

**Indivisible Lambertville/New Hope (ILNH) Questionnaire
for New Jersey CD7 Democratic Candidates**

Candidate Name: Michael Roth

General / Philosophy

1. What are your top three priorities for your first two years in Congress and how do those demonstrate your core values? What do you see as your role in trying to achieve this?

I have spent my entire career in service to make life more affordable and provide more opportunity to folks in New Jersey and across the country, and that is exactly what I would do once elected. My broad goals are to lower the cost of living for working families, bring home federal resources New Jersey is being denied, and make Washington work for the people it is supposed to serve. Each of these priorities can be advanced with a Democratic majority in the House with Trump as a lame duck President.

In my first two years in Congress, I would prioritize 1) rewriting the tax code for the working- and middle-class, 2) making housing affordable for all generations, and 3) building a 21st century economy with six figure jobs here in New Jersey.

New Jersey is unaffordable, and taxes are a huge reason why. Republicans have used the tax code to reshape the American economy in favor of ultra-wealthy billionaires and multinational corporations. We need Democrats with a vision of how to rewrite the tax code for working families. The contrast between Tom Kean Jr. and me is clear. Tom Kean Jr. was the decisive vote on a tax plan that gave trillions of dollars of tax breaks to billionaires and corporations, leading to the largest wealth transfer from the poor to the wealthy in history. I invested \$1 trillion into working families when I led the Paycheck Protection Program and narrowed the wealth gap for the first time in decades. On Day One, I would work to repeal tax breaks for corporations and the ultra-wealthy through the reconciliation process to allow for the restoration of healthcare and SNAP benefits and clean energy investments and start building a coalition for a new tax plan that would:

- Cut taxes for middle-class families, working parents, small businesses, and seniors on fixed incomes so that people can keep more of their hard-earned dollars.
- Make billionaires and multinational corporations pay their fair share.
- Promote fiscal responsibility and long-term economic security by rejecting tax policies that primarily benefit billionaires at the expense of future generations.
- Fully restore the SALT deduction to end the double taxing of New Jersey families.

Nearly half of NJ residents say they're likely to leave because of the cost of housing. New families can't afford to move in. Seniors can't afford to move. And recent graduates have no housing options near opportunity.

I co-founded the Economic Opportunity Coalition, bringing together eight federal agencies and a bipartisan group of 26 U.S. Senators to align tens of billions of dollars of private investment for housing affordability. I successfully helped thousands of nurses, teachers, and

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first responders to afford to buy their first homes. With a nationwide housing crisis, I am uniquely suited to lead bipartisan comprehensive reforms to housing that would:

- Make it easier to build housing near new job opportunities and transit.
- Cut red tape and incentivize zoning reform to build more homes.
- Expand first-time homebuyer tax credits.
- Refund excess property taxes above 5% of income for seniors.
- Provide property tax credits for residents 65+ who downsize within New Jersey.

Even with a world-class education and workforce, New Jersey ranks 49th in business friendliness, 49th in wage growth, and last in kids returning home for jobs. The economy is changing rapidly and New Jersey is getting left behind. Through my work in both the public and private sectors to catalyze industries and to create millions of jobs, I would tackle this head on and:

- Make NJ-7 a hub for advanced manufacturing, clean energy, and life science jobs.
- Turn abandoned shopping malls, corporate parks, and brownfields into job and innovation centers.
- Bring home federal investments to build the industries of the future.
- End the unchecked development of warehouses across our towns.
- End Trump's tariffs on our allies to lower costs on groceries, construction materials, prescription drugs, and everyday goods.

In the first two years I will also focus on bringing resources back from Washington for New Jerseyans for clean water, flood prevention, and transit. These are all things that can be done in the first two years with Trump still as President.

From there, we need to build out legislation that can be passed in my second term with a Democrat as President with priorities to make healthcare affordable, accessible, and accountable with a public option and making Washington work for us by reforming government and ending corruption.

These priorities show that I will lead with the core values I have always led with — listening to the needs of the people I'm serving, dignity for all people, accountability for delivering for constituents urgently, and progressive pragmatism. I understand what a member of Congress can actually accomplish legislatively and through soft power during a Trump presidency.

