

## Wisconsin's Choice Candidate Questionnaire (for 1st Round)

**BACKGROUND Name:** Andy Gronik

**Previous experience (what professional experience have you had that is relevant to the job of governor) :**

I grew up in the Milwaukee area and live in Fox Point, with my wife of 27 years, Mary, and our two young children. Over the course of 35 years in business, I built one of the largest appraisal and consulting companies of its type in the world. In that capacity, I helped thousands of struggling businesses solve problems so they could create jobs and help grow the economy.

Over the last few years, I've become increasingly concerned that the opportunities available to me and my family are becoming out-of-reach for far too many in Wisconsin, because our political system is broken. I want to change that by bringing people together across the state to brainstorm and propose bold ideas on how to move the state forward. I will bring to the state's Executive position his 3 decades of experience solving complex problems, a fresh perspective to political gridlock, and deep care for making life better for everyone.

**Hometown:** Fox Point

**THE ISSUES** -- *For each of the issues below, please provide an overview of how you'll approach the issue and your specific priorities within each realm. Please limit your response to each question to 150 words.*

### 1. Environment and energy

I believe there is a necessary and delicate balance between respecting and revering our environment and allowing our economy and business to grow. Under Gov. Walker there is no balance – his political supporters get what they want when they want it and with no consideration to the environmental impact and with the people of Wisconsin paying the ultimate price.

My GroWis economic development plan focuses on transforming Wisconsin into a 21st-century economy that leads the world in developing sustainable technologies around food production, packaging and distribution, freshwater science, clean air technology, and renewable energy. It's possible to invest in the things that honor our planet and also create new businesses that offer good-paying, family-sustaining jobs For example, we can tackle some of Wisconsin's

toughest challenges by refining the technologies needed to power entire Wisconsin communities on renewable energy. We can have a booming economy and clean air and water.

## **2. Healthcare**

I believe healthcare is a right, and the solution to healthcare for all is best addressed at the federal level. I think it's wrong that people could lose their life or life savings because they don't have good insurance. My entire family is on ObamaCare and join millions of Americans and tens of thousands of Wisconsinites

in being at risk of losing their health insurance as a result of the actions of a Republican-led Congress and Governor Walker's efforts to destabilize the program.

Healthcare is not simple, and I don't believe in taking a bulldozer to the system when a shovel will do. As Governor, I would convene an advisory board of experts from every part of the healthcare system to begin a constructive dialog to identify the very best health care solutions for the people of Wisconsin. One of the solutions on the table would be BadgerCare for all.

## **3. Education (all levels)**

High-quality public schools have always been a major driving force as to why families have chosen to live in Wisconsin and companies have chosen to locate here. Skilled teaching professionals and a supportive environment help ensure a child's educational success. Conversely, great teachers leave when you humiliate them, cut their pay, and micromanage an ever-changing set of standards that some schools must follow but others do not.

I will restore funding to our public universities and bring Wisconsin businesses and Wisconsin's systems of education together to enter into new ventures that leverage their collective brainpower, lower the cost of innovation, and create opportunities to share in the success of profitable joint ventures. We can also help recent college graduates living and working full-time in Wisconsin pay off their student loans by applying the amount they would have paid in state income tax to their loans until they are repaid.

## **4. Voting rights and campaign finance**

I believe in a transparent, accountable, and accessible government. The right to vote is sacred and we should do all we can to protect that right and expand it to ensure that all Americans have a voice in our government. Voters should choose their politicians, not the other way around. We should take the power of

redistricting away from the legislature and put it into the hands of a non-partisan entity. We should stop gutting the ethics boards that oversee our elections and restore non-partisanship to those entities.

Our politicians should not turn into professional fundraisers, and we should fight to remove the influence of money from our politics. Career politicians, special interests, and major corporations should not win at the expense of the people of our state. That broken system will change on my watch because I respect the people of our state and cherish our democracy.

## **5. Public safety, policing, and mass incarceration**

We have a crisis in our criminal justice system. We spend more money on locking people up than we do on our university system, we cram people into overcrowded jails, and we strip people of hope. This system also disproportionately locks up young people of color and gives them more extreme punishments. This must stop!

We can be smart and tough on crime and still differentiate between violent and non-violent offenders. I will conduct a review of the criminal justice system and adapt models working around the country. Not every conviction should be a life sentence, and we need to put in place effective programs that give people a second chance at life by providing access to the training and treatment programs that they need to go onto productive lives.

