

**2023 NEW JERSEY ASSEMBLY and SENATE
BEHAVIORAL HEALTH DISORDERS
PREVENTION, TREATMENT, and RECOVERY
CANDIDATE SURVEY**

I. General Views on Alcohol and Drug Disorders Policies to Address Stigma

Substance use disorders are chronic conditions, much like diabetes or hypertension. Yet the stigma associated with them continues to persist and often prevents people from seeking and receiving the treatment and services they need, contributing to the severity of the disorder and adding huge costs to public programs.

Indicate which principles (if any) you agree with regarding your general views of substance use disorder and recovery policies by placing a check mark next to the letter(s) that correspond with your opinions.

a) Substance use disorders are preventable, treatable, chronic medical conditions and are as diagnosable/treatable as diabetes, asthma and hypertension.

b) Substance use disorder is a matter of will. Government assistance is warranted, but ultimately, recovery is dependent on the individual's choices.

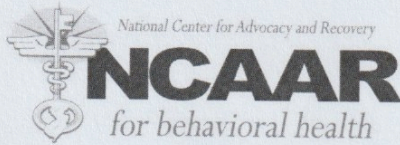
c) I would support sufficient funding to ensure that high-quality treatment and recovery services are available to those who need them.

d) The criminal code (Title 2C) should be examined to identify and rethink stigmatizing and ineffective drug policies.

e) Other _____

II. NJ Policy Perspective and the NJ Harm Reduction Coalition released a report recommending the elimination of criminal penalties for personal possession/use and sales of all drugs. Which best represents your view?

a) I would support the decriminalization of possession of drugs for personal use and sales.



b) I would support the decriminalization of possession of drugs for personal use, but not sales.

c) I do not support the decriminalization of personal possession/use or sales of drugs.

d) Undecided, would like to learn more.

e) Other _____

III. I would support the following initiatives if they are demonstrated to facilitate and improve access to recovery for individuals with substance use disorder:

a) Continued criminal record expungement reform.

b) Tax credits for employers who hire people in recovery.

c) Enhanced financial aid and program assistance to communities disparately impacted by the War on Drugs.

d) Reduction of court-ordered fees and fines for individuals who successfully complete a treatment or diversion program.

e) Investment in community-based outreach teams.

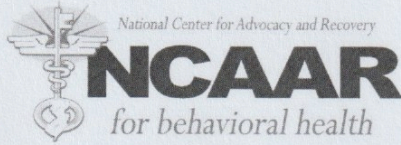
f) Housing First programs with a harm reduction philosophy for those with substance use disorder

g) Expanded use of peer recovery support services.

I do think it is important to encourage employers to hire people in recovery, but I don't know if tax credits are the way to go. My reason is that one would want employers with compassion

h) Other to hire people in recovery, and tax credits may encourage others to hire and then add to stress and anxiety. I feel offering a branding campaign showcasing these businesses social consciousness or something along those lines may be a different option.

IV. Drug overdoses continue to be a major public health concern. New Jersey has implemented life-saving programs to ensure access to naloxone, syringe exchange, and harm reduction



centers. I would support adequate government funding to expand the accessibility and use of harm reduction practices. Check all that apply:

- a) Mobile vans for safe supply distribution
- b) Expansion of Medication for Opioid Use Disorder programs in high-need areas
- c) Vending machines for harm reduction supplies
- d) Overdose Prevention Centers
- e) Drop-In Centers equipped with showers, meals, and social services
- f) All drug testing supplies (i.e xylazine test strips, etc.)
- g) Other _____

V. On an attached page, in seventy-five (75) words or less, please explain any other legislative priorities you will have regarding the prevention, treatment of and recovery from addictive illnesses if elected.

CANDIDATE MUST SIGN SURVEY TO BE INCLUDED IN THE DATABASE

Candidate Name: Lisa Bender
(please print)

Candidate Signature: Lisa M Bender

District: NJ - Legislative District 2

Party: Democrat

Date: September 25, 2023

