attended to, not monitored, and ultimately not cared for. Keeping caseloads manageable is essential to correcting this, but will not alone solve the problem. The care and protection of our most vulnerable children must be a priority for this state. I do believe there are such things as moral imperatives and that government, as the one thing we all participate in equally, is an appropriate vehicle for fulfilling them. That having been said, a broader view of this issue in the form of programming that treats entire families and endeavors to keep them whole and in their own homes is essential.

80. Do you support raising TANF benefits to at least equal the poverty level?

TANF is intended, as the name implies, to be temporary. It is to be used in extreme circumstances for families that need a stopgap for food, clothing, and shelter – basic survival necessities. In that respect, the benefits have to be enough to provide the kind of and level of protection necessary. If the current benefits are not sufficient, then the program isn't meeting its established purpose. If the benefits are meeting these basic needs, then the program is working as intended. The bigger issue is determining why

Kevin Allen 23rd District Illinois State Senate
1062 Jamey Lane
Addison IL

families fall into this particular safety net and what can be done to get them out of it as quickly as possible. Again here, jobs programs, training, placement services, etc. will go much farther in helping these families provide these basic necessities for themselves as well as keeping them out of the desperate circumstances that lead them to requiring TANF in the first place.

81. Do you support providing greater benefits to fund childcare and transportation for TANF recipients?

YES

Access to subsidized or free quality childcare is one of the key components to helping the working poor to even have the opportunity to change their own economic circumstances for the better. Similarly, access to and assistance with paying for public transportation is essential to getting people off of programs like TANF and back on their own feet. What good is finally getting a job if you can't get to it?

82. THERE IS NO QUESTION 82

83. What are your proposals to help people who do not qualify for TANF or for unemployment benefits?

The problems of extreme poverty and homelessness are manifest. Nothing we have tried as a society to date has solved them. While we have managed to find funding for free phone programs, subsidizing oil and gas companies, etc. we still seem to struggle with being able to provide money for basic food and shelter for those of our citizens whose circumstances have prevented them from being able to provide for themselves. I am still convinced that with the immense resources we have available, we could find the means to extend TANF-like programming to people who have absolutely no other alternatives – but only if we choose to make it a priority. I do not believe that Illinois should or could go this alone, but with a concerted effort, and in partnership with the Federal government and existing private and non-profit resources, we could do much better in meeting just these simple basic needs than we do now.

84. Do you support legislation banning housing discrimination against holders of Section 8 vouchers?

If it is truly discriminatory, then yes, of course. If it can be shown that someone is denied renting a qualifying property or housing unit solely on the basis of their having a Section 8 voucher, then they should have some legal recourse open to them. But, housing is – like so many of the issues this questionnaire is attempting to address – significantly more complicated than that. Concentrating Section 8 tenants has historically been shown to have problems of its own in terms of compounding other social issues they may face, while true scattered site housing has proven to be difficult to achieve. Something that may be beneficial would be looking at establishing more innovative ideas such as guaranteed development loan programs or outright grants similar to the Presidential Towers project that would encourage development near established business or retail centers with easy access to well-developed public transportation systems in exchange for Section 8 set-asides in the resulting housing.

85. Do you favor mandating that landlords give tenants notice prior to entering their units?

Kevin Allen 23rd District Illinois State Senate
1062 Jamey Lane
Addison IL

YES.

86. Do you favor assessing penalties against landlords who engage in illegal or retaliatory evictions?
YES

There may also be personal criminal liability for individuals engaging in illegal evictions over and above any financial penalties or restitution due to their breach of contract/lease. Law enforcement has as much responsibility to protect tenants being unlawfully removed from their homes as they do the rights of owners trying to regain their property from people who no longer have a legal right to occupy it.

87. Would you support legislation requiring mortgage holders to honor the terms of existing residential leases in effect when property is foreclosed upon?

YES

Tenants in rental property should have a basic bill-of-rights in Illinois that extends not only to this case, but assures them certain protections and security in their homes in general – no matter if they have short-term or long-term leases or are simply month-to-month. Foreclosure is an example of a situation that they were not party to, and may not have even been aware of, yet they are directly effected by.

88. How do you solve the problem of vacant foreclosed housing?

Making the new property owners responsible for all maintenance on the property, including the structure's appearance, and regular landscape upkeep. Extending eminent domain laws to municipalities to seize properties that are not maintained to standard. Making property holders liable for crimes committed on or in abandoned properties if there is not an active attempt on their part to properly secure the property, provide alarm systems, and where appropriate conduct regular security patrols. Under these circumstances, holders of foreclosed properties would be more inclined to turn them on the market as quickly as possible or, if they were planning on holding them, at least rent the property out to protect them from exposure to these liabilities.

89. Do you support an elected ICC?

NO

However, I do believe voters should have an uncomplicated way to recall any appointed official in the state.

90. Would you support legislation that would provide state technical assistance funds to local communities to help them prepare and implement comprehensive smart growth plans to avoid the costs of rapid unplanned growth and urban sprawl?

