



2020 General Election -- Legislative Candidates' Questionnaire

This survey is available to complete online at www.wvma.com/candidatesurvey2020. You may also scan and email your completed survey to Rebecca McPhail at rebecca@wvma.com, or mail by **August 3, 2020** to:

West Virginians for Manufacturing Jobs PAC
2001 Quarrier Street
Charleston, WV 25311

Candidate Name: Rupie Phillips Office Seeking: State Senate 7th District
Party Affiliation: Republican Email: rupie69@rcn.com
Address Line 1: PO Box 194
City: Lorado State: WV Zip: 25630 Phone: 304-687-9793

Questions:

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

The role of state government in relation to business and industry is to enact legislation that will attract more businesses to come to WV such as manufacturing facilities, distribution centers, and retail businesses just to name a few.

2. 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 experience to the office I seek. I served 8 years in the House of Delegates where I fought hard for coal and jobs. I want to help create a state where my daughter can work, raise her family, and prosper.

3. 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 am an active member of the Logan Shrine Club. We participate in several fund raising events throughout the year to ensure children who go to the Shriver's Hospital have their medical + transportation expenses covered. I am also an avid supporter of the WV Coal Association.

4. 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?

The most critical challenge that threatens our state is the war on coal brought on by the Obama Administration. My plan is to keep fighting against overreaching regulations imposed by the EPA to ensure our coal mines can obtain the appropriate permits to mine coal. This will help to keep our miners working. I also plan to fight for coal-fired power plants. Coal and natural gas are the most reliable and economical forms of energy.

5. 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 like what they introduced, and I would support it. We are one of the few states that have inventory tax. This tax makes it challenging for existing businesses to survive here + unattractive for new businesses to come here. I will work with both parties to repeal inventory tax in our state while keeping the counties + schools whole.

6. 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?

My ideas would be to improve our infrastructure by improving roads, water, sewage, + electric systems, offer broadband internet in all areas of the state, improve our school system by attracting and retaining high-quality teachers + secure funding for physical improvements to our schools, and offer tax incentives to businesses who wish to relocate to our state.

7. 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?

While opioids addiction is still a huge problem in our state, we have seen a massive uptick in meth + heroin use, addiction, + overdoses. When referring to opioids specifically, my ideas would be to provide education on alternative pain management options to those who would otherwise be prescribed opioids to alleviate some instances where people get addicted to their own medication. I would fight for stronger sentencing for drug crimes particularly those resulting in death. I would also like to improve access to mental health + drug rehabilitation facilities throughout our state. Our drug court + Fresh Start Programs in Logan have seen successes, for +

8. 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?

It feels as if these rights are already in place.

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

I support the legislation that offers free tuition for ^{students to go to} community and technical colleges. Our community colleges offer multiple programs that will help develop a skilled and diverse workforce in the state of WV.

10. 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 am not familiar with the proposed rule, but the overreach of the EPA is the reason we send jobs to other countries. We can still promote a healthy and safe work environments without hindering production or productivity.

11. 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?

Keep the EPA and the liberal bureaucrats out of it.

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

I want to fight for the people of West Virginia and be able to keep them working so they can enjoy this great state we call home. I want to help grow our state's economy by attracting new businesses and people.

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

I would be available for both.

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

Facebook

**SAVE THE DATE – 2020 WVMA All State-Legislative Dinner
Charleston, W.Va.**

Monday, November 16, 2020

**Sitting and newly elected Legislators are encouraged to attend as guests of the WVMA
Occupancy restrictions may lead to registration limits – details to follow.*