



## Alan Khazei's Approach to BIG CITIZENSHIP: A Blueprint for American Policy

### **Where Alan Stands On:**

- Reproductive Rights
- Work-Life Balance
- Pay Equality
- Comprehensive Immigration Reform
- Federal Funding for Stem Cell Research
- The Death Penalty
- Gun Control

November 19, 2009

Paid for by Citizens for Alan Khazei  
PRINTED IN-HOUSE

  
**ALAN  
KHAZEI**  
**U.S. SENATE**

## Where Alan Stands

### On Reproductive Rights

- **Support only those judicial nominees who will preserve core protections in the Constitution.**

Alan believes that a woman's right to decide to have a safe and legal abortion is indispensable, and that it would be a travesty for the courts to overturn *Roe v. Wade* and turn the clocks back to a time when abortions were illegal. He believes that the decision to terminate a pregnancy is one that each woman should be able to make, together with her family and doctor, and that this is not a decision to be put in the hands of politicians. Alan strongly supports the principles established in *Roe vs. Wade*, and will help ensure that they are protected by supporting judicial nominees with the same commitment. In addition to safeguarding this liberty, Alan wants to make sure that women have access to reproductive health care, including services that will help to reduce the number of unintended pregnancies. Assuring reproductive health care so that women's lives and their health are not put in jeopardy is a priority that Alan will never trade for other legislative or political gains.

In order to reduce the number of unintended pregnancies, and improve women's health, we should encourage family planning services by expanding such services in Medicaid, increasing funding for Title X family planning services (to \$700 million), increasing funding for CDC's STD program (to \$267 million), restoring access to lower-cost birth control through public entities negatively impacted by the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005, and eliminating policies that restrict access to emergency contraception.

### On Work-Life Balance

- **Expand FMLA by including businesses with 25 or more workers (HR 824)**
- **Expand FMLA by covering part-time workers and eliminating the requirement that employees work 1,250 hours to be covered (HR 389)**
- **Support Federal Employees Paid Parental Leave Act -- guarantee federal workers four weeks of paid leave for the birth or adoption of a child.**
- **Provide paid sick leave (proposed MA model mandate that employers provide up to seven days paid sick leave - same size employers as current FMLA)**

The Family and Medical Leave Act guarantees eligible employees 12 weeks of unpaid leave each year to care for a newborn or newly adopted child, a seriously ill family member, or to recover from their own serious health conditions, while ensuring job security. However, nearly 50 percent of workers are not eligible for the FMLA because they work for businesses with fewer than 50 employees or have not been at their jobs long enough to qualify. And part-time workers are also not covered because of the requirement that they work at least 1,250 hours per year.

In a time of rising unemployment and economic uncertainty, Alan knows that making ends meet both at work and home is more difficult than ever. This is especially true for women, who traditionally work in lower paying industries, and who often play the largest parental role in the family. Alan wants to make sure that the federal government not only works to protect jobs, but also demonstrates that it values families by enacting policies that reflect 21<sup>st</sup> century dynamics. Alan believes that the Family and Medical Leave Act was an excellent beginning to address the needs of working families, with workers using it more than 100 million times to take critical time off when necessary without putting their jobs on the line. However, he recognizes that too many working families are not covered by FMLA, and are being forced to choose between keeping their jobs and helping their families in the times when they most need it -- when recovering from a serious illness, helping a seriously ill family member, or when bonding with a newborn or newly adopted child. Alan wants to revise and expand FMLA so that it applies to more working families, including those who work part time and those who work for smaller employers (25 or more employees). We can also honor and greatly help the families of wounded soldiers by extending FMLA benefits to family members taking care of returning veterans.

Many workers who are covered by the Family and Medical Leave Act do not use it because they can't afford to take unpaid time off. In one survey, three in four workers who needed family and medical leave but did not take it, said they could not afford to miss a paycheck. Alan believes that this *must* change. Working families should not have to choose between the jobs they need and the families they love. We must develop and support new and innovative proposals that address these issues. For example, Alan believes that we can help new or growing families by passing the Federal Employees Paid Parental Leave Act, which guarantees federal workers four weeks of paid leave for the birth or adoption of a child. He also says it's time for the U.S. to join the other 145 countries that have paid sick days. 57 million working Americans do not have a single paid sick day, 80% of whom are low-wage workers.

As in health care, Massachusetts is helping lead the way. Just last week, the Massachusetts legislature held an in-depth hearing on a bill that would provide paid sick days coverage for all the workers in the state. The Joint Committee on Labor and Workforce Development heard testimony from several public health officials and experts, who discussed a new report that 1.4 million workers in the state have no paid sick days. Experts also presented evidence that paid sick days would reduce the spread of the flu — including pandemic flu like the H1N1 virus — as well as reduce the number of emergency room visits, since paid sick days give workers much-needed access to health care.

