

Lee McQueen
Independent candidate
U.S. House of Representatives
Arkansas, District 4

Arkansas Professional Fire Fighters 2018 Candidate Questionnaire

General Information

Campaign name

McQueen4Congress

Campaign email

McQueen4Congress@yahoo.com

Campaign website

<http://McQueen2018.com>

Other social media

<http://McQueen2018.com>

<http://facebook.com/McQueen2018>

<http://linkedin.com/McQueen2018>

<http://twitter.com/McQueen4USRep>

<https://www.crowdpac.com/campaigns/348674/lee-mcqueen>

<https://www.gofundme.com/McQueen2018>

Campaign manager

Committee only at this time.

Primary opponent (if applicable or known)

As an Independent candidate, McQueen does not participate in the primary. Instead, she must collect 2000 valid signatures for ballot access.

General opponent (if applicable or known)

Unknown at this time.

Preferred method of contact

Candidate's Email

Contact information

LeeMcQueen3@yahoo.com

Endorsements

**Demand Universal Healthcare
Jack Pine Radicals**

Previous offices and dates held (if applicable)

First-time candidate, frequent volunteer on political campaigns

Occupation

Self-employed

General Information (continued)

Previous occupations are librarian and substitute teacher.

Hobbies and other interests

**Gardening
Orchard work
Reading**

Social organizations

Reading interests

**Suspense thrillers
Biographies
Public affairs
How tos**

Any other information you wish to share about you or your campaign

McQueen's full campaign platform includes:

**Single payer healthcare, Expanded & Improved Medicare for All
Affordable education and housing
Good jobs and living wages
Responsible businesses and strong tax base
Renewable energy development and infrastructure modernization**

Integrity and trust in the election process
Safety and security with respect for civil liberties
Responsible foreign policy with respect for human rights

McQueen's full list of legislation to co-sponsor, lobby for, and support includes:

H.R. 676 Medicare For All Act, introduced by Rep John Conyers, Jr. (D-MI)

H.R.771 - Equal Access to Abortion Coverage in Health Insurance (EACH Woman) Act of 2017, introduced by Rep Barbara Lee (D-CA)

H.R. 1880 College for All Act of 2017, introduced by Rep Pramila Jayapal (D-WA)

H.R.15 - Raise the Wage Act, introduced by Rep Bobby Scott (D-VA) and Rep Keith Ellison (D-MN)

H.R. 3530 - Industrial Hemp Farming Act of 2017, introduced by Rep James Comer (R-KY)

H.R. 1144 - Inclusive Prosperity Act, introduced by Rep Keith Ellison (D-MN)

H.R. 2242 - Keep It in the Ground Act, introduced by Rep Jared Huffman (D-CA)

H.R. 3671 - OFF Fossil Fuels for a Better Future Act, introduced by Rep Tulsi Gabbard (D-HI)

H.R. 608 - Stop Arming Terrorists Act of 2017, introduced by Rep Tulsi Gabbard (D-HI)

H.R.2840 - Automatic Voter Registration Act, introduced by Rep David N. Cicilline (D-RI)

H.R. 3227 - Justice is Not For Sale Act of 2017, introduced by Rep Raúl M. Grijalva (D-AZ.)

First responders frequently deal with traumatic situations in which we witness horrific scenes that are not easily dealt with. It can take an emotional, mental, and sometimes physical toll on even the strongest of us; often resulting in excessive amounts of stress on one's relationships and home life. Without the proper mechanisms in place to assist our members with finding and receiving the help they need, the outcomes can be costly- emotionally, monetarily, or worse. We are seeking to put in place a peer support network; the implementation of which, we believe, will be of great benefit to our members and our retirement system as it will provide them with a readily available resource to assist them with their injury and ultimately keep them healthy and employed. In order to do so, we will more than likely need the help and support of local leaders and state legislators. The IAFF offers peer support training to our members, but that training has to be augmented by other resources and cannot work without access to psychiatric help and proper funding. Would you be supportive of our efforts to establish this network? Why or why not?

