

House District 11 is a hook-shaped urban district east of U.S. Highway 85 that encompasses neighborhoods east of downtown Cheyenne, neighborhoods south of

Lincolnway and east of Holliday Park and areas between Jefferson Road and Allison Road.

It includes Cheyenne Regional Medical Center,

Holliday Park, all of Nationway and some of the Fox Farm Road corridor and the seat is currently held by Rep. Mary Throne, D-Cheyenne.

Election 2016 Q&A

House District 11



JARED OLSEN (R)



MARY THRONE (D-INCUMBENT)

Q: What do you think are the biggest issues Wyoming faces?

Our economy, jobs, the state budget and funding education. We must diversify and grow our economy to grow our tax base. This is how we get our people back to work. At the same time, we must cut waste and reward agencies who underspend. Education is a top priority.

Wyoming, once and for all, needs to seize control of its own destiny in order to survive the downturn in the energy markets. We need a long-term plan for restructuring our economy to take advantage of new opportunities in tech, tourism, agriculture and other sectors, and at the same time maintain support for our energy base.

Q: Do you support or oppose Medicaid expansion? Why?

We must address health care in the state. However, I have serious concerns about expanding a program that will not likely be funded in the future. Wyoming needs to know whether the federal government is going to fund moving forward and the true cost to the states who have expanded Medicaid.

Medicaid expansion is a good choice for Wyoming, and there is no evidence to suggest otherwise. It would bring millions of taxpayer dollars back to Wyoming to support our hospitals, our physicians and approximately 20,000 hard-working Wyoming citizens who cannot afford health insurance.

Q: Do you support the development of alternative energy in Wyoming? How?

Yes. We must work to develop all forms of energy. Diversification will give Wyoming a robust and viable economy. Wyoming's tax climate must create an environment great for business. We also need to follow this same approach for existing energy industries and Wyoming families that depend on those jobs.

Yes. I support all types of energy development in Wyoming, including expanded use of our traditional mineral base. All energy development, alternative or otherwise, must be done in a sustainable manner to protect our air, water and land quality and the wide-open spaces we love.

Q: How should Wyoming compensate for lost revenue from the fossil fuel industry?

We must grow our tax base instead of increasing taxes on our people. To attract new businesses and opportunities to Wyoming, we must keep taxes low, whether we are talking about taxes on people or industries. Better jobs and fairer taxes will provide our families a bright fiscal future.

Wyoming is not broke, but we have mismanaged our money. We need to maximize the revenue from investments to help stabilize our cash flow and replace some of the lost mineral revenue, have an open debate about how to use the rainy-day fund and review government spending to identify priorities.

Q: How do you think the state should respond to major infrastructure issues, such as roads and building maintenance?

Of course we need to maintain our roads and state buildings. But we must prioritize people over projects. In a time when budget cuts are necessary, we must fight to protect public employees. I will not support major construction projects while cutting state jobs and necessary public services.

If we fail to maintain basic infrastructure, we will not be able to attract new business to Wyoming. Deferred maintenance only costs Wyoming more in the long run. Communities also need support for basic services.

Q: Why should voters select you over your opponent?

If my opponent had been successful in years past, Wyoming would not have a rainy-day fund to carry us through this difficult time. She openly criticized legislative leaders for having the foresight to put some money into savings. I shudder to think where we would be under her guidance.

The Wyoming Legislature functions best when its members set aside partisanship and work together. I have a track record of doing just this. My opponent says he is a fresh face. As chairman of the Laramie County Republican Party, he, instead, is more of the same.

Q: Do you support or oppose a ban on discrimination in housing and employment for LGBT Wyomingites? Why?

I support legislation addressing all forms of discrimination and rights.

Yes. No one should lose their home or job because of who they are.

Q: What are your opinions about marijuana legalization, whether for medical or recreational use?

I am open to a conversation on marijuana legalization. We are gaining more knowledge about the serious questions surrounding legalization.

I am willing to consider well-regulated medical marijuana use, but do not believe Wyoming is ready to legalize recreational use.

Q: Do you think marijuana possession should be decriminalized for small amounts?

I'm open to discussion. We can learn from other states.

Yes. The justice system should focus on more serious matters.

Q: Describe your political views.

All of my decisions as your representative will be guided by what is best for Wyoming and our families.

I evaluate policy choices solely based on whether they are good for Wyoming, not based on any political ideology.