I am ready on Day One to lead on these priorities because I have done it before. When I led the U.S. Small Business Administration during the pandemic, members of Congress called me day and night. They demanded answers, pressed for results, and held me accountable for delivering aid to their constituents. That is how Congress is supposed to work and the level of urgency and accountability I will bring to the office.

Too many members of Congress have abdicated that role. They stop showing up for oversight, outsource governing to lobbyists, and treat politics as performance instead of responsibility. My role in Congress will be to reverse that. I will legislate seriously, conduct real oversight, and use the power of the office to deliver concrete results for NJ-07. I know how

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Washington works when it is functioning properly, and I will not accept a version of Congress that does less than the people deserve.

2. What are the two main provisions of the OBBB Act you would roll back, and how would you achieve that?

First, I would roll back provisions that undermine clean energy incentives and climate investment, which New Jersey relies on for jobs, resilience, and lower energy costs. Key provisions include The Clean Energy Investment and Production Tax Credit that is critical for production of all clean electricity generation and energy storage, The Advanced Manufacturing Production Tax Credit that incentivizes the production of solar panels, batteries, critical minerals, and other components necessary for energy production, and the Residential Clean Energy Tax Credit that incentivizes homeowners to transition to clean energy. These rollbacks hurt both our environment and our economy.

Second, I would repeal provisions that protect corporate tax avoidance and expand giveaways to wealthy individuals, especially those that worsen inequality and balloon deficits. Key provisions to roll back include the estate tax cuts that allows more money to be passed down to heirs in the wealthiest families tax free, tax cuts for the top earners which costs \$340 billion, and tax cuts for corporations which costs \$753 billion. Repealing these provisions would allow us to restore Trump's harmful cuts to Medicaid and SNAP.

I would pursue repeal of the noted clean energy incentives and climate investment through targeted legislation which has had bipartisan support before. There are more than 25 Republican House and Senate Members who publicly opposed the repeals (of course not Tom Kean Jr.) even though they ended up voting for the OBBB. There are likely even more Republicans who would go along with targeted clean energy legislation based on the huge rise in energy costs and the loss of jobs disproportionately in Republican areas. I would work to build a coalition to get this passed as I have built bipartisan coalitions before across the ideological spectrum with a common goal.

For the repeal of the tax provisions, I would use the reconciliation process which bypasses the filibuster and only needs a simple majority in the Senate (assuming Democrats can win the Senate). By using the reconciliation process, we would dare Trump to veto a bill that only raises taxes on billionaires, which is very popular.

Leadership

3. How would you describe your leadership style, giving an example from your past work, and how would that influence your approach in Congress?

My leadership style is rooted in fairness, urgency, and trust. I'm a crisis-tested builder who leads from the front to fix what's broken and deliver results fast. In Congress, that means listening to constituents first, aggressively holding people and agencies accountable through all oversight authority, building coalitions, sweating implementation details, and measuring success by outcomes, not headlines.

As Head of the U.S. Small Business Administration during the pandemic, I worked across agencies, parties, and sectors to deliver aid quickly and transparently. I took over the 13,000 person agency from Trump while 6 million small businesses were shuttered, waiting for funding. I found an operation hollowed out by incompetence and cruelty. Technology systems

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were not set up. There was no communication with Congress. Political enemies like Planned Parenthood Clinics and immigrant-owned businesses were being denied. And I fixed it – fast.

In just a couple months, we delivered nearly \$1 trillion in relief. In NJ alone, we kept 200,000 small businesses open and saved more than a million NJ jobs. We made sure Planned Parenthood Clinics stayed open, eligible immigrant business owners were able to access funding, and built trust with local community leaders. We cut down on fraud, waste, and abuse. By making government work for the people, we turned an economic crisis into the biggest small business boom in US history and flipped the trend on income inequality for the first time in a century.

That same approach defines how I lead everywhere: build trust, move with urgency, empower talented teams, and stay grounded in the communities we serve. Whether working with governors and mayors across the country, building a company recognized as one of the best places in the country to work, or leading chants at the No Kings Day Rally or staying late to fold tables and pack cars, I lead from the front with accountability, humility, and a bias toward action.

