



## **NH-GOV OPEN DEBATE SET PRECEDENT IN FIRST-IN-THE-NATION STATE**

"Tonight, the Open Debate Coalition and New Hampshire made history with the first-in-the-nation crowdsourced gubernatorial debate submitted and voted up by the public at [OpenDebateQuestions.com](http://OpenDebateQuestions.com). The over 120,000 votes cast from Americans across the political spectrum prove that the public is ready and worthy to assume a major role in shaping the issues discussed in debates.

"Tomorrow's U.S. Senate Open Debate could lead to questions from regular voters impacting control of the U.S. Senate. We at the coalition hope that tonight's debate serves as a model for presidential events in 2020, and that it soon becomes the norm for political debates all across America for every office up and down the ballot. Our political system and our country is better off when questions come from real voters rather than media elites and the Open Debate Coalition will continue to fight to make bottom-up debates a reality in 2017 and beyond."

**-- Lilia Tamm Dixon, Director, Open Debate Coalition**

"Several of the issues raised by the public in the Open Debate Coalition's submission and voting process were questions our news team never would have thought of ourselves. For example, the opioid epidemic is discussed regularly in political debates here in New Hampshire, but this question from Bridget B. in Portsmouth, NH, gave a fresh perspective that more directly addresses the day-to-day concerns of voters: 'What will you do to make it easier for people in recovery to get jobs?' Similarly, after seeing a question about Alzheimer's rise to the top of the voting ranks, our staff looked into the issue more deeply. The treatment and of and support for Alzheimer's patients and their families will be a major public health concern in New Hampshire over the next 20-30 years, and it's one that isn't being discussed.

"The Open Debate Coalition is helping to expand the list of standard questions that candidates get asked over and over in traditional debates into issues that more directly impact the lives of viewers. NH1 is proud to be a pioneer of this concept by hosting the nation's first gubernatorial Open Debate."

**-- Robb Atkinson, Senior Vice President, NH1 News Network**

## **Statements from Open Debate Coalition members:**

"The Open Debate Coalition has proven in two successive presidential debates that the American people are eager and ready to play a big role in debates up and down the ballot. Tonight in New Hampshire, voters were able to see how successful and substantive a true Open Debate can be. Tonight proves that the intensity, quality, and interest of questions submitted by voters to the Coalition will only continue grow in a way that can't be ignored by major media companies or those that run debates."

**-- Grover Norquist, President and CEO, Americans for Tax Reform**

"This is a great victory for democracy. It comes after years of organizing by our coalition, and we thank NH1 for being responsive to the voice of the people in tonight's debate."

**-- Adam Green, Co-Founder, Progressive Change Campaign Committee**

"We're proud to be members of the cross-partisan Open Debate Coalition to help ensure that debates fully represent the diverse views of all Americans. Tonight's debate builds on the great success the Coalition had during the presidential debates and gives our members in New Hampshire and across the nation another opportunity to get answers on issues they care about. By participating in [OpenDebateQuestions.com](https://www.opendebatequestions.com), voters will hopefully be inspired to get more involved in the hard work of freedom."

**-- Roberta Combs, President and CEO of Christian Coalition of America**

"New Hampshire has a strong bipartisan tradition of protecting women's preventative health care and safe, legal abortion. However, in the past legislative session, an unprecedented 20 bills were proposed to restrict women's health care in New Hampshire. Tonight, the bipartisan Open Debate Coalition provided Granite Staters with the opportunity to hear directly from the gubernatorial candidates if they will stand up to threats to reproductive rights and women's health care access in New Hampshire."

**-- Victoria Bonney, Communications Manager of  
Planned Parenthood New Hampshire Action Fund**

## Questions from OpenDebateQuestions.com used tonight:

### **What will you do to make it easier for people in recovery to get jobs?**

Many drug addicts have criminal records related to their addictions which prevent them from getting good jobs or from even being able to apply for most jobs. Unemployment leads to relapses.

Submitted by: **Bridget B. from NH**

Oct. 12, 2016, 10:27 p.m.

Issue area: **Questions for gubernatorial candidates**

### **Do you support cannabis decriminalization?**

Decriminalization and legalization are two separate issues and should be separate questions. In NH you face a criminal record and one year in jail for even the smallest amount of cannabis.

Submitted by: **J C. from NH**

Oct. 13, 2016, 11:32 a.m.

Issue area: **Questions for gubernatorial candidates**

### **Would you support laws requiring health care providers to publish their prices?**

Obamacare's a failure. Forced purchasing of insurance isn't the answer. Providers should publish prices & charge all the same, regardless of insurance.

Submitted by: **Cindy K. from NH**

Oct. 21, 2016, 3:52 p.m.

Issue area: **Questions for gubernatorial candidates**

### **Will you support a Paid Family and Medical Leave program for all NH citizens?**

Paid Family and Medical leave will level the playing field for employees and employers and ensure that everyone who needs this support will get it. What would your plan for NH look like?

