

SAMPLE QUESTIONS FOR BIRDDOGGING

Below are sample birddogger questions for 2022 congressional candidates, crowd-sourced from the network and vetted by experts and allies. Since the best birddog actions involve “winning the room,” the questions avoid technical jargon and partisan red flags, and aim for easily understandable requests that candidates from any political party *could* say “yes” to. Guidelines:

- **Avoid open ended questions**, especially “what will you do about X?” or “what is your plan for X?”
- **Avoid retrospective questions**, “Why did you do X bad thing?” Skillful birddogging wins over most of the people in the room (or at least doesn’t alienate them), and allows a target to say “yes” and look good—or say “no” and *expose themselves as people who are unworthy of voter support*.
- **Questions are generally 40 seconds long or less**, and no more than one minute.
- About 1/2 of every question is a powerful, emotional personal story about yourself or someone you care about—a true story that resonates with the people in the room and generates sympathy. The last 1/2 of a good birddogger question is a request for specific, measurable action, in the future, that assumes little prior knowledge in the room or on the part of the candidate, and still makes sense to everyone in the room.

Global Pandemic Fund:

1. We recently passed the grim milestone of 1 million American deaths from COVID-19, all while existing viruses, such as ebola, zika, polio, and now most recently, monkeypox, are cropping up with increased frequency around the world, putting us all at risk. **Will you fight for a global fund for global health security and pandemic preparedness?**

2. We know pandemics are accelerating and intensifying. Globalization, underinvestment in health systems, and climate change breed more deadly pandemics, faster. *The next millions-of-deaths outbreak is likely within the decade.* **Will you fight for a global fund for global health security and pandemic preparedness?**

3. We have lost more than 1 million lives to COVID-19 and every person who died has left 9 people behind them, tens and thousands of children are without caregivers and Thanksgiving will not be the same anymore. These 9 million Americans will never forget what COVID-19 has done to their lives. **If elected to office, will you ensure that America leads by example in preventing future pandemics by supporting a global fund for global health security and pandemic prevention and preparedness to ensure that this nightmare does not happen**

again?

4. Additional point to highlight: This fund will ensure the US does not take on the burden of recovering from COVID-19 and preventing the next pandemic alone, and instead, holds a permanent leadership seat in fund governance and holding partner countries accountable.

Vaccinate the World:

1. We have lost more Americans to COVID after we have had the vaccine than before the vaccine was discovered. This is mainly because of emerging variants worldwide which repeatedly puts us all at risk. **If elected to office, will you ensure that this grim cycle of COVID ends by committing to vaccinating the world, a noble and a moral thing to do, to ensure that people around the world are vaccinated and we stop emerging variants by reaching global herd immunity?**

2. Americans have spent more money on pet food in a year than our government has spent on global vaccination efforts. Less than 1% of all the previous COVID relief has been directed to fight COVID globally, although there is clear science indicating that if the world was vaccinated, there wouldn't have been delta and omicron variants. **If elected to office, will you commit to ending the grim cycle of COVID variants by supporting the U.S government's commitment to vaccinating at least 70% of the world and ending variants once and for all?**

3. Vaccine Justice Alternative: We've learned from the HIV/AIDS pandemic that only when lifesaving treatments are readily available without cost barriers will we ever get the upper hand on a global pandemic. In order to meet the millions of doses needed to reach anything close to global herd immunity, and be adequately prepared for the next zoonotic threat, we need sustainable, local production of vaccines, medicines and diagnostics. **If elected to office, will you commit to ensuring the U.S. government uses EVERY tool available to facilitate technology transfer and sustainable financing of local manufacturing of these lifesaving tools in the global south?**

Bolster Public Health Jobs:

1. Our response to the COVID-19 pandemic has clearly not worked. We have spent trillions of dollars, yet we have lost over a million innocent lives. This is clearly because of decades of disinvestments into communities like ours and our public health systems. To ensure that our public health represents the public and meet the needs of everyday people, **will you fight for creating permanent public health jobs that are rooted in our**

communities and reach the most vulnerable- the elderly and the poor to ensure that we have a system in place to combat any health threats in our locality?

