



## 2026 Candidate Questionnaire

**Candidate Name:** Theo Gillespie

**Position:** Member of the House of Representatives

**District:** 7

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**What drives you to seek this position and what strengths do you have that make you uniquely qualified?**

I'm seeking the house of representatives position because I'm a United States Citizen who is tired of this country not being what it originally was set out to be. A government that is not truly for the people. It doesn't benefit the people of America. Civil Rights are threatened and I am here to change that.

I have always been a leader amongst my peers and community. I'm a generous person that acts from the heart and kindness towards humanity. I believe in integrity and having morals.

**Policymakers face difficult decisions that at times present conflicts between their personal values, constituents' competing concerns, and their chances to stay in power: what would you do in such situations?**

I will do what's right for the people of District 7 and America.

**As a member of the Democratic Party representing constituents in Congress, what would you do to address the impact of Project 2025 policies? Please include your plans regarding the gutting of lawfully allocated funds to programs and agencies through presidential recission and the firing of unionized federal employees without due process.**

Congress controls the power of the purse, full stop. I would oppose any attempt to unilaterally withhold or claw back funding that Congress has duly passed into law. That includes introducing and supporting legislation to block abusive rescission efforts, strengthen enforcement of the Impoundment Control Act, and require immediate judicial review when a president attempts to override congressional appropriations. I would also work with oversight committees to hold executive officials accountable through hearings, subpoenas, and, when necessary, litigation to ensure taxpayer dollars are spent exactly as Congress intended.

Second, on the firing of unionized federal employees without due process:

This is an attack on workers, unions, and basic fairness. I would fight any effort to strip federal employees of their collective bargaining rights or terminate them without cause. That means supporting legislation that codifies due process protections, reinforces federal labor law, and prevents the executive branch from reclassifying career civil servants into at-will positions. I would also stand with federal unions to ensure whistleblowers, scientists, public health workers, and national security professionals are protected from political retaliation.

I would treat Project 2025 as what it is: an attempt to consolidate power in the executive branch at the



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expense of democracy.

I would strengthen guard rails on executive authority, protect independent agencies from political purges, ensure transparency and public accountability at every level.

My responsibility is not to any president, but to the Constitution and the people I serve. I would not allow extremist agendas to dismantle democratic institutions, silence workers, or undermine the rule of law, and I would make that opposition loud, public, and effective.

### **What is your position on support for Ukraine?**

Ukraine is a sovereign democracy of a little country being bullied by a bigger one. Standing with Ukraine is about upholding international law, protecting democratic values, and making it clear that borders cannot be changed by force. If we allow authoritarian regimes to invade their neighbors without consequence, we invite more global instability and greater threats to U.S. security.

I support diplomatic efforts aimed at a just and lasting peace—one that respects Ukraine's sovereignty and does not reward aggression. Peace cannot come at the expense of abandoning a democracy under attack.

### **What legislation would you champion to address immigration reform? What do you think is wrong (or not) with the current way immigration is being handled? Which specific civil rights of immigrants need to be protected?**

Immigration reform is long overdue, and the current system is failing everyone. It is failing immigrant families, border communities, workers, asylum seekers, and the rule of law itself. I would champion immigration legislation that is humane, orderly, constitutional, and grounded in reality.

I would support legislation that creates a clear, earned pathway to citizenship for undocumented immigrants who are long-term residents, including Dreamers, TPS holders, farmworkers, and essential workers. People who live here, work here, pay taxes, and raise families here should have a fair chance to fully belong as long as they aren't criminals or a threat to our security. Right now, our immigration system is over-politicized, under-resourced, and structurally broken.

Asylum processing is overwhelmed, leading to massive backlogs and years-long delays

Enforcement is inconsistent and often punitive rather than effective

Families are separated, children are detained, and due process is routinely compromised

Immigration courts are buried under cases without enough judges or legal support



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Employers exploit undocumented workers because the system makes legal work pathways nearly impossible

The civil rights that need to be protected due process and equal protection under law, protection from unlawful detention and deportation, access to legal counsel and hearings, freedom from racial profiling and discrimination, labor rights and workplace protections, protection of family unity and best interests of children.

### **How would you address threats from the federal government to cut funds to rebuild the Key Bridge?**

I would make clear that Congress controls federal spending, not the executive branch acting out of political retaliation or leverage. If funds have been lawfully authorized or appropriated, I would oppose any attempt to block or delay them through executive pressure, rescission threats, or bureaucratic slow-walking. I would work immediately with Maryland's delegation to lock funding into statute where possible, pursue legal remedies if the administration violates law. I would treat any funding threat for what it is: hostage-taking with people's livelihoods. Tens of thousands of workers, small businesses, truckers, longshoremen, and families depend on the Port of Baltimore and the surrounding infrastructure. I would use every tool available. Floor speeches, committee action, and media to make sure the public understands that cutting these funds would hurt workers, not politicians. I would not allow political games to delay the rebuilding of the Key Bridge or put our region at risk.