

## #3

**COMPLETE**

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**Q1**

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

I believe it is the government's role to create an economy conducive to business. The government does not create jobs, but tax reform and regulatory reform should be enacted to make the state more appealing.

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**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?

My family owns a small business in Oak Hill. There, I have assisted in making decisions that helped our business grow and expand. If elected, I will enter the Capitol knowing exactly what holds businesses back in WV. I am ready and capable of making the necessary changes to help our state move forward.

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**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.

Fayette County Republican Executive Committee - Vice Chair, WV Republican Executive Committee, EnAct WV - Board of Directors, Mount Hope Lions Club - Volunteer

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**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?

For quite some time, we have had a lack of good paying jobs. In order to change this, we have to take a four-pronged approach: enact meaningful tax reform (business inventory tax, income tax, etc.), rebuild or repair our roads and bridges, tackle the drug epidemic with a treatment-based solution, and reduce the bureaucracy that holds our education system back.

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**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.

I believe the business inventory tax majorly impedes our ability to attract new business. Therefore, I think it should be repealed, and I would absolutely support legislation like SJR 9 and SB 837.

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**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?

We tax our people and businesses to death. As I stated earlier, meaningful tax reform would give us the big boost that we need. Otherwise, businesses will continue to pass us up for more business-friendly states.

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**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?

For decades, we have attempted to arrest our way out of this problem. It doesn't work. Our best option, practically and financially, would be to take a treatment based approach by partnering treatment centers with Community and Technical Colleges and hiring counselors. By doing this, we can get them clean, teach them a trade (now free due to SB 1), and work on housing and/or record expungement.

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**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?

Hiring and firing should be done based on your performance. If someone is fired or not hired based on their race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, etc., that should not be tolerated.

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**Q9**

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

Education is key. We should put a big push on our trade schools because we are facing huge shortages with those types of jobs. For high school students, we should utilize our vocational technology centers to help propel our young people into the workforce.

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**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 support establishing a work group to make sure these changes are in the best interest of WV businesses and citizens. We must not do anything to hurt current businesses or to halt new businesses from coming in.

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**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?

Protecting our environment is something everyone wants. In a state that is a tourist destination, we need to make sure our natural resources are protected. However, we have seen in the past how regulation can easily turn in to strangulation of businesses. Prior to passing any new regulations or renewing any existing regulations, we need to really study and ensure that said regulation isn't keeping business away. Too much regulation can force businesses away.

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**Q12**

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

I am a pro-jobs and pro-business candidate. I am ready to do all i can to grow our economy and welcome new businesses into our state. I have said for many years that WV could be an incredible manufacturing state. If we put the right policy in place, nothing can stop us. We will explode like we've never seen. During this time of COVID-19, we have to focus an economic recovery like none other. This will be a heavy task, but it can be done with legislators that are ready to cut the red tape and make meaningful strides to grow WV.

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**Q13**

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

Yes! 100%

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**Q14**

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

Facebook - Haynes for House, Twitter - @haynes4house, website - austinhayneswv.com

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**Q15**

Name

Austin Haynes

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**Q16**

Office Seeking

House of Delegates

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**Q17**

Party Affiliation

Republican

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**Q18**

District

32

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**Q19**

Email

haynesforhouse@gmail.com

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**Q20**

Phone

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**Q21**

Address

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Address 2

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City/Town

**Oak Hill**

State/Province

**WV**

ZIP/Postal Code

**25901**

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