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Q1

Identity-Please fill out the indicated fields.

Candidate Name: Jarred Cannon
Office Seeking: House of Delegates
Party Affiliation: Republican
District: 21

Q2

Contact Info-Please fill out the indicated fields.

Address: 93 BB Way
Address 2: -
City/Town: Hurricane
State/Province: WV
ZIP/Postal Code: 25526
Country: USA
Email Address: cannonforwv@gmail.com
Phone Number: 3043602798

Q3

Education & Experience-Please fill out the indicated fields.

High School Attended (Ex: School name, city, & state)

Cabell Midland, Huntington, WV

Colleges Attended & Degrees Obtained (Ex: Marshall, MBA)

WVU, BA Political Science

Current Employer & Job Position (Ex: WVMA, Director of Operations)

Owner, Athena Consulting

Describe your current job & responsibilities

PR consulting, social media management, traditional media training, op-ed writing, graphic design, etc.

How long have you worked for your current employer?

4 years

Q4

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

If society writ large were a three-legged stool, the three legs would be family, industry and government. It is the role of each leg to support the other two in order to achieve a shared, balanced weight. There are times when one leg may take more of the burden - during the pandemic, for example, when government had to bear the brunt and give out extra support in order for the other two to not break. Or during the World Wars when the government and military would have failed without strong family units and industry. By and large though, in times of calm, state government should be a partner to industry that places itself on an equal level of importance.

I am someone who will always listen and have an open office for your group. Even if we don't agree on every issue (though I suspect we may on the vast majority), I'll never be dishonest with you about how I plan to vote or what my thoughts are on a topic.

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?

I have worked in and around public service for nearly a decade both on the "inside" and "outside" - I served as a Herndon Fellow at the state legislature in 2019 and over the last three years I've worked at the Capitol in government relations representing a number of clients from the energy, healthcare, education and engineering industries. These prior experiences allow me to come into the legislature ready to get to work on day one.

In my personal time, I serve on the board of the Ohio - West Virginia Youth Leadership Association (YLA) which hosts the Youth In Government program at the Capitol each year. I am also an organizer and counselor for Camp Lincoln, a conservative youth leadership camp held each summer in Cowen. Experiences like these shaped me as an adolescent and it is important to me to help provide similar ones for the next generation of West Virginians.

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.

Ohio - West Virginia YLA
Camp Lincoln WV
West Virginians for Life (WVFL)
West Virginia Citizens Defense League (WVCDL)

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?

Our number one issue is population stagnation. We cannot grow as a state without increasing the number of people who want to move to West Virginia and increasing the number of new children being born here.

To bring people here, we have to offer more high-paying jobs with good benefits (something that WVMA members certainly provide). When a business is considering a new plant in West Virginia and their first experience on a site visit is pothole after pothole, it sets a bad first impression - that's why we need to spend our federal and state infrastructure dollars wisely on common-sense, high-need projects. Broadband expansion is also critically important.

On the other issue, increasing the number of children actually being born in West Virginia, we must incentivize family formation and support new parents through our tax code.

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.

Yes, I fully support Amendment One and plan to campaign for it in the fall as I go door-to-door.

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?

West Virginia has the supply, capacity and willingness to be the energy capital of America. We must leverage more of our resources including natural gas, metallurgical and steam coal, timber and more. Rare earth minerals used to make electronics and batteries are mined almost exclusively outside of the country. These valuable resources can and should be extracted here in West Virginia and used by in-state manufacturers so that we are a part of this growing industry. More generally, West Virginia should massively incentivize the re-shoring of overseas manufacturing in all industries into our state.

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?

The most vital step we could take to curb fentanyl and heroin use is one that unfortunately must happen at the federal level by further securing our southern border. The overwhelming majority of drugs are being transported here from other countries.

At the state level, the Senate's fentanyl bill that passed during the 2022 session will help curb part of the problem and can be expanded on. A good job also solves a lot of problems and there is clear evidence linking drug addiction to job loss/unemployment statistics. Improving our economy generally will help the problem.

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?

West Virginia should focus on becoming the best place in America for a young, conservative family to live, work and raise their kids in. The focus of business and industry should be on setting up shop and expanding in states with great business climates which I look forward to improving in our state. If a company chooses not to relocate to our state because of our "gender equity" status, they may not have been a great fit for our state in the first place.

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.

The state has done an exceptional job expanding school choice programs over the last eight years. The next step in this movement is ensuring that students can be placed directly into career pathway programs as early as middle and early high school. With microschoools, charter schools, extended learning opportunities and virtual schools now options for West Virginia students, it is possible for a teenager to do half a day of school in the morning or afternoon and spend the rest of the day working on-site as an intern or paid employee in an industry they plan to go into after graduation. We need to make better use of these types of programs and incentivize our kids to participate in them.

Q13

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

First, we need to let the programs that we've put in place over the last few years play out to see how they improve things. In the meantime, we need to reform Chapter 18/18A of our state code to modernize things and cut much of the regulations and paperwork teachers face every day so they can focus on the students in front of them.

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 helped lobby for passage of West Virginia's Extended Learning Opportunities (ELO) bill that is still in the rule-making process. Once finalized, it should allow for students to involve themselves directly with industry through internships and receive course credit for doing so. Programs like this are critically important because they allow students to form relationships and gather necessary skills to be able to jump directly into a great job right after graduation.

I am fully behind an expanded STEM curriculum in our public schools as well as the implementation of career pathways programs. If a student entering high school knows the job they're interested in pursuing, they should be able to take courses that directly correlate to that field (while also working with a local employer in the industry) and not be bogged down by "mandatory" classes that may not provide value to them.

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?

Preserving the natural beauty of West Virginia and protecting our people is critically important, but each bill should be analyzed carefully to ensure it doesn't turn away industry and growth. As previously stated, my door is always open to talk to folks at the WVMA and if you think there may be a concern with a particular bill I'll always hear you out.

Q16

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

I firmly believe in an all-of-the-above energy policy that includes natural gas, coal, nuclear and renewables, among others. State government should not incentivize one form over another to allow the most competitive, efficient energy producer to rise to the top and create a competitive, low-cost marketplace for consumers.

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?

ESG criteria has no bearing on my policy decisions in the legislature. I stand firmly behind Treasurer Moore in his efforts to fight back against ESG policies. They are nothing more than a way for progressive board members in liberal clusters of America to attempt to force their worldview on the rest of the country that, in many cases, strongly disagrees with them.

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?

Following the passage of Amendment One, the top priority for me will be eliminating the business inventory, machinery and equipment tax. It is a massive hinderance to the growth of our current businesses and the immigration of new ones because of the massive tax burdens it places on employers both large and small.

Q19

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

Yes, either.

Q20

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

Personal FB: <https://www.facebook.com/jarredacannon>

Campaign FB: <https://www.facebook.com/CannonForWV/>

Campaign Website: www.cannonwv.com
