

VSEA Candidate Survey:

Name: Michael (Mike) Yantachka

District: Chittenden 4-1

1. Should the work of State government be performed by State employees?

Yes. I do not support outsourcing the functions of state government to private firms.

2. As an elected official, how would you improve the overall safety of state employees?

Obviously all safety standards should be complied with on the part of the departments and agencies. In the case of personal security to prevent incidents like the Laura Sobel murder, the state should have adequate security guards and camera surveillance in all buildings accessed by the public. Funding for BGS will need to reflect these improvements.

3. What is your plan to make the health care system more fair and equitable for working Vermonters?

Monitoring and evaluation of Vermont Health Connect needs to be ongoing. If functionality continues to be a problem by January, we should investigate working with another state with a working system to migrate our system to their platform. I personally think that the insurance premium increases requested by BCBS and MVP are too high and will exacerbate the number of Vermonters that will opt out of insurance and take the federal fine for being uninsured.

4. Will you support collective bargaining and vote against "Right to Work" legislation in any form?

Absolutely!

5. What do you see as the role of State employees and how would you support them in their role?

State employees are the key to making government function as expected. They also have a responsibility to identify and communicate problems where government isn't working as well as it should be. There should be open communication between employees and their supervisors with an "open-door" policy of access to any higher level of supervision right up to the head of the department or agency.

6. What mechanisms would you put in place to avoid budget shortfalls?

I don't really have an answer to this question. It is extremely difficult to predict what the economy is going to do a year in advance. Our estimates are at the mercy of unforeseen events, too. The Joint Fiscal Committee is supposed to monitor revenue and spending data to make needed adjustments.

7. What approach would you take to make higher education more affordable for Vermonters?

I like Sue Minter's idea of increasing the Bank Franchise Fee to bring in revenue to provide free tuition for 2 years of college or technical school through the State College System. College

costs also have to be controlled in a responsible manner. Building new facilities just to “keep up with the Joneses” and providing lucrative contracts with generous termination clauses are policies that should be discouraged.

8. What would you do to ensure the viability of the state college system?

Again, I don't have an answer to this specific question. Certainly, the state has needed to increase funding for the state college system since I have been in the Legislature. This need has to compete with other needs, however, and usually gets less funding than it should. Sue Minter's idea for subsidizing state college tuition for Vermont students will help, as will the recent consolidation of Johnson State and Lyndon State.

9. Do you support a livable wage for Vermonters? If so, what do you think that amount should be?

Yes, I support a livable wage. This should be at least \$12.50/hour.

10. Briefly state why the VSEA should endorse you, and describe the type of assistance that you would be seeking from a VSEA endorsement.

I have been a strong supporter of labor, including membership in the Working Vermonters Caucus, and have signed onto many of the Caucus' initiatives. I am a past member of Alliance@IBM/CWA Local 1701. I believe that the union movement needs a resurgence to protect the rights of non-management workers in sectors where workers are taken advantage of, like WalMart and McDonald's. I would appreciate an endorsement by the VSEA, but I do not need any financial assistance which would be better spent on progressive Democrats in competitive races.