McQueen fully supports and is willing to lobby for the concept of a peer support training, psychiatric help, and full funding for additional resources required to maintain Arkansas's first responders at top performance levels.

Fully-functional firefighters are a requirements for safe and secure communities. We need to take care of our firefighters in order for them to take care of us.

2. Retirement Security Firefighting is a dangerous and physically demanding job. Over the course of a nearly three decades long career of protecting life and property we are frequently exposed to dangerous environments that pose an immediate threat to our health and safety. In return, we ask for a secure retirement. Not being covered by Social Security, our pension system provides that secure future. Unfortunately, pension plans are often the subject of political attacks and schemes to seize what we have put into and built up through the course of our careers for the sake of profits and brokerage fees. These plots are often hatched in think tanks that have little interest in the financial well-being of any state or municipality and seek only to deceptively influence opinion and promote anti-pension sentiment. Despite the average yearly retirement allowance for an Arkansas firefighter being a meager \$18,000, we know we will soon face these attacks as we have already seen them in surrounding states and throughout the country. Under the guise of alleviating a nonexistent or exaggerated problem, these attempts often create massive unfunded liabilities by ceasing the funding needed to provide for current retirees and shifting it to defined contribution plans. This comes at great cost to the government, the taxpayer, and the retiree. We believe that a healthy system deserves to be protected and should be immune from any attempted cash-grabs, especially when sound practices and performance are demonstrated (ours is currently 76% funded). Would you support or oppose any efforts to alter or diminish our retirement security? Should an issue ever arise within our system, would you be willing to allow its stakeholders the first opportunity to propose a remedy? Why or why not?

McQueen will oppose efforts to diminish retirement security, and looks forward to working with stakeholders to lobby for increased retirement security that approaches closer to 100% funding.

3. Presumptive Cancer Disability As with any disease, prevention is the first line of defense. There are many practices that can be implemented to help reduce exposures to cancer-causing carcinogens on a fire ground as well as at the fire station. Unfortunately, no matter what steps are taken to reduce

contamination, completely eliminating risks is not a realistic goal. There will always be lives and property to protect and as a result, firefighters will continue to experience cancer rates greater than those of the general population. Because the practice of fighting fire occurs in an uncontrollable environment, there is no way to place occupational limits on exposures. It also seems highly unlikely that manufacturing practices will change to limit the use of cheap and hazardous materials, further reiterating the fact that exposure elimination is an unrealistic goal. A recent study conducted by NIOSH found that firefighters stand a significantly increased risk of contracting and dying from certain types of cancer when compared to the general population, including a 100% increased risk for mesothelioma and a 45% increased risk for rectal cancer, among others. These findings are similar to the two other prominent comprehensive studies on the subject of cancer in the fire service. Given these realities, coupled with the fact that the state already recognizes cancer as an occupational hazard of the fire service for which we are eligible to receive a line of duty death benefit, we believe that members forced to retire because of cancers found to be linked to the fire service should be allowed to have a duty-related disability retirement. Would you be supportive of this effort? Why or Why not?

McQueen supports duty-related disability retirement for firefighters as fair and reasonable compensation for the daily, job-related hazards of exposure to carcinogens.

4. Residency Firefighters serving many municipalities in the state choose to live outside of the city in which they work for a myriad of reasons. However, we are often faced with municipal governments imposing or attempting to impose restrictions on where we can choose to live. Their motives for doing so can be anything from padding public coffers to promoting a sense of civic pride. However, the former has been found to be unconstitutional and the latter has been found to be irrelevant. Little Rock, for example, was recently praised for attaining an ISO Class 1 rating and international accreditation with a workforce that is majority non-resident. In the words of administration, “this rating assures residents and businesses that they are receiving the best possible services from the Little Rock Fire Department.” Thus the assumption can be made that residency has no correlative effect on quality of service, with respect to those provided by a fire department. We feel that this is a matter of individual liberty and imposing such restrictions, regardless of motive, violates the fundamental right of personal choice in family matters. Other states have passed laws banning this practice by municipalities and have been successful in upholding this ban under the strict scrutiny of state supreme court cases. We feel that if a municipality expresses an eagerness or even a willingness to violate the rights of its citizens or employees, then those people have no choice but to turn to the state to protect their rights. We also feel that preemptive efforts to curb this practice could save time and money by preventing needless litigation and wasting taxpayer dollars. Would you support a ban on residency restrictions for firefighters? Why or why not?