4. What two measures would you take to address the corruption of the current administration?

First, I would use the full oversight, subpoena, and investigatory powers of Congress to expose corruption and enforce accountability without fear or favor. I would make it clear to every Trump Administration official, every company, and every foreign entity that has engaged in corruption, self-dealing, or abuse of power that Congress will pursue them with the full force of its constitutional authority. That means aggressive investigations, public hearings, document production, sworn testimony, and referrals for prosecution where warranted. Corruption thrives in darkness; my role will be to drag it into the light and ensure no one is above the law.

Second, I would strengthen and enforce ethics, transparency, and anti-corruption laws to prevent abuse before it happens. This includes banning stock trading by members of Congress and senior executive officials, closing loopholes that allow influence peddling and revolving-door corruption, strengthening disclosure requirements, and protecting Inspectors General and whistleblowers from retaliation. I would also oppose any effort to politicize law enforcement or weaken independent oversight institutions.

Corruption is not just a moral failure. It directly drives higher costs, worse services, and broken trust in government. Addressing it is essential to making Washington work for the people it serves.

Affordability

5. What changes, if any, would you support to the federal tax code?

Republicans have used the tax code to reshape the American economy in favor of the ultra-wealthy billionaires and multinational corporations, while working people struggle and the social security trust fund is set to run out of cash in less than a decade. Tom Kean Jr. was the decisive vote on a tax plan that gave trillions of dollars of tax breaks to billionaires and corporations, leading to the largest wealth transfer from the poor to the wealthy in

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history. I invested \$1 trillion into working families when I led the Paycheck Protection Program and narrowed the wealth gap for the first time in decades. We need comprehensive reform on the tax code, not just tax brackets. Here are a few principles for a tax plan:

- Cut taxes for middle-class families, working parents, small businesses, and seniors on fixed incomes so that people can keep more of their hard-earned dollars
- Impose a minimum tax on multinational corporations in line with what individuals pay
- Reform capital gains taxes to be in line with ordinary income
- Increase estate and gift taxes
- Close loopholes like carried interest and stepped-up basis
- Eliminate Trump tariffs and restore the power of the purse to Congress

6. What initiatives would you propose to address housing affordability and food insecurity?

Nearly half of New Jersey residents say they're likely to leave because of the cost of housing. I have worked for 15 years to increase housing affordability so that thousands of nurses, teachers, and first responders could afford to buy their first homes. Any good housing plan needs to ensure that housing is built near where there is opportunity. That means building housing near transit and bringing more jobs to New Jersey and building housing around that. In Congress, I would work to:

- Make NJ-7 a hub for advanced manufacturing, clean energy, and life sciences jobs by bringing home federal tax incentives and coordinating to build in abandoned shopping malls, corporate parks, and brown field sites
- Incentivize municipalities to build housing near new job opportunities
- Cut red tape and incentivize zoning reform to build more homes
- Expand first-time homebuyer tax credits
- Provide property tax credits for residents 65+ who downsize within New Jersey

In New Jersey, there are over 1 million people who rely on federal programs that help put healthy food on the table. In Congress, I would work to:

- Fully fund SNAP and WIC
- Expand free school meals
- Support the more than 10,000 farmers who are currently being crushed by the Trump tariffs by repealing those tariffs, funding and expanding USDA programs that prioritize local and regional food markets, investing in regional food infrastructure, and using oversight to ensure federal programs benefit small and mid-size farms rather than large agribusiness
- Bring jobs back to New Jersey, along with funding workforce development programs so more families have access to jobs that pay a dignified wage so we can ultimately lower the number of families who rely on federal programs

Public Health

7. What specific legislative language or mechanisms would you back to support federal protections for reproductive justice?

