

# Forgotten in the campaign for governor

**JOHN BALDACCI**

DEMOCRAT

**PAT LAMARCHE**

GREEN INDEPENDENT

	PUBLISHED POSITION	CANDIDATE'S RESPONSE	EVALUATION BY SERVICE RECIPIENTS	PUBLISHED POSITION	CANDIDATE'S RESPONSE	EVALUATION BY SERVICE RECIPIENTS
<b>MENTALLY ILL PEOPLE</b>	NONE	Increase housing resources, peer services, services to jails and prison inmates including diversion efforts and access to employment opportunities. Bring closure to the consent decree.	He has the issues right. But we have the same leadership in place at DHHS, which continues to not "get it" to fix problems in the community mental health system. We need serious leadership shifts to move us to a hope-filled, recovery-based system, instead of covering your butt.	NONE	Universal health care, universal access to health care, a living wage, and affordable housing; a new governor who will cancel the pending state Request for Proposals that calls for privatizing mental health services for the poor and elderly. We can't suddenly include the tragically overlooked in our discussions and do them justice with 40 words.	The idea of housing is good, and universal health care would hopefully mean the whole person-mental and physical health. There is no reference to acquiring jobs, transportation, or prisoner issues here, and those are large concerns for people with mental illness.
<b>DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED PEOPLE</b>	NONE	Provide more options for services to those who are living at home, transitioning from high school; reexamine the eligibility definition for mental retardation and autism services; bring closure to the community consent decree.	He is right about eligibility for services. The definitions for eligibility need to be expanded. Some people don't need a lot of support, but they get denied and fall through the cracks. Then they don't get any support.	NONE	SEE ABOVE	Her comment on health care is important, but what we really need is dental care. Wages are important. A lot of people with developmental disabilities do piecemeal in workshops and don't even get paid minimum wage.
<b>ELDERLY PEOPLE</b>	NONE	Utilize the talents of elders by increasing flexible employment opportunities, assuring access to healthcare including medications, housing and transportation.	My Alzheimer's-ridden mother-in-law - "flexible employment"? This attitude disregards what many old people are like. "Utilize the talents"? We are encouraging people to imagine things that aren't possible.	NONE	SEE ABOVE	She comes closer to expressing some hope that there could be a broader range of positive caring - not just a make-believe game of caring. Universal health care, unfortunately, isn't in the cards. No amount of talk will get us there.
<b>HOMELESS PEOPLE</b>	NONE	Support a housing bond issue that would include permanent housing for the homeless, continue to support the Maine State Housing Authority's use of the transfer tax for affordable housing, and continue the effort of the cabinet-level Director of Homeless Initiatives.	In permanent housing, a lot of people don't get up and do something for themselves. Too many people would just take advantage of it. If they are in permanent housing, then make them work at least 20 hours a week.	NONE	SEE ABOVE	Here's someone that needs permanent housing: when you got kids. You can't have the kids living outside in all kinds of weather.
<b>PHYSICALLY DISABLED PEOPLE</b>	NONE	Increase access to employment and home-based and consumer-directed services; greater access to the Medicaid "buy-in" option.	Access to new and renovated buildings must be increased. There is almost no [state] staff to support this. Access to employment could be assisted by the efforts of the Department of Economic and Community Development. The Web site isn't even accessible, according to the latest state Web site report. What about public transportation?	NONE	SEE ABOVE	Why are we "suddenly included" in this discussion? People with disabilities make up 20 percent of the population, 20 percent of the voters! Jobs, access to buildings, transportation are issues that can be mentioned in a few words. We need all of these plus good educational opportunities.
<b>STATE PRISONERS</b>	NONE	Increase substance abuse services to inmates.	The candidates haven't forgotten us because they haven't recognized nor cared about children, women, and men in cages. They see the criminal justice system as a tool to contain damage done by poverty, racism, and an economic system that rewards high-level thievery while punishing drug abusers or the mentally ill.	NONE	SEE ABOVE	Between 1985 and 2000 a 700 percent increase occurred in drug offenders imprisoned. The billions of overhead it cost to cage them could have been used for prevention and treatment at the local level. But the money went from education and other community needs into razor wire, concrete, and guards' salaries.
<b>VERY POOR PEOPLE</b>	NONE	Invest in their training and education, childcare support, transportation, and continued access to health care.	I would like to see [his agenda] accomplished with fewer roadblocks getting eligibility into programs and services.	NONE	SEE ABOVE	Dental care needs to be included in health care programs. A support system for people needs to be created to solve problems and work through things step by step. Many need encouragement just to blend in with people in public. Self-esteem is very important.

