Dear Candidate,

Please send back an email as soon as possible, and definitely before election day, answering the 16 questions listed below about whether you support voters' right to know key information before they vote, and whether you support key democratic good government reforms for municipal elections and governments.

Thank you in advance for answering these 16 key questions so that I can make an informed vote in the municipal election.

I. Do you support making misleading voters illegal?

Candidates and "third parties" (interest groups and individuals who are trying to affect the election results) are allowed to lie to voters in their election promises and statements about candidates and about issues and about anything else about which they want to mislead voters.

Please send back your responses to the following questions:

1. Will you resign if you break any of your promises?
2. Do you support a provincial law requiring candidates in Ontario municipal elections, and everyone in municipal politics (including third parties), to tell the truth during and between elections, with a high fine for misleaders?
3. Do you support a provincial law with key measures to prevent, prohibit and penalize disinformation and misinformation during and between municipal elections?

(Click here to see details about how to have an honesty in politics law, and click here to see details about stopping disinformation)

II. Do you support making the political donations and loans system democratic by stopping big money donations and loans?

A candidate and their spouse are allowed, together, to donate to the candidate's campaign a total of $7,500 + 20 cents per voter in the municipality (for a mayoral candidate), or $5,000 + 20 cents per voter in the ward (for a council candidate) up to a maximum of $25,000, which is much more than most candidates can afford (Democracy Watch's research at the federal level and in Ontario shows a large majority of voters donate only $75 on average).

Donors are allowed to donate up to $1,200 to a municipal council or local board candidate (and up to $5,000 to the candidates for any one council or local board), and up to $2,500 to a Toronto mayoral candidate, which is much more than an average voter can afford.

Candidates and their spouses are also allowed to obtain unlimited amounts of money in loans from financial institutions to pay for their campaign, which undemocratically favours wealthy candidates and candidates with wealthy spouses.

Please send back your responses to the following questions:

4. Did you and/or your spouse donate to your campaign?
5. Are you refusing big donations and, if so, what is the maximum donation you are accepting?
6. Did you obtain a loan from a financial institution to support your campaign? If so, what is the amount of the loan, and from which financial institution?
7. Do you support limiting donations to an amount that an average voter can afford (i.e. no more than $100)?

(Click here to see details about the loopholes that allow for undemocratic, unethical large donations)

III. Do you support making the "third-party" interest group spending system democratic?

Third parties are not even required to register (and be subject to donation limits, spending limits and donor and spending disclosure requirements) if they are only doing ads about issues (only third parties who do ads promoting or opposing candidates are required to register – click here to see section 1 definition of "third party advertisement");

There is a $1,200 limit on other donations to third parties (to a maximum combined total of $5,000 to all third parties), which is much more than an average voter can afford. Also, candidates are allowed to contribute to third parties and collude with them on their election campaign strategy and tactics.

Third parties are also allowed to obtain unlimited amounts of money in loans from financial institutions to pay for their activities, which undemocratically favours wealthy third parties.

The same spending limit applies to an individual who is a third party and a third-party group with thousands of members, which undemocratically allows a wealthy individual to spend as much as thousands of voters.

Please send back your response to the following question:

8. Do you support limiting spending by individuals who are third parties and businesses to a very low amount (because they don't represent any voters), and limiting spending by unions and other citizen organization third parties to a low amount per member/supporter?

(Click here to see details about the loopholes that allow for undemocratic "third-party" spending)

IV. Do you support transparency before voters vote of who is fundraising and campaigning for, and donating and loaning to, candidates and third parties?

Candidates are not required to disclose who is raising money for them, and people raising money are not required to disclose they are doing it nor how much they raised, even if they are lobbyists.

Candidates are not required to disclose who is campaigning for them, not even top level people, even if they are lobbyists.

Candidates are not required to disclose donations before voters vote (donor disclosure is only required months after voting day).

Third parties are not required to disclose how much they spent, nor who funded them, before voters vote (disclosure is only required months after voting day.

Please send back your responses to the following questions:

9. Will you, ideally before voters start voting in advanced voting, and then regularly after that up to election day, disclose your donors?
10. Will you, ideally before voters start voting in advanced voting, and then regularly after that up to election day, disclose who is fundraising for you and how much each person has raised?
11. Will you, ideally before voters start voting in advanced voting, and then regularly after that up to election day, disclose who is working on your campaign?
12. Do you support requiring disclosure before advanced voting begins, and right up to election day, of anyone who is fundraising for a candidate or third party so voters know who are key campaign supporters before they vote?
13. Do you support requiring disclosure before advanced voting begins, and right up to election day, of anyone who is playing a senior or significant role in a candidate's and third party's activities so voters know who are key campaign supporters before they vote?
14. Do you support requiring disclosure before advanced voting begins, and right up to election day, of candidate and third-party donors and lenders so voters know who are key supporters and who is bankrolling campaigns before they vote?

(Click here to see details about the loopholes that allow for secrecy in fundraising, campaigning, donations and loans)

V. Do you support voting system reform?

Because of the lack of a ranked ballot or run-off voting system, theoretically one the multiple candidates for many mayoral and municipal council elections could win the election with the support of only a small percentage of voters.

Please send back your response to the following question:

15. Do you support a ranked ballot or runoff voting system for municipal elections? (Click here to see details)

VI. Do you support key democratic good government measures?

Click here to see the top 10 key changes to make Ontario's municipal governments best-practice democratic governments plus the additional #11 change of cancelling Ontario's strong mayor powers system that the Ford PC Party government enacted because it is fundamentally undemocratic.

Please send back your response to the following question:

16. Referring to each of the 11 key changes by number, which of the 11 changes do you support to require everyone to municipal politics to be honest, ethical, transparent, and to make representative decisions and prevent waste?

Thank you for responding to these 16 key questions so that I can make an informed vote in the municipal election.