Every person deserves freedom to make their own healthcare decisions without interference from politicians. When the Trump Administration blocked funding to Planned Parenthood clinics during the pandemic, I made sure clinics received federal funding on my first day in the federal government. In Congress I will protect and expand reproductive freedom by:

- Codifying Roe v. Wade into federal law so every American has the right to make personal decisions about their body and future
- Protecting access to contraception and IVF and stopping any attempt to restrict reproductive care

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- Ensuring access to reproductive healthcare by protecting and expanding federal funding for clinics, community health centers, and providers like Planned Parenthood so care is available regardless of zipcode, removing barriers that limit providers' ability to deliver care, expanding telehealth, and guaranteeing coverage so care is affordable and without political interference
- Defending privacy and data protections so no one can be tracked or prosecuted for seeking healthcare

8. What are your proposals to improve healthcare access and affordability?

Healthcare costs are crushing New Jersey families, who pay more for premiums, prescriptions, and procedures than almost anywhere else in the country. Too many families delay care because they can't afford it, too many seniors struggle to afford their medications, and too many small businesses can't compete with rising healthcare costs. Our healthcare system is broken. While Republicans try to dismantle it completely, Democrats are just fighting for the status quo which does not work for people. We need fundamental, comprehensive reform that includes:

- Ensuring healthcare is a human right, not a privilege of your job, income, or zip code, by guaranteeing affordable coverage through a public option and strong federal protections
- Protecting Medicare and Medicaid from funding cuts
- Lowering costs for families by allowing Medicare to negotiate prescription drug prices, expanding ACA subsidies, and capping out-of-pocket costs
- Expanding primary care, mental health treatment, and addiction services
- Making breakthrough treatments like GLP-1s affordable and available for families who need them
- Cracking down on Pharmacy Benefit Managers that drive up prescription drug costs
- Never taking a dollar from any healthcare corporate PAC or lobby so that I work for the people rather than corporate interests

9. What legislation would you introduce or support to end gun violence?

Everyone deserves to feel safe in their community. In Congress, I would fight for common sense gun legislation and to crack down on the hate that is fueling it.

- Pass a federal assault weapons ban
- Enact a federal red flag law to remove guns from people who pose a danger to themselves or others
- Pass safe storage laws to keep guns out of the hands of kids and prevent tragic, preventable shootings
- Ban untraceable firearms that have no place in our communities
- Repeal protections that grant the firearms industry immunity from liability
- Combat hate and rising antisemitism, Islamophobia, and racism by funding educational programming, strengthening national hate crime laws and enforcement, and ensuring houses of worship have access to security funding and resources
- Regulate social media and AI companies to make them accountable for harmful, abusive, and hateful content

Climate, Energy & Environment

10. What specific actions would you take or propose to protect the climate and the environment? If possible, please name specific ties to New Jersey.

The climate crisis is already here and New Jersey families are paying the price. We can take on the climate crisis and grow New Jersey's economy at the same time by building clean energy in New Jersey, upgrading stormwater management, and holding big polluters

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accountable. In NJ-7, nearly half of our towns — including places like Lambertville — have reported higher than safe levels of PFAS in the water. And New Jersey has the most superfund sites in the country. Tom Kean Jr. said if clean energy were cut, New Jersey would face an “energy crisis” and then he voted to cut energy funding. I have worked across the country to build new clean energy sources to bring down costs, create jobs, and increase competitiveness. In Congress, I will fight to:

- Restore and expand clean energy tax credits that lower monthly utility bills
- Bring home funding to invest in modern energy infrastructure
- Make New Jersey a hub for clean energy jobs from battery storage to advanced manufacturing so costs can be cut while growing the local economy
- Restore and reauthorize FEMA’s flood mitigation program
- Fight for funding to remove the trees and debris from our rivers that cause flooding and investing in stormwater drainage capacity and stormwater management
- Ensure clean drinking water for everyone in the district, by making corporate polluters pay, ensuring continued measurement of PFAS in our water, and advocating for funding from the emerging contaminants program so our towns have the resources to provide clean water
- Fund and clean up our superfund sites, making corporate polluters pay for it, and building clean energy jobs of the future on those sites

Education

11. What is your vision for how the federal government should support education, including childcare, pre-K, public K-12 schools, and higher education, including affordability?