With the threat of the H1N1 flu and the government's encouragement that sick workers and children stay home, our policies must have the backs of our workforce and our families. Alan knows that when businesses take care of their workers, they are better able to retain them. Alan wants government to help our workers balance the dual demands of work and family, so that they never have to choose a healthy family or a secure job. This will also ensure that our workforce is more committed and productive.

## **On Pay Equality**

- **Support the Paycheck Fairness Act to close loopholes in the Equal Pay Act**

More than 45 years ago, President Kennedy signed the Equal Pay Act into law, making it illegal for employers to pay unequal wages to men and women who perform substantially equal work. At the time of the Equal Pay Act's passage in 1963, women were paid merely 59 cents to every dollar earned by men. While Alan recognizes that we have made progress, we have a long way to go when women are being paid only 78 cents to the man's dollar. In April of last year, Senator Ted Kennedy released a report, "Taking a Toll: The Effects of Recession on Women," that showed the drastic effects that the economic recession had already begun to have on women. Women were already in a difficult economic situation before the downturn, not only because they are paid less but also because 32% of women are more likely to have a subprime mortgage (putting them disproportionately at risk to foreclosure), and because they have fewer savings and are less likely to be participating in employer-sponsored retirement savings programs than men.

Equality is one of our nation's most cherished principles, but this data illustrates that many Americans, especially women and minorities, still face discrimination every day. Alan knows that this discrimination is not only wrong, it is also affecting families' ability to make ends meet. As we look to recovery from the recession, Alan believes we must address these basic issues of inequality, especially as they affect the female workforce.

President Obama took an important step in addressing pay equality when he signed the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act on his first day in office. But Alan recognizes that more is necessary to realize the promise of equal pay for equal work. As Senator, he will support the Paycheck Fairness Act, which would deter wage discrimination by closing loopholes in the Equal Pay Act and barring retaliation against workers who disclose their wages. Now is the time for Congress to take the steps necessary to effectively address wage discrimination and eliminate loopholes that have undermined the Equal Pay Act's effectiveness. In addition, Alan will fight for policies that address all forms of gender discrimination, including pregnancy discrimination and sexual harassment.

### **On comprehensive immigration reform:**

Alan is the son of immigrants. His father came from Iran, leaving behind a dictatorship and coming to a country of democracy and freedom. He taught Alan from a young age that the United States is the greatest country in the world. It was the only country that would welcome him and embrace him from day one.

Immigration has been critical to America's past, and it will continue to be critical to our future. We need commonsense immigration reform, including an earned path to citizenship. It's time to bring millions of undocumented immigrants out of the shadows and into the light of our democracy. Many of these hardworking men and women do the most difficult jobs we have in our society.

In conjunction with allowing undocumented immigrants to earn citizenship, we need to do a better job securing our border. We must improve our ability to verify workers' employment eligibility and punish employers who knowingly violate our laws. We should also work to encourage economic development abroad so that foreign citizens are able to enjoy greater opportunities at home.

### **On federal funding for stem cell research:**

Alan's father was part of a team that pioneered the technique of protracted arterial infusion cancer chemotherapy. Today, stem cell research holds great promise to cure life-threatening diseases like cancer, Parkinson's, diabetes, and heart disease. Federal funding will galvanize stem cell research, and as Senator Alan will champion this research in Massachusetts and across the country. With federal funding, stem cells can save thousands of lives and bring high quality jobs to our Commonwealth.

### **On the death penalty:**

Alan strongly opposes the death penalty. It is ineffective, costly, and just plain wrong. Studies by criminologists in multiple states tell us that the death penalty does not deter crime. Instead, death penalty trials and executions cost millions of dollars more per case than life imprisonment-money we should spend on preventing crime and supporting the families of crime victims. The death penalty is biased against minorities, and each year DNA testing exonerates wrongly accused individuals. Alan trusts the security of our prisons, and believes the death penalty has no place in a 21st Century America.

### **On gun control:**

Alan supports commonsense gun laws and ownership for responsible citizens. He has lost friends to gun violence, and has seen first-hand the terrible pain that guns bring to our urban communities. We need to get guns off our streets, and away from our kids and teens. Alan respects responsible gun owners, like his grandfather who was a hunter. Rather than detracting from their interests, protecting our community from gun violence helps them as well. As Senator, Alan will vote to ban assault weapons, implement child locks, strengthen background checks, close the gun show loophole, and give law enforcement personnel the tools they need to track and control illegal guns.

Final 091119 1915