

## I. General Views on Alcohol and Drug Disorders Policies to Address Stigma

Alcohol and drug disorders have only recently become recognized as chronic diseases, much like diabetes or hypertension. Yet the stigma associated with them continues to persist and often prevents people from seeking the treatment they need, contributing to disease severity and adding huge costs to public programs.

Indicate which principles (if any) you agree with regarding your general views of alcohol and drug addiction (Substance Use Disorder) and recovery policies to address behavioral health issues by placing a check mark next to the letter(s) that correspond with your opinions.

a) Substance Use Disorders are preventable, treatable, chronic diseases and are as diagnosable/treatable as diabetes, asthma and hypertension.

b) Addiction is a matter of will. Government assistance is warranted, but ultimately, recovery is the individual's choice.

YES c) I would support sufficient funding to ensure that treatment and recovery services are available to those who need them.

YES d) The criminal code (Title 2C) should be examined as to whether the state's drug laws ought to be re-worked

e) Other Regarding option A: There is no medicine for substance abuse. I do believe it is treatable, but not comparable to those with diabetes or asthma. As the father of a son who suffered with addiction for decades, I know first-hand the complexities and challenges inherent in treating those who have the disease.

NJ Policy Perspective and the NJ Harm Reduction Coalition released a report over the summer, recommending the elimination of criminal penalties for low-level possession/use and sales of all drugs. Which best represents your view?

a) I would support the decriminalization of all low-level drug use, possession and sales

b) I would support the decriminalization of all low-level drug use/possession, but not sales

YES c) I do not support the decriminalization of all possession/use of drugs

d) Undecided, would like to learn more

e) Other

III. I would support any, or all, of the following initiatives if they could be demonstrated to get and keep people in long-term recovery.

YES a) Continued criminal record expungement reform

YES b) Tax credits for employers who hire people in recovery

YES c) Enhanced financial aid and program assistance to communities disparately impacted by the War on Drugs

YES d) Reduction of court-ordered fees and fines for individuals who successfully complete a treatment or diversion program

YES e) Expanded use of peer recovery support services

f) Other

IV. In the past year, drug overdoses have dramatically increased. Naloxone (brand name - NARCAN) is an opioid antidote that can reverse an overdose. I would support adequate government funding in order to expand the use of naloxone. Check all that apply:

YES a) Mandating every pharmacy maintain a minimum supply of naloxone

YES b) On public transportation

YES c) in public libraries

YES d) On college and university campuses

YES e) In homeless shelters

YES f) Authorize EMT's to dispense naloxone

YES g) Mandate a supply of naloxone in other public spaces, e.g. stadiums, theaters, arenas, etc.

h) Other

V.

On an attached page, in seventy-five (75) words or less, please explain any other legislative priorities you will have regarding the prevention, treatment of and recovery from addictive illnesses if elected.

As you may know, I lost my son to the disease of addiction last year. Locally, I have volunteered many hours helping those who seek treatment and recover from addictive illnesses and I have also made it a priority in Trenton. I was a primary sponsor on bill A3292 which required all prescription opioid medications dispensed in New Jersey to have a warning label describing the risks of the opioid medication. I look forward to passing legislation that would increase access to NARCAN, and push for more harm reduction centers in counties across the state.



**CANDIDATE MUST SIGN SURVEY TO BE INCLUDED IN THE DATABASE**

Candidate Name: John Amato  
(please print)

Candidate Signature: John Amato

District: 2

Party: Democrat

Date: 7/16/2021