



Name: Diane M. Denk

Running For: State Representative

District: 9

Candidate Questionnaire

Thank you for taking the time to reflect on your experience with Maine's nonprofit sector. Once we receive your response, your answers will be posted on our website at www.nonprofitmaine.org/2016candidates. Please respond no later than Friday, September 30, 2016.

Did you know nonprofits:

- **Employ 1 in 7 workers** in Maine.
- **Contribute \$10 billion per year** to the economy through wages paid, retail and wholesale sales, and professional services contracted.
- **Pay \$3.6 billion annually in wages**, which translates to approximately **\$206 million in personal income tax revenue**.
- **Mobilize 350,000 volunteers each year** to improve communities.

1. Please describe your personal and professional experiences with nonprofit organizations.

From the time I was in high school, I volunteered with non-profits. I worked with a visiting group that serviced seniors at a state hospital and continued as a Visiting Friend through an organization for the elderly. In Maine, I have volunteered with hospice. I chaired a homeless shelter for African-American women and their children in Chicago and continue to work with York County Shelters by fundraising and hosting drives. In the business world, I organized groups to fund scholarships for inner city students. I was briefly employed by Equality Maine and worked on marriage equality. Upon learning there were homeless veterans living in the woods in York County, I organized a warm clothing drive which distributed the clothes through the VFW.

2. Please provide specific ways in which, if elected, you would partner with the nonprofit sector to advance policies that strengthen Maine.

565 Congress Street, #301
Portland, Maine 04101
tel: 207-871-1885
fax: 207-780-0346

www.NonprofitMaine.org

Many Mainers are struggling to raise families on multiple jobs to provide for the basics, especially when trying to send kids to college. Seniors are becoming a large demographic in this state and want to age in place or find affordable housing, transportation, home healthcare, and respite care for non paid caretakers. Each of us is one step away from having a need that we cannot meet or fulfill. If elected, I would like to strengthen not only the system of affordable or free providers, but find ways of disseminating the information to those in need. A system of ombudsmen through our town halls or on our county boards would help people navigate what is a very confusing system of services. Many retirees have moved to Maine and have to capacity and desire to volunteer but don't know what is needed. Matching up those willing to volunteer with the needs is a critical piece and I would like to become an advocate for this.

3. What is your position on property tax exemption for Maine nonprofit property owners?

I am 100% supportive of exemptions for non profit entities that provide services to people in need in Maine. Homeless shelters, food banks, and even churches that run daycares or programs for the benefit of needy citizens all should be exempt. But wealthy churches which do not host programs for social welfare or have discriminatory criteria for receipt of services are undeserving of tax exemptions.

4. Do you have any specific questions or need further information on any particular issue regarding Maine's nonprofit sector that we can help you with?

As we become the grayest state, we must all unite to determine which services we need for our senior citizens. Promulgating these programs and assisting the elderly in navigating what is available and cutting red tape through government programs, including the VA, will be my priority in the legislature.

You may submit your responses as follows:

Via email to: mecasale@nonprofitmaine.org

Online: www.nonprofitmaine.org/2016candidates

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