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Q1

Identity-Please fill out the indicated fields.

Candidate Name: Josh Holstein
Office Seeking: House of Delegates
Party Affiliation: Republican
District: 32nd District

Q2

Contact Info-Please fill out the indicated fields.

Address: 664
Address 2: Lower White Oak Road
City/Town: Ashford
State/Province: West Virginia
ZIP/Postal Code: 25009
Country: US
Email Address: electjoshholstein@gmail.com
Phone Number: 304-533-7154

Q3

Education & Experience-Please fill out the indicated fields.

High School Attended (Ex: School name, city, & state): Sherman High School- Seth, WV
Colleges Attended & Degrees Obtained (Ex: Marshall, MBA): Marshall University- Economics BBA

Q4

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

I believe state government should be as limited as possible. While I believe in safe working environments for employees, I understand that many laws can extensively overburden businesses and stunt economic growth. I believe overregulation is the largest job killer in our state.

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?

As a young person, I believe that I bring a fresh perspective as to what young potential employees are looking for in employment as well as assisting in some of the issues that face our state such as population loss. I have played a direct role in the passage of Amendment One (HJR3), worked to create substance use recovery tax credit legislation, and cut taxes in our state.

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.

N/A

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?

Opioids and the drug crisis is the biggest issue facing our state. It affects our economy, quality of life, endangers our people, and puts our children in a toxic environment. I believe that West Virginia should continue to be supportive of local recovery groups and be as involved in reaching those struggling from substance abuse who are seeking help and provide them help.

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.

Absolutely! I was a proud sponsor of this piece of legislation and will do all that I can to see it passed this November.

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?

The cost of living is significantly lower in West Virginia than in many other places across the country. I believe that West Virginia can capitalize on this and attract business and people to our state. Additionally, we are taking several large steps toward making our state more business friendly by cutting regulations, tort reform, and tax reform. The fruit of this labor is already paying off with large businesses moving to our state as recently announced by Governor Justice.

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?

This issue is one of the most important to me. When I first ran for office, I promised to do as much as possible with regard to this issue. I currently serve on the Select Committee on Prevention and Treatment of Substance Abuse and we have taken a deep dive into these issues. For the past two sessions, I have submitted legislation, in conjunction with leaders of the business community, to create a Substance Abuse Recovery Tax Credit. This credit would allow employers to hire individuals who have completed a state-recognized drug recovery program or drug court program. Please feel free to review this bill and contact me with any questions or concerns. I have a good feeling that we will be able to get this bill across the finish line this coming regular session.

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?

I don't believe that this should be a factor in the employment process at all. Providing a special opportunity for one individual on the basis of things that are not possible for another individual to change about themselves. We all should be more inclusive but it is not the role of the state to mandate inclusion over qualification.

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.

I believe that we should put extensive focus on our Vocation training in public high schools across our state. Many students are taught that a college education is the only key to economic success and are unaware of the opportunities that acquiring a trade skill can afford them. I believe there needs to be more funding for these types of jobs and that this should be a major part of our public school education.

Q13

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

I believe in a strong public education system and I also believe in school choice for our parents and students. I believe that students should be able to seek out an education that works best for them and their individual needs. I believe that we should adequately fund our public schools, improve wages for qualified teachers while limiting spending on bureaucracy. We as a state can not expect our public school system to improve while we have a shortage of qualified teachers. If we do not make teaching careers more attractive, we risk losing qualified employees.

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)?

I believe this one of the most important things our public education system can do for our state's economy. We must help fund these programs in our school, increase education about the importance of obtaining an education this field, and establish scholarships for this type of education.

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?

Regulations should be reduced to the furthest extent possible without completely disrupting another industry or the people of West Virginia. Some regulations are strictly punitive and do not benefit anyone while other states and other countries have less strict environmental regulations and contribute to the problem without consequence. A perfect example of overregulation was addressed by the drinking water standards that were lowered last regular session. This bill kept West Virginias water quality standards at a high level compared to many other states while lowering it slightly to be less punitive to well owners and other business in our state. A balance must be struck between the two.

Q16

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

I support all forms of energy in our state and I believe that the more energy resources that we invest in, the better off we are economically in our state. I believe that fossil fuels still play an essential role in our economy and our national security and any attempt to extinguish them from the market is detrimental to both. I believe that we should welcome new types of energy such as nuclear energy and other job-creating energy resources to our state. This past legislative session, we lifted the ban on nuclear energy in our state and took major steps toward reforming our business and inventory tax structure. I believe we should continue on this course if we wish to be successful.

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?

I am opposed to ESGs as a concept. I believe that corporations have the right to make these determinations themselves without government regulation. If corporations decide to establish ESG's then they should be allowed to do that. As a legislator, I will oppose any legislation that mandates ESG requirements for corporations.

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?

I personally believe that lowering the overall tax burden of businesses and individuals in the state is the most effective piece of legislation that the legislature can enact. I will work to limit personal income tax without shifting the burden on the business community and create incentives for employment such as business tax credits.

Q19

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

Absolutely. I would be more than happy to discuss any issues.

Q20

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

Facebook: [facebook.com/DelHolstein](https://www.facebook.com/DelHolstein)