Support Long Covid Survivors:

1. Since the beginning of the COVID pandemic, many in the chronic disease community knew that there would be a percentage of people who would not get better after acquiring Sars-CoV-2. Unfortunately, current numbers and trends indicate that Long COVID is our next public health disaster in the making with more than 15 million cases resulting from this pandemic, many of which are in their prime working years. **If elected, can you commit to creating a Long COVID assistance program to help people with Long COVID and their families? It should also include a special fund for healthcare workers, first responders, military personnel, and educators, erase medical debt, and make Long COVID eligible under Social Security Disability.**

2. Since the beginning of the COVID pandemic, many in the chronic disease community knew that there would be a percentage of people who would not get better after acquiring Sars-CoV-2. Unfortunately, current numbers and trends indicate that Long COVID is our next public health disaster in the making with more than 15 million cases resulting from this pandemic, many of which are in their prime working years. **If elected, can you commit to forming a White House level Long COVID Task Force composed of patient experts, post-viral disease specialists, labor economists, public health advisors, and other relevant experts, to address the needs of our nation's growing Long COVID community?**

2022 Midterms Pandemic Prevention and Response COVID Coalition Platform

Pandemics are also not inevitable, they are the product of policies. Present choices by politicians have resulted in rapid acceleration and intensification—pandemics are accelerating and getting worse. Our organizations call on our leaders to stop COVID-19 and Monkeypox, make up lost ground on other older pandemics, like HIV, TB and polio, and take the actions needed to stop pandemics of the future. It is urgent to apply key lessons and best practices of COVID-19 (*and Zika, Ebola and H1N1*) to root out the scourge of ongoing crises, and simultaneously urgently tackle the *root causes* of disease

outbreaks. We call on policy makers to reverse the systems of inequality that disproportionately impact some communities much more than others. We urge political leaders to endorse these urgent recommendations:

Pandemic-proof the planet with the U.S. fair-share of the \$10 billion total needed annually for a global fund that prevents diseases from spilling over or spreading internationally.

Fund should support implementation of national comprehensive pandemic prevention plans in low- and middle- income countries to (1) stop zoonotic spillover, (2) contain breakthrough outbreaks and meet WHO's International Health Regulations, and (3) build resilient public-sector health systems needed to realize the right to health.

Vaccinate the world within 100 days of a future outbreak. Vaccinate *now* to stop the variants.

Share vaccine recipes, build local manufacturing and tech-transfer hubs, and make "last-mile" supply chain investments to ensure clinical trial data, publicly funded therapeutics, vaccines, and diagnostics are accessible worldwide.

Support Long COVID patients, including adopting an aggressive NIH research agenda, and ensuring that emergency Medicaid coverage and comprehensive Social Security Disability benefits are readily available for long-haulers
Comprehensive benefits for COVID survivors and people who have lost loved ones, similar to the 9/11 Victims Compensation Fund, to cover out-of-pocket medical costs, mental health counseling, pain and suffering, back hazard pay, and loss of earnings.

Enact a permanent, national COVID Memorial and COVID Memorial Day, to commemorate the ones we've lost—and to mark this enormous loss of life, making sure it never happens again.

Launch a COVID-19 Commission, modeled after the 9-11 Commission, to prepare a complete account of government preparedness and response, and map what we need to avoid a repeat.

Establish a permanent one million-person Public Health Job Corps to tackle end racial and regional health disparities in America, and mitigate impact of COVID-19 and future pandemics.

Fund public health jobs for local social change organizations rooted in communities, in addition to state and local government agencies.

Fight for universal, high-quality, low-cost health care, where we live, at prices we can afford, that gets progressively better, easier and cheaper.

Extend ACA subsidies permanently. Prohibit junk plans and surprise medical bills. Require price transparency and prevent price gouging. Revoke monopolies if companies charge Americans more for products of publicly subsidized research than the next 10 richest countries.

Establish a National Pandemic Action Center that maintains (A) always-warm, pathogen-agnostic global sentinel surveillance and metagenomic sequencing system, (B) the CARES Act's National Public Health Data System, (C) standing team leading 100-day vaccine research and manufacturing, (D) PPE and essential medicines stockpiles

Fund and establish yearly stress-test norms around the emergency response and mitigation plan, modeled after military readiness exercises.

Establish clear, science-based criteria *automatically* triggering stay-at-home, masking, and vaccination measures, as well as initiating the social supports needed (payroll protection, enhanced unemployment, protections for essential workers, etc).