

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

Candidate Name: Tina Shah

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?
<p>As a practicing ICU doctor, I see patients who frequently have to make the tough decision between affording basic needs like rent, gas, and electricity and going into debt to pay for lifesaving medical care.</p> <p>This affordability crisis has reached a boiling point, and it's time we actually get our politicians to do something about it.</p> <p>Instead, Trump and MAGA enablers like Tom Kean, Jr. have attacked our healthcare, rolled out chaotic tariffs, and have done nothing but make the rich even richer.</p> <p>That's why priorities one, two, and three for me in Congress are lowering costs for the residents of New Jersey's 7th Congressional District. I believe every single American should have access to high quality and affordable healthcare – and that's just one piece of our current affordability crisis. As a doctor, I never planned to run for Congress, but after watching our healthcare system fail my patients again and again, and seeing how Congress is not doing its job to help Americans, I have to step up. I will bring the stories of my patients and our community members, along with deep federal policy experience to solve the challenges facing our district.</p> <p>I'm running to repeal Trump's tariffs, which drive up the cost of groceries, household necessities, and cars, while causing job cuts, drowning small businesses, and tanking our economy. I want to lower housing costs for those just starting their families and for our seniors.</p> <p>I plan to do everything I can to prevent medical debt from bankrupting people, by pushing for bans on reporting medical debt to credit bureaus and garnishing wages or using property liens or seizures to pay medical debt.</p>
2. What are the two main provisions of the OBBA Act you would roll back, and how would you achieve that?
<p>The Big Ugly Bill is nothing short of a declaration of war against hardworking families across America.</p> <p>Rising household costs, SNAP benefits cut, higher electricity costs. And, most personal to me and my patients, millions of Americans (over 300,000 in New Jersey) will lose their healthcare, reversing more than a decade of progress we made under the ACA. All of this is to give tax breaks to billionaires. How infuriating!</p> <p>My focus in Congress will be reversing the disastrous effects on our healthcare coverage and provisions that directly impact peoples' pocketbooks. I'll immediately get to work to reverse the Big Ugly Bill's Medicaid cuts and to extend the ACA premium tax credits.</p>

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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?

I'm an ICU doctor. Every day I go to work to try to save people's lives and make them better.

When I'm dealing with a patient in crisis, my first question isn't "Are you a Democrat or are you a Republican?" It's instead an open ended question so that I can listen and get the clues to make the right diagnosis and bring the right treatment to my patient, regardless of their background or political views.

This is the exact approach I'll take to solving problems and getting things done in Congress. We all come from different walks of life, different experiences, different world views, and that's okay. What matters is, are our representatives able to listen, come together, work toward a common good, and rise above what makes us different to create a positive, lasting impact for our community? That's what matters to me, and that's the ethos I'll bring to Congress.

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

First things first, it's critical to defeat Republican Tom Kean Jr. and flip the House. A Democratic majority in Washington would allow for increased oversight of the current administration, including hearings to draw public attention toward the constant corruption. This is particularly important as Trump has dismantled oversight mechanisms by inserting politics into the Justice Department and wiping out internal functions like the Offices of the Inspector General across the executive branch.

The corruption and chaos runs deep, and a big part of it is thanks to the corporate influence that permeates Washington. That's why I'm not taking a dime of corporate PAC money.

Electing representatives that are powered by, and for the people, will ensure that Congress focuses on what really matters: lowering costs, fixing our healthcare, and standing up for democracy.

Affordability

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

Instead of a tax code written by, and for, corporate special interests with the direct support of Congressional Republicans like Tom Kean Jr., we need a tax system that is fair, and that lifts up hardworking New Jerseyans.

The Big Ugly Bill has now made the gap between us and Trump's billionaire buddies wider, from a top marginal tax rate cut to tax exemptions for special interests – this bill does nothing but make the rich even richer and puts more of the tax burden on our working families.

In Congress, I will work to reverse the disastrous effects the Big Ugly Bill has had on our tax code and our country. I'd also work to fully restore the SALT deduction, so that we're not double taxed here in New Jersey.

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

We know New Jersey is the best state in the country, but it's getting more and more expensive to live, raise a family, and retire here. Donald Trump and Tom Kean Jr.'s actions have enriched the ultra wealthy at the cost of our livelihoods, our homes, and our healthcare, and it's time we fight back.

When it comes to housing, the first thing we need to do is stop the blanket purchasing of homes by large corporations. Housing is a right, and it's a failure of our elected officials that families are competing – and losing – against private equity buyers sucking up all the housing inventory in our state.

Tom Kean Jr. and his Republican colleagues in Congress haven't acted to stop this, and they are in fact bankrolled by some of these same special interests. That's also why I'm not taking a dime of corporate PAC money in this race.

With Congressional Republicans and the Big Ugly Bill cutting SNAP benefits down to the bone, food insecurity is likely to reach an all-time-high in recent history this year.

Rather than feeding our families, and putting a roof over our neighbors – Congressional Republicans like Tom Kean Jr. have shown time and time again that they'd rather side with their billionaire buddies over us. As a doctor, I know that housing and food security are the building blocks for good health. Enough is enough.

Public Health

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

Every woman in this country has the right to make their own healthcare decisions. We need to enshrine reproductive rights and access to abortion care at the federal level. I was proud to see New Jersey codify the right to an abortion at the state level a few years ago, but we must fight these attacks nationally, and I will do so in Congress by supporting the Women's Health Protection Act. As a physician, I believe that we must include more than abortion in reproductive healthcare, such as insurance coverage for IVF, *and* expand support for women's health beyond reproductive care as well - including fully covered breast cancer screening and expanded treatment options for menopause.