Submitted by: **Christina D. from NH**

Oct. 17, 2016, 2:04 p.m.

Issue area: **Questions for gubernatorial candidates**

## Facts -- Open Debate Coalition, [PresidentialOpenQuestion.com](http://PresidentialOpenQuestion.com):

- **Tonight's debate between Colin Van Ostern (D) and Chris Sununu (R) marks the first-ever gubernatorial Open Debate.** Over 120,000 votes were cast on over 450 questions submitted by regular Americans at [OpenDebateQuestions.com](http://OpenDebateQuestions.com).
- **Strange bedfellows:** The cross-partisan Open Debate Coalition which was formed during the 2008 election cycle and includes Americans for Tax Reform, the Progressive Change Campaign Committee, FreedomWorks, MoveOn, Faith & Freedom Coalition, the National Organization of Women, craigslist founder Craig Newmark, Electronic Frontier Foundation President Cindy Cohn, Wikipedia founder Jimmy Wales, and many more (See full list of coalition members [here](#)).
- **The Open Debate Coalition was cited in the last two presidential debates by ABC's Martha Raddatz on Oct. 9, and Fox's Chris Wallace on Oct. 19.** These were the first time that questions derived from the internet were asked at a Commission on Presidential Debates- sponsored debate. For the Oct. 9 town hall, ABC and CNN agreed to consider 30 most popular questions voted up by the public at [PresidentialOpenQuestions.com](http://PresidentialOpenQuestions.com), where nearly 4 million votes were cast.
- **In 2008, [President Obama and Senator McCain](#) endorsed the coalition's call for bottom-up questions, but the CPD did not incorporate the idea until this year.** The Open Debate Coalition successfully held open debates in the 2013 special election for Congress in Massachusetts and in the 2016 U.S. Senate [debate](#) in Florida. Between the two open debates, more than 2,500 questions were submitted and over 450,000 votes were cast. The Florida debate received over half a million views and was aired on C-SPAN several times. The AP [reported](#), "Both candidates said they enjoyed the format...saying they were more substantive than a typical debate would have been."
- **Local grassroot groups promoted the New Hampshire Open Debates on social media**, including: Planned Parenthood New Hampshire Grassroots and Public Affairs, New Hampshire Lakes Association, Open Democracy, Temple Israel (Portsmouth, NH), New Hampshire Tea Party Coalition, Land for Good, National Young Farmer Coalition, Libertarian Party of New Hampshire, Plymouth Democrats, Hillsborough County Republicans, New Hampshire Peace Action, Grafton-Upper Valley Democrats, Clean Water Action, Farmers Union, Grafton County Republicans, Belknap County Republicans, Amherst Republicans.
- National groups and celebrities backing the Open Debate Coalition on social media include: NRA, Everytown, NARAL, NAACP, Americans For Tax Reform, Progressive Change Campaign Committee, George Takei, Mark Ruffalo, Arianna Huffington,

Rosario Dawson, Craig Newmark, Jimmy Wales, Ben & Jerry's, Star Jones, Ultraviolet, Planned Parenthood, Define American, NumbersUSA, Young Democrats, Young Republicans, The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, Southern Poverty Law Center, Color of Change, Presente, [350.org](http://350.org), Young Conservatives for Energy Reform, Social Security Works, Demos, Sierra Club, Sierra Student Coalition, Girls Who Code, Alzheimer's Association, Democracy for America, Bill Moyers, Catholics in Alliance for the Common Good, Americans United for Separation of Church and State, Shailene Woodley, Common Cause, Legal Defense Fund, LGBTQ Task Force, Cenk Uygur, Shepard Fairey, The Young Turks, Brave New Films, Bettermarkets, Cory Doctorow, Tim O'Reilly, Denis O'Hare, Change.org, Dean Baker, Jose Antonio Vargas, Feeding America, New Leaders Council, Science Coalition, Union of Concerned Scientists, Teaching Tolerance, Coalition on Human Needs, Disability Rights NJ, NYC Mayor's Office of People with Disability, One Virginia 2021, Oregon Housing Alliance, ACTE Public Policy, Credit Union National Association, Steve Nash Foundation, Voices for Service, Netroots Nation, Russell Simmons, Rock the Vote, Everyvoice, Lawrence Lessig, DailyKos, DailyKos, and Independent Journal Review.

**Prominent national and local promotion of NH Open Debate voting:**



**Grover Norquist**  
@GroverNorquist

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**BoldProgressives.org**  
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Submit & vote on questions for **#NHSen** and **#NHGov** candidates to answer at the **@OpenDebate** hosted by NH1.