## **6. Wages and workers rights**

I've always recognized the importance of treating employees like family — it's called being a good corporate citizen. Paying people fairly, making sure they have affordable healthcare or other needed benefits, and making sure workers have a voice at the table are all important priorities for me. Good wages and fair labor practices are not just good for workers — it's smart business, and ultimately, it is good for the economy. I've always believed that labor working together with management toward common goals is how everything great has been built.

This is the state where progressives and workers succeeded in implementing the first worker's compensation protections, the first unemployment compensation law, and the first protections against LGBTQ discrimination in employment. And we were the first state to give public sector unions the right to collectively bargain. It's important for us to carry on that legacy and fight for workers' rights.

**7. Infrastructure** Here's a simple concept career politicians can't seem to understand: If you can't get there, nobody's

going there.

Let's be clear – there is no sincere plan for community and economic development in Wisconsin that does not include long-term investment in roads, rail, light rail, buses, ports, airports, high-speed Internet, and reliable cellular connections. This is the 21st century, and we need infrastructure that empowers our state to compete in the global economy. By strategically investing in Wisconsin, we will see growth throughout our state and a turnaround of communities that Gov. Walker has left to die on the vine.

We will re-energize communities by making Wisconsin the most efficient at getting people to work and products to market. Infrastructure projects will also be structured to create regional jobs training programs that put underemployed workers throughout Wisconsin to work in family-sustaining jobs and future energizing regional economies.

## **8. Immigration**

My daughter, Maria, was adopted from Guatemala. When I look at my daughter, I think about what her life would have been like if she'd grown up in Guatemala. I'm glad I could bring her here to America for a better life. Almost a million families in this country made the same decision we did -- they brought their children here for a better life, just without the proper documentation. Those young people are not that different from my daughter. Gov. Walker has not done enough to stand up for their rights.

As Governor, I will make Wisconsin a state that honors the contributions of immigrant families and do everything I can to stop unfair deportations. I also support an expeditious path to citizenship and a permanent solution for DACA recipients, and will ensure that immigrants are issued a valid driver's license and are not the subject of wage discrimination.

## **9. Jobs and the economy**

Right now in Wisconsin, families are working two, three, or four jobs and still struggling to pay their rent. Parents are not seeing their kids, and these families can't even dream about taking a vacation. Well, that's not a high quality of life, and it's definitely not the Wisconsin I've known living here my entire life.

I have 35 years of experience creating good-paying, family-sustaining jobs in the private sector. My GroWis economic plan builds on Wisconsin's strengths and creates jobs in science, technology, manufacturing, and agriculture. Wisconsin has the infrastructure to claim world leadership in the industries supporting food production, packaging and distribution, freshwater and clean air technologies,

and in renewable energy. We can bring families back to rural communities by being who we are in Wisconsin, and not by attempting to buy our way out of dismal job creation performance by shoveling taxpayer money off to Foxconn.

**Of the issues above, which three areas will you prioritize as governor of Wisconsin?**

Jobs and the economy, Education, and Healthcare

**In the best case scenario, what does good governance look like? Who should the governor of Wisconsin work alongside or in coalition with? (limit to 250 words)**

I believe in a transparent, accountable, and accessible government that works for the people of our state. No one wants a broken system in which career politicians, special interests, and major corporations win at the expense of the people of our state. That broken system will change when I'm governor because I respect the people of our state and cherish our democracy. Let there be no mistake, I am a team player and I believe that teamwork is about looking out after the people to your left and to your right. To me, this means looking out after everybody in the state of Wisconsin, no matter their political affiliation or non-political affiliation. I'm running to be the governor of the entire state and I'll execute upon the very best ideas no matter where they come from as long as they put the people of Wisconsin first and make life better for everyone in our state..

**What efforts is your campaign making to recruit and engage volunteers?**

Our campaign is holding town halls, youth forums, Kitchen Table Conversations and a host of other events across the state to encourage conversations about the issues that matter most to everyday Wisconsinites. We're going right to where the people are to engage them on the issues and empower them to contribute their vision for the future of our state. Giving regular people a seat at the table and listening to their ideas is a large part of what has been missing in our politics for the last seven years. So far, our efforts have resulted in ideas that have become a part of our campaign platform as well as the recruitment of volunteers in key areas around the state.