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

As a doctor, I've seen firsthand how critical of a condition the United States healthcare system is in. And in Congress, my plan includes:

1. Reversing Trump's Medicaid cuts to restore access to healthcare for those who need it most, including mothers, children, and seniors.

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2. Restoring the Affordable Care Act premium tax credits to lower health insurance premium costs.
3. Protecting us from insurance companies who focus on profits over people: passing prior authorization reform at a federal level like I helped our legislators do in New Jersey in 2024
4. Lowering prescription drug costs and expanding Medicare prescription drug negotiations for everyone so that no one has to choose between the medications they need to be healthy and buying groceries.
5. Capping insurance co-pay and hidden fees for drugs, office visits, ER visits, non-elective surgeries and other services.

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

Everyone should feel safe in their school, workplace, place of worship, and community. The Trump Administration has cut funding for community policing, leaving New Jersey to scramble for stopgaps to keep us safe.

Preventing gun deaths and keeping our communities safe with the resources they need go hand-in-hand. And in Congress, I will work to reduce crime, prevent gun violence, and protect our community by:

1. Restoring funding that Trump's Department of Justice cut from community policing, training, victims' services, and violence intervention programs.
2. Banning assault weapons – weapons of war – from civilian use. We need common sense reform, not “thoughts and prayers.”
3. Investing in mental health services so that individuals in crisis can get the care they need.
4. Mandating that law enforcement officials show their identity unmasked and provide their name and badge.
5. Promoting programs for parole officers to mentor nonviolent youth offenders; these programs have saved our children, saved taxpayer dollars, and reduced crime across the country.

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 energy crisis and climate emergency have already arrived in New Jersey: our electricity bills are increasing by the month and flooding has become more frequent and severe, as we particularly experienced last summer. We must enact policies to drive down utility bills, solidify our energy security and improve climate resilience before we lose even more in costs and damages. Like so many of us, I'm frustrated with our government's inability to respond to today's reality.

In Congress I will fight for green policy that grows our economy and saves taxpayer dollars, including:

1. Reversing Trump's cuts to federal funding for climate resilient infrastructure to guard against flooding and rising sea levels along our coasts.

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2. Restoring investments from the Inflation Reduction Act that Trump canceled that would begin new renewable energy projects, creating jobs across the state.
3. Fighting to preserve the decades-old policies that have ensured we have clean air to breathe, water to drink, and land to live on that Trump and his EPA are systematically dismantling.
4. Working to secure funding for New Jersey to modernize our aging electrical grid and lower costs by raising the supply, which is also threatened by Trump's cuts to the Inflation Reduction Act.
5. Making data centers that are popping up all over New Jersey pay for the electricity they use to keep from driving up costs for residents.

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?

Our country's future depends on supporting our children, and that means investing in and fully supporting New Jersey's public schools. I was fortunate to receive a world-class public education here in New Jersey, and I believe that every kid deserves the same. But as Republicans dismantle the department of education and embrace privatization, the institutions that are the bedrock of so many of our communities are in dire straits.

In Congress, I will be an advocate for our kids, and our public schools by:

1. Investing in our public schools and educators so every kid can receive a high-quality education that prepares them for the real world.
2. Restoring funding and oversight authority to the Department of Education to protect all students, particularly students with disabilities.
3. Reversing Trump's Department of Education decision to stop counting critical, skilled professions like nursing, social work, and education as professional degrees, so that these students can receive loans up to the full cost of their education.
4. Working to lower the costs of higher education so that you don't have to go broke, deal with predatory lenders, or dip into retirement savings to afford it, including by restoring Graduate PLUS loans so students can borrow up to the full cost of their education.
5. Ensuring there's a student loan forgiveness plan for our public school teachers so more young people can enter the profession.

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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We can take border security seriously and have a fair immigration process while also treating those who come to our country with dignity and humanity.

I'm the daughter of immigrants, and I'm proud of my family's story of how we came to be in this country. I know so many others are too. It's what truly makes New Jersey and our United State great – NOT the cruelty and hate we are seeing at the hands of this administration and of ICE.

We need an immigration system that keeps us safe while also being fair and humane and respects the rule of law.

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

Many of Trump's immigration policies are illegal, inhumane and directly contradict the America my parents came to.

ICE kidnapping people from their homes, their place of work, and in public without any due process (a Constitutional right!) is not only illegal, it's un-American. We should all be ashamed of what we are witnessing, and we must continue to stand up and come together as a community to fight back against these draconian policies.

And in Congress, I will use House oversight powers to hold this administration accountable for what they've done for tearing apart our communities.

AI, Privacy & Surveillance

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

Artificial intelligence is here. I believe that it is a tool, and depending on how it is used could generate benefit or harm. We should be doing everything within our power to make sure we are restricting any negative impact on our quality of life, safety, environment, and cost of living. The role of government is to set the right guardrails. In Congress, I will work to protect people on this new frontier, and make sure that the data centers popping up over New Jersey are paying for their own electricity, rather than driving up utility costs for local residents.

As the former Chief Medical Officer of a healthcare AI company, I have firsthand knowledge of both the opportunities that AI presents, as well as the potential threats from national security to patient safety. In order to effectively legislate on AI, we need Members of Congress who have direct experience and real understanding of the possibilities and risks of AI. As someone with private sector AI experience, I will be well positioned to shape policy that uses AI for innovation and progress, without sacrificing jobs or hurting humans.

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?

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I will not take a dime of corporate PAC money. My campaign is by, and for, the people.

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

I am working with each of the CD-7 county parties and local committees to engage and build relationships with leaders, volunteers, and voters. I'm also a longstanding member of – and continuing to work with in my new capacity as candidate – local and national physician organizations that are working to address our healthcare challenges, including the Medical Society of NJ, the American Medical Association PAC, and others.