# THE WOULD-BE GOVERNORS ON SERVING MAINE'S MOST VULNERABLE PEOPLE

## BARBARA MERRILL

INDEPENDENT

## CHANDLER WOODCOCK

REPUBLICAN

	PUBLISHED POSITION	CANDIDATE'S RESPONSE	EVALUATION BY SERVICE RECIPIENTS	PUBLISHED POSITION	CANDIDATE'S RESPONSE	EVALUATION BY SERVICE RECIPIENTS
<b>MENTALLY ILL PEOPLE</b>	NONE	I was the advocate for the Maine chapter of the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill (NAMI) and the Maine Psychological Association. We were able to change Maine law so that, for the first time, health insurance covers mental illness. My agenda would be (1) to preserve that law and (2) fulfill the consent decree.	A very weak platform! Go beyond the preservation of parity; move to a system that is inclusive of all health. If we look to just getting out of the consent decree, we are doomed. If the state is released from the consent decree, we may see even fewer resources-and not used wisely.	NONE	We must meet our commitments under the AMHI consent decree. As the courts have noted, the state has not made adequate progress. We must provide adequate community services that are accessible to people who need the services.	Housing and treatment costs are rising quickly, and Woodcock's ideas about Question 1 make me worry, since rising costs above the inflation index must [be paid for somehow]. Prisoners aren't referred to here; neither is skill building or support for those who want to work.
<b>DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED PEOPLE</b>	NONE	[As a lawyer] I represented providers who served people with developmental disabilities. We have good programs in place for this community. My Action Agenda would make sure the payment system meets the needs of the mentally disabled, is fair to providers, and is sustainable.	Her comment about the payment system is important. Losing staff because of low pay is a huge problem. Also, people can't get out into the community enough because there isn't enough funding for transportation.	NONE	Maine has made considerable progress in recent years assisting people with mental disabilities to live in the community and to seek education and employment. Community-based services and independence should remain our priorities.	His emphasis on community and independence is good, but he needs to know that everyone can learn and everyone can work. We need more job opportunities.
<b>ELDERLY PEOPLE</b>	NONE	I represented providers who delivered home care, assisted living and nursing care for the elderly. My agenda would (1) make sure the state supports care approaches that maximize healthy, high-quality independent living and (2) ensure the state responds fully to elder abuse.	We shouldn't put "elder abuse" and "care approaches" together. They are two different categories. This is an example of how there isn't any real thinking from most candidates on these issues. But is she coming forward with money? For most candidates, it's rhetoric.	NONE	As Maine's population continues to age, we must ensure that the public and private sectors provide services needed by the elderly. We should allow the elderly to stay in their homes and remain independent as long as possible. Adequate health care facilities in rural areas are a major concern.	The state has defined too narrowly the standards for help. When my mother-in-law had Alzheimer's, the definition [from] one social worker was that you couldn't get services if you could roll over in bed! All of us look to self-sufficiency, but unless the social workers can be made to act more humanely, nothing will work.
<b>HOMELESS PEOPLE</b>	NONE	Many homeless people need mental health and medical services and adequate shelter. My agenda would (1) ensure the Maine State Housing Authority continues to develop local emergency shelter plans, using planning like Portland's; and (2) review gaps in current law concerning evictions and shelter in cold weather.	We need emergency shelters to do more. There was a few times last year that all the shelters were full, and it was raining. To keep warm I had to walk all night and come [to a day shelter] in the morning.	NONE	While emergency shelter beds are important, our emphasis should be on helping people transition to permanent housing. I have been impressed by such efforts in the Portland area. Regulations that drive up the costs of affordable housing should be examined.	What would help me most to get into permanent housing is getting a job, but I can't pass a drug test, so I still wait in the woods.
<b>PHYSICALLY DISABLED PEOPLE</b>	NONE	It is surprising how many public buildings in Maine are still not accessible to people who use wheelchairs. Federal law has improved accessible voting. My agenda would promote increased "nonsheltered," non-subsidized employment and support programs that provide a bridge to it.	Voter access is being tested during the upcoming election. Public buildings are not the only access controlled by federal and state laws; enforcement is the problem for all access needs. Public transportation is most important.	NONE	We need to continue to work to ensure that public services and buildings are accessible. While we have laws in place that require that we do just that, state leaders must make certain that progress is made.	Transportation, jobs, integrated education—these issues aren't discussed. People with disabilities do not want to be a "service drain"; we want to work and contribute. Passage of Question 1 [TABOR], supported by Woodcock, would hurt health care, transportation, and educational services; their costs are not tied to inflation.
<b>STATE PRISONERS</b>	NONE	I played a key role in improving services to mentally ill prisoners; their treatment has bordered on the inhumane. I would (1) allow prisoners serving time for nonviolent crimes to be released to work in the community, monitored with GPS; (2) address overcrowding; and (3) give more resources to women prisoners.	Families, good neighborhoods, a living wage, affordable housing, a sense of belonging provide a great crime-control model. The overwhelming majority in prison return to our communities. The damage from being caged confronts the long odds upon their return to the outside world.	NONE	We should make greater use of diversionary courts, such as drug courts, to attempt to reduce the need for incarceration. We should place a greater emphasis on pre-release services to help those being released transition back into society.	Maine abolished parole (that glimmer of hope), disproportionately jails the Pas-samaquoddy people, lost federal funding for reentry programs, built a Supermax at Warren that violates the UN Minimum Standards for the Treatment of Prisoners, uses incarceration as therapy for the mentally ill and treatment for substance abusers — all in the name of "corrections."
<b>VERY POOR PEOPLE</b>	NONE	Some welfare recipients have problems requiring sustained support. Sometimes one-on-one support is required. I would (1) improve Maine's economy by making it a free-enterprise state that generates well-paying jobs for poor people and (2) make Maine's educational system the best in the country, enabling many welfare recipients to get off the rolls.	In order to go further than high school, we need free higher education. From grade school on, people are limited in hope by the cost of higher education.	NONE	Maine needs to improve its efforts to help welfare recipients transition to work. We should examine what has worked in other states to help people become self sustaining.	We should find out what works in other states, but what works there might not work in our state because of different rules. Many people returning to work lose benefits and end up making no headway; they lose health care and must pay for many things, including child care.

SIMONNE MALINE, SOUTH PORTLAND AND BANCORS MELINDA DAVIS, OF THE ADVOCACY INITIATIVE NETWORK.

LAURA ANTRANIGIAN AND KELLY BASTON OF SPEAKING UP FOR US.

BOBBY FARNSWORTH, SKOWHEGAN.

DAVE RAWER, PORTLAND.

STEVE HOAD, WINDSOR.

RAYMOND LUC LEVASSEUR, BRUNSWICK. HIS COMMENTS APPLY TO ALL THE CANDIDATES.

NIKKI MCLAN, PORTLAND.