I am a proud graduate of New Jersey public schools. Students' opportunities should not be decided by what zip code they were born in. Democrats need to reset our focus on education and have proposals that improve outcomes. In Congress I will fight to strengthen our public education by:

- Bringing home federal education dollars so taxpayers are not burdened with ever increasing property taxes
- Raising teacher pay and classroom resources through increased federal support for Title I and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act funding
- Expanding access to STEM, vocational, and technical education so every student has a pathway to a good-paying job, college degree, or skills trade
- Expanding paid apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs through labor unions and employers so students can earn while they learn and graduate with industry-recognized skills, credentials, and a direct pathway to good paying jobs
- Protecting public schools from extremist attacks on what books kids can read
- Expand access to childcare through a fully refundable Childcare Tax Credit and supporting childcare providers and educators with fair pay, small business support and federal funding to expand capacity in high-need areas
- Support free advanced education opportunities for graduating seniors
- Expanding national service opportunities so more young people can serve their country, diversify their perspectives, gain purpose, and earn money, strengthening both opportunity and our democracy

Immigration & Border Policy

12. What is your vision for how the US government should handle issues around immigration, in terms of both policy and process?

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America is a nation of immigrants. My own family sought asylum in the United States in the 1950s after surviving the Holocaust. Like so many others, my family story shows that the difference between an asylum seeker and a person who leads the country's economy out of crisis is just a generation. Trump's immigration policies fly in the face of American values. They are not just inhumane and often unconstitutional, they also crush our economy. Trump's immigration policy will reduce US GDP by more than \$200 billion per year, harm American competitiveness in critical national security sectors like semiconductor and AI development and medicine, and substantially increase the cost of key sectors like housing and construction, farming, and caregiving.

We need comprehensive reform that creates a secure, orderly immigration system that reflects our values and our needs and centers human dignity. We need border security, a clear asylum process, and expanded legal pathways so we can uphold the law while welcoming those who strengthen our country. In Congress, I will fight to:

- Expand legal pathways that match our economy's needs, including visas for service workers in healthcare, construction, agriculture, and caregiving, and advanced technology like AI, semiconductors, medicine, and clean energy so we grow all parts of our economy instead of fueling chaos, labor shortages, and price increases
- Create an earned pathway for legal status for long-term, law-abiding immigrants who hold jobs, pay taxes, and have full participation in civic life
- Secure the border and restore order without cruelty by investing in modern border infrastructure, faster processing, and smart enforcement so the system is lawful and humane
- Protect human dignity and due process, rejecting mass deportation, family separation, and indefinite detention in favor of targeted enforcement focused on serious criminals and traffickers
- Hold employers accountable and stop exploitation, ensuring that immigration reform raises wages for everyone, protects workers, and prevents bad actors from undercutting American labor
- Hold ICE accountable for any illegal actions, right-size funding for immigration enforcement, and require all ICE officers to wear uniforms and clear identification
- Focus immigration enforcement on keeping violent criminals off our streets, not bullying legal immigrants who came for a better life
- Fix the asylum process by making it clear and accessible, hiring more judges to clear the backlog and ensure all legitimate claims are heard urgently as it is their legal and human right
- Defend DACA while working for protections and establishing clear pathways to citizenship for recipients

13. What immediate steps would you take to hold ICE, CPB, the attorney general, and others accountable for illegal actions?

America's democracy has thrived because our Constitution creates three separate, equal branches of the government. The Trump Administration, conspiring with a Republican Congress that has bent the knee, has, in one year, shown how fragile our democracy is and how quickly the country can turn towards authoritarianism. Congress needs to show immediately that no agency, no attorney general, and no president is above the Constitution. Democrats today should be sending a message to anyone who has conspired illegally with the Trump Administration that we are going after them to the fullest extent of Congressional powers, including oversight and investigative powers, power of the purse, legislative authority,

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IG and enforcement referrals, and structural checks like rejecting emergency powers falsely used as pretext. When I'm in Congress, I will:

- Conduct rigorous oversight and investigations of ICE, CPB, DOJ, and any other agency, corporation, or foreign government whenever there are credible allegations of illegal or unconstitutional conduct
- Hold public oversight hearings to expose patterns of abuse, unlawful directives, and failures to comply with court orders
- Strengthen and protect Inspectors General by ensuring they have independence, subpoena power, adequate funding, and protection from political interference
- Use Congress's power of the purse to right-size the investment in immigration enforcement
- Legislate clear statutory guardrails governing detention conditions, asylum processing, use of force, family separation, and due process so no one can exploit ambiguity to justify actions
- Protect and empower whistleblowers inside enforcement agencies who report misconduct, abuse, or corruption
- Ensure real consequences for violations, including referrals for civil or criminal investigation when warranted and removal of officials who authorize or carry out illegal actions
- Impeach as necessary when an action taken by any member of the Trump Administration has committed an impeachable offense