McQueen needs to gather additional information to learn more about the issue of local residency requirements for firefighters. As a federal candidate for U.S. House of Representatives, it may prove difficult for McQueen to address a municipal issue via federal legislation.

However, McQueen has agreed to residency requirements herself in order to legally campaign for a seat to represent Arkansas's District 4.

5. Fill the Boot The Muscular Dystrophy Association, or MDA, is leading the fight against muscular diseases such as muscular dystrophy and ALS. Since its partnership with the IAFF in 1954, firefighters

have raised over \$400 million. However, in an effort to curb panhandling and solicitation on our cities' roadways, municipal governments have inadvertently hindered our ability to collect donations on behalf of this charity. Our larger cities generally raise more money, by virtue of having greater numbers and higher traffic volumes. Little Rock Local 34, a local that ordinarily raises anywhere from \$30k-\$50k a year for MDA, was only able to raise \$12k at its most recent Fill the Boot event. This is a direct result of a crackdown on panhandling and an emphasis on the enforcement of local ordinances that go as far as possible without violating civil liberties. We do not disagree with the importance of enforcing laws or cities doing what they can within the confines of the law to maintain safe and fluid rights-of-way. We only ask that an exception be granted in the case of firefighters collecting for Fill the Boot on behalf of MDA, as has already happened in other states. Collecting these funds often involves entering the roadway while traffic is stopped, causing little to no backup and always being mindful of the safety of one's self and the motorists also occupying the intersection. Without the freedom to step off of the curb and into the street, we will continue to see significantly lower returns on our efforts. While this only deprives us of our ability to collect in greater quantities, it deprives a worthy cause of the funds it so desperately needs to operate and continue to make breakthroughs in research. Would you support such an exception for firefighters so that our ability to collect is not dependent on the outcomes of legal challenges? Why or why not?

Exceptions to rules tend to breed resentment within those who are excepted from the rules.

McQueen intends to co-sponsor, lobby for, and vote up HR 676 Expanded & Improved Medicare for All Act which requires full federal funding of medically-necessary healthcare for all. All medically-necessary healthcare, including for muscular dystrophy and ALS, becomes free at the point of delivery, just like firefighting, policing, disaster relief, emergency response, road and infrastructure building, schools, libraries, etc.

With single payer healthcare, the federal government guarantees payment of services which releases our firefighters and other charitable causes constrained by similar local ordinances from having to raise funds for medical treatment.

6. Just Cause With any disciplinary action taken in an Arkansas workplace covered under civil service laws, there are potentially four parties involved: the employee, management, the Civil Service Commission, and in some cases the circuit court system. Should a disputed case go so far as to reach the court system, it can come at an extremely high price for the employee as well as the city that employs them. Therefore, we feel it benefits every party involved to operate with the same set of rules, the seven tests of just cause. If this simple test that determines whether actions taken by an employer were fair was codified, we could avoid needless lawsuits and costly settlements- something that just recently cost the city of Jacksonville nearly \$300,000. Having protections in place for the employee and management will avoid outcomes like that. Would you support this idea? Why or why not?

McQueen agrees that operating under the same rules, the seven tests of just cause, appears fair and reasonable to all parties. However, McQueen requires additional research to determine a clearer position on this issue.

Candidate Signature

Thank you for taking the time to answer our questionnaire. Signed and answered questionnaires can be mailed or faxed to: Arkansas Professional Fire Fighters 210 S. Gaines St. Little Rock, AR 72201 FAX: (501)568-9181 Or emailed to mstallingsAPFF@yahoo.com If you would like detailed explanations of the questions, supplemental information, or would like more information about our organization and who we represent, my number is (501)762-2873 or you can email me. Also feel free to provide us with any of your campaign literature, mailers, etc.