



## 2026 Candidate Questionnaire

**Candidate Name:** Rep. Johnny Olszewski

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

**District:** 2

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

The working-class values I learned growing up in eastern Baltimore County drive me. My upbringing, along with my professional experience before entering Congress—from teaching American government in public schools to serving in the Maryland General Assembly and as Baltimore County Executive—push me every day to do more to serve our community.

Today, we face serious challenges, including the rising cost of living, weakened social safety nets, and a President who takes pleasure enriching himself at the expense of our democracy. In my first term as your Congressman, I have proudly championed legislation to hold this Administration accountable to Congress, the courts, and the American people. For example, I introduced a constitutional amendment to place a congressional check on the President's often abused pardon power, and I was able to persuade a Republican Congressman to join me in that effort. I believe I have the experience and relationships necessary to build on this work in a second term and, with a Democratic majority, strengthen oversight of this Administration.

**Are you an incumbent? If so, what would you have done differently in this term? (If not an incumbent, write N/A)**

Yes. In my first term, I focused on defending our democratic institutions and restoring accountability in government, especially against President Trump and his reckless Administration's abuse of executive authority. I authored a bipartisan constitutional amendment to reform the presidential pardon process, pushed for full transparency around the Epstein files, opposed efforts like the SAVE Act that could disenfranchise voters, and supported measures like the War Powers Resolution to reassert Congress' constitutional oversight. In a second term, I will build on that foundation — strengthening partnerships on both sides of the aisle while doubling down on my efforts and pursuing even more reforms to achieve transparency, accountability, and the protection of our democracy. In today's political climate, progress requires meaningful cross-party collaboration.



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**For new candidates, 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? (If not a new candidate, write N/A)**

N/A

**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.**

Time and again, this President has violated the boundaries of the Executive Branch and undermined the rule of law - from leveraging his position for personal financial gain to actively usurping Congress's constitutional power of the purse. I will continue to actively support legislation, investigations, and litigation to hold this Administration accountable for these actions.

In my first term, I became one of the most vocal champions on behalf of our federal workers, including 20,000 who live in my district. Our federal workers are not political pawns. During the government shutdown of 2025, I introduced the Securing Assistance for Federal Employees (SAFE) Act to block the illegal layoffs of civil servants. I also introduced the "Protect Promoted Workers Act" to require the Administration to reinstate federal employees who had been on probationary status due to recent promotion when they were terminated - and extend employment protections to all promoted employees moving forward. I believe that we must reverse the Reductions-in-Force (RIFs) illegally made by this Administration and am supporting legislation and litigation to do so.

As a co-equal branch of government, Congress should vigorously guard our power of the purse from Administrative overreach. I proudly championed stronger guardrails to protect Congress's constitutional spending authority in my first term. In July, I voted against a \$9 billion rescissions package that repealed funding for public broadcasting and foreign aid. During the Fall 2025 shutdown, I introduced amendments to proposed funding bills that would prevent President Trump and his Administration from unilaterally canceling funding approved by Congress. I have also embedded an anti-recissions clause into all of my



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appropriations requests.

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

Our nation was built on the same principles of freedom and self-determination that Ukrainians are courageously defending today. It is paramount that we do everything we can to ensure Ukraine has what it needs to defend itself against Russia's illegal invasion. As a member of the Congressional Ukraine Caucus, I am proud to cosponsor the Ukraine Support Act. This legislation extends Ukrainian security assistance by providing \$600 million over the next two years to support Ukraine's defense and related security efforts. I am also deeply concerned that this Administration's proposed Ukraine policy appears to prioritize the interests of Russian President Vladimir Putin by demanding, among other harmful provisions, that Ukraine surrender territory illegally occupied by Russia. Any credible peace plan must be developed through consultation with Ukraine and our European partners, not by U.S. and Russian officials without Ukrainian input.

### **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?**

Under the Trump Administration, ICE has repeatedly undermined public trust through wrongful arrests, the detention of American citizens, and a routine disregard for widely accepted law enforcement standards. This reckless conduct turned deadly when two Americans were killed during federal enforcement operations in Minnesota. These tragedies were entirely preventable and demand immediate change.

I joined House Democrats in putting forward commonsense reforms that Americans overwhelmingly support: prohibiting the detention or deportation of U.S. citizens, establishing clear use-of-force standards, and protecting sensitive locations such as schools and places of worship. These are basic safeguards that law enforcement agencies across the country already employ.

My message has been clear and consistent: no guardrails, no money for ICE. Fundamental civil rights cannot be deferred to a future negotiation—they must be guaranteed now.



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

To be clear: funding for the Key bridge is already law.

If the Administration wants to change funding levels, it must come to Congress, which is granted the power of the purse under the Constitution. This is one of the many reasons I have and will continue to call for protections against illegal impoundments or unilateral rescissions.

In my first term, I introduced two amendments to the continuing resolution budget bill to prevent the President from unilaterally canceling funds — including for the Key Bridge. These would have ended the President’s ability to fast-track rescissions and would prevent cancellations right before funds expire. They were straightforward protections, yet were rejected by the majority — one of the reasons I voted against the budget deal.