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Q1

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

I think the role of government is to help facilitate and advise business and industry in their operations. Government must provide the necessary foundation for operation -- that is to have the complete infrastructure in place for business/industry. Infrastructure includes water, sewage, electricity, gas, roads, and definitely internet/broadband service. Further, government should establish a responsible climate that encourages and supports business and industry.

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?

As a former member of my City Council, I helped pass and supported a new water treatment plant, new storage water tanks, a waste water plant, a new substation for our electric department. As a current member of the Building Commission, I have helped startup two businesses on Main Street.

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.

Philippi Building Commission -- member
Leader of the Barbour County Historical Museum
Philippi Convention and Visitors Bureau -- Board member
Philippi Main Street -- volunteer
Philippi Christmas Committee -- volunteer
Barbour County Association of Retired School Employees -- member

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?

Because many of West Virginia's problems are interrelated, citing just one issue as the most important is next to impossible. Therefore, I will cite three problem areas, all interrelated. The three are the drug crisis, the loss of West Virginia businesses and tax-paying citizens, and the current COVID-19 situation.

Regarding the drug crisis, we must sit down with all people involved -- school personnel, parents, government, social agencies, and law enforcement -- and pound out a plan to address the drug problem. For the loss of West Virginia businesses and tax-paying citizens, we must build a plan to recruit businesses and create a friendly climate for them. Such work will eventually lead to people returning to West Virginia. And finally, for the current COVID-19 situation, we must establish one voice that says we will follow science and the data so that West Virginia can eventually open and establish a new normal.

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.

Before we phase out or do away with any taxes, we must find out how are we going to replace the funds proposed for elimination. We just can't do away with such money. A lot of these funds support our schools and the safety of West Virginia. Any tax elimination cannot jeopardize the well-being of the systems supported by those taxes.

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?

Some ideas that can build our state's economy and improve our position in competing for investment and job growth are: establishing better wages and protection for our workers, establishing a friendly climate towards business, providing a much better infrastructure plan that includes how to provide better roads, how to provide internet service for all, how to provide needed water and sewage for all rural West Virginians. When these improvements occur, the State's economy will improve and investment/job growth will follow.

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?

As a former principal, I have faced these problems. All parties concerned must meet to discuss what to do. We need new ideas to combat these problems. Government, schools, parents, businesses, law enforcement agencies, and social agencies must all be involved in identifying the causes of the drug problem and in establishing a variety of ways to address and eventually eliminate the problem.

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?

Some West Virginia communities have already begun to address these issues. Involving representatives of these communities along with representatives of West Virginia's various races, minorities, and sexual identities in regional gatherings to hear their ideas on this matter can be the beginning of ideas to recruit and retain companies and employees.

Q9

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

Education is the key to developing a skilled workforce. A good work climate is a great asset. Ongoing training for all workers and good benefits and salary all contribute to building such a workforce.

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.

My approach would be discussion with all involved. I would support the WV DEP's active work group. One main policy I would support and keep is the Clean Air and Water Act. There can be a happy medium between business/industry needs and a safe environment.

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?

One is the Clean Air and Water Act. This is a must for keeping the State of West Virginia a good place for business/industry while maintaining a healthy and safe environment for workers and the State's citizens.

Q12

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

I thank you for the opportunity to share ideas for the workers of West Virginia. Keep up the good work and be safe. Thank you!

Q13

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

Yes, I am available for either.

Q14

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

www.edlarrywvhouse.com
Facebook at Ed Larry for WV

Q15

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Q16

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