AI, Privacy & Surveillance

14. What legislation would you support related to AI? Please address digital ID and digital currency in your response.

AI and all technology advancement should be judged by a single standard: does it help working people build a more secure, affordable future? AI has us on the precipice of a massive economic transformation and Congress has a responsibility to make sure it works for people, not just for powerful companies and the billionaires who control them. Handled correctly, AI could enable breakthroughs in medical research and treatment, raise productivity and economic growth, reduce some consumer costs, create good-paying jobs, and help the US outcompete other leading economies. But absent significant intervention, it could concentrate power, displace millions of workers, undermine trust, create further isolation and disillusionment, and put people, our democracy, and national security at risk. We need clear rules of the road, strong worker protections, and public investments so the benefits of AI are broadly shared. In Congress, I would support legislation that puts people first by focusing on good jobs, consumer protection, and American competitiveness:

- Empower workers to have more say in how AI is used by employers through unions and sectoral bargaining over AI use so workers across an industry, not just a single firm, can collaborate with employers to set standards for how AI is adopted
- Invest in workforce transition and training, including apprenticeships, community college partnerships, and on-the-job reskilling
- Support legislation like the CREATE AI Act that promotes innovation and broad access to AI tools for small businesses and startups, not just large incumbents, so AI expands opportunity across the economy
- Explore the best way to ensure broad-based distribution of wealth created through AI, including a potential new tax on large AI companies and use the revenue to provide

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support to workers or providing all Americans shares of AI companies so everyone shares in profits

- Set clear federal guardrails for high-risk AI applications, especially in healthcare, mental health, housing, credit, and criminal justice, where mistakes can cause serious harm to individuals
- Hold companies accountable for unsafe or deceptive AI systems, including deepfakes, fraud, and manipulation
- For Digital IDs, I would focus on making the government work better with the choice of the consumer. I support an optional, privacy-preserving digital ID standard that makes it easier for people to access benefits, prove eligibility, and interact with the government more efficiently, especially during emergencies. The digital ID standard would need strong safeguards on data use and choice.
- For digital currency, I will work to protect consumers and support innovation. I would back legislation that creates clear frameworks for regulation such as the CLARITY Act, bring digital currencies under clear federal oversight so consumers are protected from fraud, abuse, and manipulation, and support a stable regulatory framework that treats digital assets with the same seriousness as other financial products, while allowing responsible innovation to continue

Campaign Finance and Coalition Support

15. Do you support public financing or stricter limits on outside (PAC/super PAC) spending? Are there any specific companies, organizations, or individuals you would refuse donations from?

Corporate lobbyists, billionaires, and special interests have more power in Washington than the people. It's time to end that era. In Congress, I will work to:

- End Citizens United and take corporate money out of politics
- Establishing term limits and age limits for federal office, including the House, Senate, Supreme Court, and Presidency
- Ban stock trading for all Members of Congress

16. What coalitions and community partners are you currently working with?

I am proud to be running a people-powered, grassroots campaign, and have connected with local elected officials (both past and present) and former candidates, community leaders like small business owners, faith leaders, and climate champions, local affiliates of labor unions, and members of Indivisible chapters, like here in Lambertville and over in Flemington with the Garden State Values. Endorsements include: Nora G. Radest, Former Mayor of Summit, 2016-2024; Claire Toth, Incoming Summit Council President; David Naidu, Former Summit City Council President and Council Member; Andrea J. Stein, Former Chair, Summit Municipal Democratic Committee, 2019-2023; and Terri Tauber, Former Chair, Summit Municipal Democratic Committee, 2008-2015, and Treasurer, Summit Municipal Democratic Committee; Thomas Dackow, Board Member of the New Jersey League of Conservation Voters; Fmr. Congressman Earl Pomeroy, former Representative for North Dakota's At-Large District and co-chair of the bipartisan Rural Health Care Coalition; Don Graves Jr., former U.S. Deputy Secretary of Commerce.