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**COMPLETE**

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Page 1

**Q1**

Identity-Please fill out the indicated fields.

**Candidate Name:** Ronald (Ron) Watson  
**Office Seeking:** House of Delegates  
**Party Affiliation:** Conservatives' Democrat  
**District:** 69

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**Q2**

Contact Info-Please fill out the indicated fields.

**Address:** PO Box 599  
**Address 2:** NA  
**City/Town:** Lost Creek  
**State/Province:** WV  
**ZIP/Postal Code:** 26385  
**Country:** US  
**Email Address:** ronwatsonwv@gmail.com  
**Phone Number:** (304) 669-0094

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**Q3**

Education &amp; Experience-Please fill out the indicated fields.

**High School Attended (Ex: School name, city, & state):** Lost Creek, Lost Creek, WV 26385  
**Colleges Attended & Degrees Obtained (Ex: Marshall, MBA):** UNF - MPA; FSU - BA Education  
**Current Employer & Job Position (Ex: WVMA, Director of Operations):** Retired - Over 40 years of government experience  
**Describe your current job & responsibilities:** The last 18 years as a County Commissioner  
**How long have you worked for your current employer?:** NA

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**Q4**

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

It should be a "hand and glove" relationship. The main goal of businesses is to make a profit and governments' goal is to ensure economic stability and growth

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**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?

Over 40 years of government experience. The ability to listen and use the expertise of the professionals. My record as a 18 year County Commission depicts the many areas in which I was directly involved in affecting positive results for the North Central areas of WV.

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**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.

Fraternal Order of Police; Blue Knights; Lost Creek Lions Club; Lost Creek Senior Citizens; Knights of Columbus; Elks; Lost Creek High School Alumni Association; Lost Creek Community Festival, Inc.;

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**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?

Work Force Development; Economic Stagnation; Flight of our Youth; Educational Disparities; Drugs and Crime Matters; etc. My plan would be to hear from the experts and their recommendations on how to address these areas of concern.

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**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.

I am open to hear the good, bad and ugly of this subject. My first reaction is yes I would support Amendment One if it could be accomplished without adding additional taxes on the individual to make up for any short fall in government budgets.

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**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?

First of all we need to make sure that we have the work force to accommodate any companies that we pursue. The educational systems will need to be a partner in this endeavor.

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**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?

Absolute stopping this crisis will never happen in my opinion....but we need to find ways in which to slow down the problem. Again we need to start on "ground level", that is, our Elementary Schools and provide the families of these students with the tools they need in order to reinforce the teaching. There are certainly other ways to slow down problem. It's like when you have a headache...you take a headache pill. Some areas might be to create community coalitions to work together; developing safe drug disposals; establish drug diversion task force; drug courts; etc.

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**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?

These are all very sensitive areas of concern. One has to be careful as to not violate one's constitutional rights. A skilled HR individual would be able to facilitate the work force. Also a review of how other states have addressed these issues.

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**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.

Research has indicated where the shortfall needs are regarding work force skills gaps. Again we need to partner with the educational institutions in developing the courses to educate individuals in these areas.

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**Q13**

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

Let's ask the experts. One article that I have reviewed gave 7 ways to improve outcomes but I would like to add one more and truly number 1.....that is, increase salaries for "classroom" teachers to be competitive with surrounding states. Some other recommendations include investing in training teachers; don't focus on punishing bad teachers...learn how to make good ones instead; modernize the teacher's job; let kids learn at their own pace; get families involved early; address the issue of poverty, etc.

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**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)?

On a personal note...a few years ago I was courting a company to locate their potential company at our airport that had the possibility of bringing 300 new jobs with them. As I was promoting this I quickly learned that we did not have the work force to accommodate this company. To answer this question, I would need to rely on the experts to advise me what action I should take in this matter.

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**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?

I agree with Governor Justice comment that "the DEP needs to have a change of attitude, one that no longer emphasizes NO when it comes to dealing with new and existing businesses in the state". I believe that the state's regulating agencies should do all they can to assist business without ignoring or eliminating the safeguards that are in place to protect our environment and our residences.

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**Q16**

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

Investing in renewable energy is a viable solution to diversifying and strengthening WV economy. I think that the switch to renewable energy would be cost-effective and can be done in a way that creates thousands of jobs....and may even save consumers money.... At least it should be on the table.

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**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?

I would be open to what the experts bring to the table and would rely on staff to provide the research in order to make the best informed decision.

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**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?

I would think property tax cuts would be high on my list. It would be a tough sell since it would have an impact on local governments and school systems....but I would continue to work for some kind of relief for manufacturers.

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**Q19**

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

Yes Either Or

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**Q20**

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

Although I do have a Facebook page I am not very good with its management. Ron Watson House

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