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Q1

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

The role of state government is to protect employees, the environment, and to hold companies accountable without overextending their boundaries. It is very important government not be allowed to over regulate business and industry to the extent our West Virginia businesses and industry cannot be competitive in a national and global market.

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 small business owner I create jobs and have an understanding of what it takes to create a business environment that brings about growth in the job market. I have served as adjunct faculty for The College of Business and Economics at West Virginia University teaching Entrepreneurship and Small Business Management. While we all need to understand that small business is the backbone of economy, bringing in larger business and industry vital to the continued growth of the state.

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.

I'm currently a member of the West Virginia Nursery and Landscape Association, National Federation of Independent Business, and Jobs for Life through Christian Help in Morgantown, WV.

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?

West Virginians are leaving our state for better paying jobs. It is important that we attract new business and industry specifically to Monongalia County. To encourage new industry to West Virginia we need a well educated workforce with a particular emphasis on trade industry training. We must additionally take on the opioid crisis at a comprehensive state wide level, to ensure we have a healthy viable workforce to attract new industry to West Virginia.

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 agree that a reduction and/or repeal of the above taxes would create more business friendly climate and attract in state and out of state investment in business. This would need to be done gradually over time to reduce the immediate impact on schools and local governments. In this current climate I see this as an ongoing situation of exploring options to replace this lost revenue and implementing these strategies over time. With the current reduction of revenue due to COVID 19 the state's coffers are drained and cannot support an immediate drastic change to our revenue stream; however the revision of the inventory/equipment tax must be a top priority for the legislature as the pandemic fades and puts us in a situation where we can better address alternative resources of revenue to replace this tax.

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 must continually maintain and improve our infrastructure to meet the needs and support a growing economy. This includes investment in infrastructure for roadways and access. We also need to improve broadband as it is essential to facilitate the everyday functions of all businesses. Particularly in today's ever changing work conditions businesses need to be able to offer work from home opportunities which requires consistent statewide broadband access. In investing in our future workforce to attract new businesses, we must collectively improve our human capital participation in order to drive a strong West Virginia workforce.

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?

Create a coalition of different agencies including first responders, medical providers, mental healthcare providers, and law enforcement to better understand and work together to find a viable solution to the impending problem. We need all of these agencies working diligently on this crisis. If we can create a better sharing of information and collaboration this will lead to a lasting comprehensive solution.

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?

We need to foster an all inclusive environment in all workplaces and in our communities.

Q9

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

Over the course of my campaign I have been able to better understand and appreciate the role that manufacturing and the trades play in the development of West Virginia's economy. I have had the opportunity to meet Kathy D'Antoni, Assistant State Superintendent of Schools, regarding the West Virginia Board of Education's Simulated Workplace and to tour the MTEC Vocational Program with its director Mr. John Pollock. Educators and business leaders need to be made aware that the programs of training students in the trades offer them the opportunity to obtain lucrative jobs in manufacturing, heating and cooling, construction and various other trades. This educated workforce will help to better serve West Virginia in filling current manufacturing positions and attracting new business to the state.

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 the WVMA in conjunction with WV DEPs approach on establishing an active work group to further evaluate these measures.

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?

Government regulations need to serve its function without overstepping their boundaries that can then inhibit economic growth potential

Q12

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

Being the small business owner of Premier Landscapes, I understand the importance of a long term plan to bring businesses to our county and state while developing our existing and future workforce, West Virginians are smart, proud and hardworking people who will be the backbone to revitalization of West Virginia's economy.

Q13

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

I would be available for an interview either remotely or in person.

Q14

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

Facebook- Justin White for House of Delegates

Q15

Name

Justin S. White

Q16

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Q17

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