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Q1

Describe your overall philosophy toward the role of state government as it relates to business and industry.

As a self employed owner of 2 small businesses in Huntington, I realize that there must be responsible regulations and tax structures that are fair and balanced.

Q2

What do you bring to the office you seek? Specifically, what have you built, improved, or changed for the benefit of your community or business?

I bring 12 years legislative experience as a City Council Representative and all 12 years in a leadership role as Vice Chair (2 years) Finance Chair (1 year) and Chairman (9 years). The City of Huntington was basically bankrupt in 2008 when I was elected. Through good fiscal management , restructuring tax, pension, and health plans the city is now fiscally sound.

Q3

Please list any groups, associations, or non-profits in which you are an active member or volunteer such as civic groups, labor organizations, advocacy groups.

YMCA Huntington Board of Directors, currently Vice President. Marshall University Big Green. Huntington Municipal Development Authority.

Q4

West Virginia is facing many challenges. What do you consider to be the most important and critical challenge that threatens our state and what is your plan to alleviate this threat?

Covid-19 has presented itself as potentially West Virginia's most important and critical challenge for 2020 and beyond. While it's total effect remains to be seen, leaders must prepare to deal with budget and economic and health issues that are all but guaranteed to rise. My plan would be to work with fellow legislators to come up with a comprehensive plan to deal with these issues.

Q5

During the 2020 Legislative Session, SJR 9 and SB 837 moved in the West Virginia Senate, but fell short of the votes needed to move to the House of Delegates. The intent of the effort was to allow West Virginians to vote on a constitutional amendment to phase-out/repeal of manufacturing inventory, machinery, and equipment tax, business inventory, and tax on passenger vehicles while making local governments and schools whole. Please describe your ideas for addressing this issue which requires a change to the West Virginia Constitution.

As a business owner in automotive sales and rentals, I am directly affected by the business inventory and passenger vehicle portion. I am supportive of a top to bottom overhaul of the tax code. In Huntington, home rule allowed us to institute a revenue neutral tax package. We cut retail and service B and O taxes in half, eliminated the manufacturing B and O and instituted an additional 1% consumer sales tax. The plan will have to be bi-partisan for the voters in WV to change the constitution.

Q6

What ideas do you have to help build our state's economy and improve West Virginia's position in competing for investment and job growth?

It begins with a competitive tax structure, fair regulations, low cost of living.

Q7

Use of and addiction to opioids in West Virginia and our region have reached crisis levels. This is a problem being recognized not only at the state level, but at the federal level. What ideas do you have to help stop this devastating trend in our state?

The state should do more to assist in rehabilitation. There are "rehab" homes all over the state that are more for profit than the focus of getting folks well. A more regional approach such as like the jail system should be considered. If not possible, tighter regulations (safe, clean facilities) are needed in the recovery community

Q8

Racial justice and equity, LGBTQ rights and gender equity are important factors for many current West Virginia employers, companies that consider moving to our State, and employees who may consider relocating to West Virginia. How would you address these issues to recruit and retain companies and employees for whom this is a priority?

The City of Huntington was one of the first cities in West Virginia to pass an ordinance outlawing discrimination adding disability and sexual orientation to the current laws. I voted for this as did each other council member. Huntington WV is open to all and I support West Virginia being "Open to All"

Q9

What are your specific ideas related to developing a diverse and skilled workforce in West Virginia?

I believe that more investment in Technical Schools and Community Colleges would be a starting point. We should have incentives to enter trade schools. Working with Chamber of Commerce to develop courses that would benefit their work force.

Q10

The West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection proposed a rule for the 2021 Legislative Session to adopt a portion of US EPA recommended human health criteria which established limits for certain environmental permits. The WVMA is actively involved in ongoing discussions related to these criteria and supports the WV DEPs approach to establish an active work group to further evaluate these important measures. Please describe your position on the proposed rule.

I really don't have enough information to comment. I will say that common sense, fair and responsible regulation is what I would support.

Q11

Please describe policies that you believe may be helpful in balancing state regulations and environmental rules while maintaining a competitive atmosphere for industrial job growth and investment?

I really don't know the answer to this question. However, the way that I have found to be effective in governing in Huntington is to be open to different views and data and make a common sense decision from that.

Q12

What would you like to share with our members that we have not asked?

I enjoy serving. I am a term limited (3- Four year terms) member of Huntington City Council. If I could run for City Council again, I would. I think I bring a fresh open minded common sense approach to the Legislature.

Q13

Would you be available for an interview remotely or in person?

Yes

Q14

Where may the WVMA follow you on Social Media? Please list social media handles including Facebook, Twitter, and others.

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Q15

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Q16

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