TONIGHT: **@ColinVanOstern** & **@ChrisSununu** face off in **#NHGov @OpenDebate!** Vote on questions and WATCH:



**U.S. Senate candidates answer YOUR questions!**  
7pm Oct. 26 & 27 on NH1: Voters set the agenda for groundbreaking Open Debates. Submit & vote here!  
[opendebatequestions.com](http://opendebatequestions.com)



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**Robert Greenwald**  
@robertgreenwald

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**Common Cause**  
@CommonCause

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Submit & vote on questions for #NHSen and #NHGov candidates to answer at the @OpenDebate hosted by NH1.  
[cmnca.us/2eCO4FG](http://cmnca.us/2eCO4FG)



**craignewmark**  
@craignewmark

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opendebatequestions.com



**EveryChildMattersNH**  
@ECMNH

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1 day left to vote for #NHSen and #NHGov candidates to answer this question at the @OpenDebate hosted by NH1.  
[opendebatequestions.com/questions/318/](http://opendebatequestions.com/questions/318/) .....



**Click here to vote on this question for U.S. Senate candidates to answer at th...**  
"What policies do you support so all kids have a shot at the American Dream? Every child deserves the opportunity to reach his or her full potential. But only some ki...  
opendebatequestions.com



**DCCIL**  
@TheDCCIL

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Submit & vote on this question for #NHSen and #NHGov candidates to answer at the @OpenDebate hosted by NH1.



**Click here to vote on this question for U.S. Senate candidates to answer at th...**  
"Climate Change How will you address the climate change crisis?" At 8pm on Oct 26 & 27 on NH1, Maggie Hassan, Kelly Ayotte, Colin Van Ostern, and Chris Sunu...  
opendebatequestions.com



**Alzheimers MA/NH**  
@AlzheimersMANH

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Vote for @HonoringKen's question on @OpenDebate for #NHSen candidates to answer at the @NH1News debate



**Click here to vote on this question for U.S. Senate candidates to answer at th...**  
"What is your plan to tackle the Alzheimer's epidemic and crisis in our country? Alzheimer's is the 6th leading cause of death in US, only one in top ten with no of...  
opendebatequestions.com

**AIM** ALZ Impact Movement  
@ALZIMPACT

Follow

Granite Staters, vote for an Alzheimer's question to be asked at the #NH gubernatorial debate. [bit.ly/2eBaXat](http://bit.ly/2eBaXat) #ENDALZ #Ask4ALZ



Click here to vote on this question for U.S. Senate candidates to answer at th...  
\*What's your plan to support families affected by the Alzheimer's crisis in NH?  
Alzheimer's is the 6th leading cause of death in US, only one in top ten with no eff...  
[opendebatequestions.com](http://opendebatequestions.com)

**100** Planned Parenthood  
@PPNHAF

Follow

On Thurs, @NH1News will host #NHSen Debate: @Maggie\_Hassan vs. @KellyAyotte. VOTE to #AskAboutAbortion: [bit.ly/2eoTh3N](http://bit.ly/2eoTh3N) #nhpolitics



Click here to vote on this question for U.S. Senate candidates to answer at th...  
\*Would you support a Supreme Court nominee who will overturn Roe v. Wade? Our  
next U.S. Senator will help to determine the makeup of the U.S. Supreme Court ...  
[opendebatequestions.com](http://opendebatequestions.com)

**SOCIAL SECURITY WORKS.** Social Security Works  
@SSWorks

Follow

Expanding #SocialSecurity could be a question in Thursday's #nhsen debate. VOTE:



Click here to vote on this question for U.S. Senate candidates to answer at th...  
\*Are you in favor of expanding Social Security's modest benefits? Many older and  
disabled Americans depend on Social Security as their only source of income. Be...  
[opendebatequestions.com](http://opendebatequestions.com)

**ACS** ACS Law and Policy  
@acs law

Follow

During the NH Senate Debate, we want to know: how will the candidates address the #SCOTUS vacancy crisis? #DoYourJob [buff.ly/2e7gNx7](http://buff.ly/2e7gNx7)



**Bread for the World**  
@bread4theworld

Follow

#NewHampshire, VOTE for a poverty question to be asked at #NH congressional #debates . [opendebatequestions.com/questions/396/](http://opendebatequestions.com/questions/396/) ... @BFTWNE



Click here to vote on this question for U.S. Senate candidates to answer at th...  
\*If elected, what will you do to end hunger and alleviate poverty? If elected, what will  
you do to end hunger, alleviate poverty, and create opportunity in the US and wor...  
[opendebatequestions.com](http://opendebatequestions.com)

**Grassroots ThinkTank**  
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Ask @ColinVanOstern & @ChrisSununu back participatory budgeting at @NH1News' @OpenDebate. #NHGov #Vision4BlackLives



Click here to vote on this question for U.S. Senate candidates to answer at th...  
\*Should the people more say in government spending (participatory budgeting)?  
Harvard's Ash Center finds when the budgeting process is participatory, transpa...  
[opendebatequestions.com](http://opendebatequestions.com)