YES

In the Western Suburbs we are keenly aware of the differences between old-growth communities that sprang-up along what were then new rail lines in the late 1800's and early 1900's and communities that have exploded along interstate highways in just the last 30 years. Even redevelopment or expansion of parts of the older communities has caused problems that no one either foresaw or cared about at the time. Now, facing transportation problems, congestion, water abatement issues, and other basic

Kevin Allen 23rd District Illinois State Senate
1062 Jamey Lane
Addison IL

infrastructure concerns, we find ourselves playing a constant game of catch-up on the public side of these issues while our land-locked development offers us few workable alternatives. Also, what choices are available are now much more costly than they would have been to implement prior to growth. Fully funded and well-researched comprehensive regional development plans are the only way to avoid these problems in the future.

91. Do you support funding for high-speed rail connecting Illinois Metropolitan areas?
YES

Additionally, I would like to see future highway projects include commuter rail components, major regional arterial streets include small-scale light rail systems and bus express lanes where physically possible, and people-mover and similar car-alternative transportation systems developed to link major business and retail centers to major population centers and larger transportation hubs in larger communities where it would make sense to do so. Also, future state-funded road projects need to include advanced storm-water removal systems and buried utility conduits as part of their basic planning.

92. Do you support a comprehensive statewide mass transit plan for Illinois?

Quality, affordable, reliable, and extensive public transportation systems are keys to economic growth, commercial profitability, employment opportunities, and an ever improving quality of life for the people of Illinois. Plans, yes – but we need to have dedicated funding and a commitment to following-through. Re-legislating the plan every year or every few years will get us nowhere – literally.

93. Do you support state legislation to ban the manufacture, sale and possession of assault weapons?

I believe the regulation of any classification of firearms may help protect people from irresponsible or poorly trained gun owners. However, a ban on any one type will most likely not prevent these weapons from getting into the hands of criminals, nor do anything significant to curb gun violence. I would however strongly support legislation to restrict or eliminate the sale of fully jacketed and other forms of armor piercing rounds as well as so-called “dum-dum” bullets designed for use in high-powered weapons.

94. Do you support legislation increasing penalties for illegal resale of weapons?

YES

I believe those involved in the illegal gun trade should be fully liable for the penalties associated with any and all crimes committed with weapons that can be traced back to them.

95. Do you support legislation permitting the carrying of concealed weapons?

If we believe that we are already doing everything necessary to ensure the principles and practices of responsible gun ownership are being followed by people in our state licensed to have firearms, and that sufficient protections are already in place to make sure that people who are specifically prohibited from carrying guns do not have legal access to them, and that legal ownership transfers are being properly recorded and required background checks are being performed, than I would have no objection to conceal carry

Kevin Allen 23rd District Illinois State Senate
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legislation in concept. Three years ago, the Supreme Court extended the Second Amendment militia clause to include an individual's right to keep AND bear arms. The measure would however need to include specific language that would protect private property holders' rights to prohibit weapons from being carried on to their property if they so chose, as well as to specify public institutions where weapons could not be carried except for authorized law-enforcement or licensed security personnel.

96. Do you support legislation mandating background checks of purchasers of weapons at gun shows, through the Internet and through print advertisements?

YES

These are areas that most responsible gun owners realize are sources for the illegal guns carried by criminals they fear, and the reason why they are such proponents of their need for conceal carry legislation in Illinois.

97. Do you support capital punishment?

NO

Illinois proved that we are not responsible enough to have the ultimate punishment at our disposal. The history of capital cases in this state, what type of people were sent to death row, why they ended-up there, and how many times we got it wrong – that we are aware of – is well established.

98. Do you support criminal prosecution of juveniles as adults?

I would hope that the criminal justice system, prosecutors, and juries would use this sparingly. But, being under 18 should never be used as a defense for a heinous and calculated crime. Most people are well aware of actions and consequences long before they turn 18. Similarly, most people in their teens are also fully aware what rape and murder are. At the same time, we need to realize that the extremely young or those that are lead into crime by older people are often somewhat victims themselves. They may suffer from developmental, social, or mental problems - and having our system victimizing them further isn't helping anyone and does nothing to further the cause of real justice.

99. Do you support mandatory sentencing?

I believe sentencing guidelines should be established, and should be treated as just that – guidelines. In cases where a death occurred, either through neglect or intent, these should allow less leeway on the part of the judge. However, if we believe we are putting responsible objective and intelligent people on the bench, then we should trust in their ability to be discerning and to apply the law based on the specific circumstances of the cases brought before them.

100. Do you support work release, home monitoring, and other alternative sentencing?

In non-violent cases, where there is no clear threat to the person or the community at large, with first-time offenders, where the individual is responsible for the care and upkeep of others, or other common sense situations where there is a clear benefit to rehabilitating the person or having them pay their debt in a more constructive way -

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alternative sentencing should always be an available option.

101. Do you support admissibility of illegally obtained evidence?
NO

102. Do you support electronic eavesdropping?
With a warrant obtained on the basis of the presentation of factual evidence.

103. Do you support roving wiretaps?
Only if the warrant authorizing them clearly defines the purpose, use, limitation, and duration for which they will be allowed.

104. Do you support life sentences for juvenile offenders?
Again, discretion, specific circumstances, common sense, and simple decency have to be applied in all sentencing. An unfortunate truth of the world we live in is that there are some individuals in it where everyone involved – including them – would be better off if they were secured away from the general population. At the same time, just as in the case with capitol punishment, allowances have to be made for over-zealous prosecutions or just simple mistakes in the case that don't come to light until after the sentence is passed. In these cases, alterations in the term of the sentence should always be available.