

# #26

**COMPLETE**

**Collector:** Web Link 1 (Web Link)  
**Started:** Thursday, June 23, 2022 3:58:46 PM  
**Last Modified:** Thursday, June 23, 2022 4:36:50 PM  
**Time Spent:** 00:38:03  
**IP Address:** 204.111.167.220

---

Page 1

## Q1

Identity-Please fill out the indicated fields.

Candidate Name: **Stephen Baldwin**  
Office Seeking: **Senate**  
Party Affiliation: **D**  
District: **10**

---

## Q2

Contact Info-Please fill out the indicated fields.

Address **261 Locust**  
Address 2 **Street**  
City/Town **Ronceverte**  
State/Province **WV**  
ZIP/Postal Code **24970**  
Country **USA**  
Email Address **baldiwnforwv@gmail.com**  
Phone Number **3044044207**

---

**Q3**

Education & Experience-Please fill out the indicated fields.

High School Attended (Ex: School name, city, & state)

**Greenbrier East, Fairlea, WV**

Colleges Attended & Degrees Obtained (Ex: Marshall, MBA)

**Queens College (Bachelor's in PoliSci); Vanderbilt University (Master's in Divinity)**

Current Employer & Job Position (Ex: WVMA, Director of Operations)

**Ronceverte Presbyterian Church, Pastor; WV Senate, Minority Leader**

Describe your current job & responsibilities

**As pastor, I am responsible for preaching, teaching, leading the staff, building maintenance, mission programs, community engagement, counseling, weddings, funerals, etc. As Senator & Minority Leader, I am responsible for representing the people of Fayette, Greenbrier, Monroe, Nicholas, Summers, and all of WV.**

How long have you worked for your current employer?

**15 years at the church. 5 years at the Senate.**

---

**Q4**

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

Govt should be a partner with industry in two primary ways--1) providing necessary infrastructure for development and 2) providing clear public safety guidelines. My experience teaches me that govt and industry both work best when they work together.

---

**Q5**

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 people together and connect the dots--between govt and business and non-profits, between the majority and minority, and between my district and Charleston. I've undertaken these efforts in support of such partners as Smooth Ambler (John Little) and the Great Barrel Company (Tom Crabtree). I built numerous collaborative groups over the years including the Greater Greenbrier COVID Task Force, Greenbrier Broadband Council, Summers Broadband Council, and flood recovery, for example. I've played a role in bringing hundreds of millions of dollars to my district in five years, not for my own benefit but for the benefit of the community and community efforts.

**Q6**

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.

Rainelle Medical Center, board member  
Greenbrier Broadband Council, chair  
COVID Task Force, chair  
Local Emergency Planning Council  
Greenbrier Humane Society  
Ronceverte Ministerial Association  
Presbytery of WV  
Ronceverte Food Pantry  
Greenbrier Chamber

---

**Q7**

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?

It all comes back to our population decline. Our children are our greatest export. And their exodus leaves us without money or people to fill jobs and potholes, among other things. The drug crisis, child welfare crisis, and labor crisis all tie back to the "brain drain." Until we give people hope and a reason to stay, our myriad of problems will continue.

---

**Q8**

Do you support the passage of Amendment One on the November 2022 General Election ballot? The measure provides the legislature with the authority to repeal or phase out tangible personal property in the future, this includes tax on personal vehicles, small business inventory, and tax on manufacturing inventory, machinery, and equipment.

Yes, I voted in support of it in 2021. I also support taking that action when we have a solid plan to keep counties whole, for if we cannot funds schools or police...then our efforts will be in vain.

---

**Q9**

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?

- 1) Broadband, broadband, and broadband. We've talked long enough. I've taken action locally to get the job done. Because it's not a luxury, it's a prerequisite for development.
  - 2) Site development. Having spent a lot of time with site selection folks, the reasons we lack new businesses are really simple--water, sewer, flat land, broadband. We don't have ready-sites.
  - 3) Our tourism push is paying huge dividends, and we are only scratching the surface. The film tax credit will enhance this greatly in years to come.
  - 4) Give our kids a reason to stay. They are leaving and doing marvelous things in other states. We need to keep them here.
  - 5) Tax reform. I did not support the income tax proposal of 2021 because it was a net tax increase for too many citizens, but I do agree we need to do tax reform. I've put forward several proposals the last two years.
  - 6) The Fairness Act, in some form, is vital. Many employers view it as a prerequisite.
-

**Q10**

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?

- 1) We took an important step this year by putting one person in charge--Dr. Christiansen. For years, we never had a single person in charge. He will now focus our efforts on what is actually working.
  - 2) Recovery-based employment programs have worked wonders in my district. We need more.
  - 3) Family treatment courts and drug courts are showing tremendous results. We need to expand them.
- 

**Q11**

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?

We need to pass the Fairness Act and make a clear statement that you can't be fired or evicted simply because of who you love. It's not only the right thing to do, it will be good for business.

---

**Q12**

What are your specific ideas for addressing workforce skills gaps in industry? Specifically, with the growth of manufacturing jobs in the state and need for diverse and skilled labor, what are your ideas to prepare the state's current and future workforce for manufacturing jobs.

We need to connect the dots between all levels of education and provide vo-tech options from the very beginning (elementary school), so that kids can find a pathway that fits their skills and our needs as a state. I've worked closely with New River to make new programs available based on local business needs. The more we can collaborate, especially with the school system, the better.

---

**Q13**

What are your ideas for improving outcomes in the state's K-12 public education system?

We need to free the hands of our educators. As a former Board of Edu member, I know education is far too centralized in Charleston. Let teachers teach. We also need consistency between public, private, charter, and microschoools.

---

**Q14**

What ideas do you have for incorporating a focus on STEM education in our public schools and how could industry engage to support increased workforce learning models in middle and high schools, as well as career and technical education centers (vo-tech)?

We should start vo-tech as early as elementary school. We should hire folks from industry to teach. (Kevin Warfield in Greenbrier County came from industry and has an engineering program that is internationally-recognized. I support them at every turn.) We need more simulated workplaces, including in agriculture.

---

**Q15**

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?

The general principle should be exactly what the question says--a balance. Every situation must be taken individually and balance should be sought. Industry wants predictability, and balance is the most predictable principle we can strive for.

---

**Q16**

What do you think West Virginia could do to promote energy diversity including the growth of renewable energy sources in the state?

Practice what we preach. We say we are an "all of the above" energy state, but we treat different sources differently. We are an energy state, and we should continue to be. But we can only continue to be if we truly value diversity by treating sources fairly.

---

**Q17**

Many corporations have established environmental, social, and governance criteria. How would such goals impact your decision making on relevant policy issues as a member of legislator?

As I said before, balance is the best thing we can offer industry. It is predictable. It is reasonable. We should reasonably look at the criteria of potential partners and work in a balanced way with them to collaborate. I would not immediately accept or dismiss a company based on their generic criteria.

---

**Q18**

If you could work on a single piece of legislation to help support manufacturers with in the state of West Virginia what would it be? and Why?

You tell me! You're the experts.

Based on what I've heard locally, I would say site development and labor force preparation would be the biggest pieces of the puzzle.

---

**Q19**

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

Yes, I would welcome either.

---

**Q20**

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

@baldwinforwv

Facebook, Insta, Tiktok, Twitter

---