

House District 44 primarily covers the downtown Cheyenne area, south of Pershing Boulevard and north of Interstate 80.

Election 2018 **Q&A**
House District 44



Q: Why are you running for this office?

I am passionate about Cheyenne in particular and Wyoming in general. I want our state to reflect the best of our values: fair, responsible and deeply independent.

I am running for the state Legislature to make Wyoming a better place for my children and patients. I grew up in Wyoming and returned after medical training to care for my neighbors and raise a family. I am called into public service to further give back to my community and state.

Q: What distinguishes you from your opponents?

My track record of working with the Legislature for the past 20 years as an engaged citizen and the last two years as the director of Wyoming Equality. I have experience creating bipartisan solutions and bringing people to the table. My history as a faith organizer has given me unique skills in creating dialogue that leads to policy.

I am a physician, small businessman and father of two school-aged daughters. I have the education, experience and skill set best suited to address our state's present challenges in health care, our economy and education. We need a representative who has relevant background and experience, listens, builds consensus to meet goals and holds himself accountable to voters.

Q: What do you think is the most important issue in this race?

The most important issue in this race is Wyoming's economy, hands down.

I think the most important issue facing Wyoming is our budget. It's unsustainable for Wyoming to continue to run through our savings. Many other issues facing our state are directly related to the state's fiscal constraints, including, but not limited to, education, health care and infrastructure.

Q: How would you address state education funding challenges?

Luckily, our founders left us very clear guidelines in the Wyoming Constitution: All Wyoming schoolchildren deserve equity. My two sons receive a top-notch education in our public schools.

Unfortunately, education costs are necessarily high in rural states like Wyoming. Nonetheless, we should always look for further efficiency. LCSD1 suffered disproportionate cuts in the recent budget. This is difficult in our growing school district. I will work to keep dollars with our teachers and children in the classroom and to develop a sustainable funding model.

Q: Is economic diversification a priority for you? If so, how would you go about helping to diversify the state's economy?

I was proud to help Array School of Technology and Design bring the Tech Jobs Tour to Cheyenne, where over 25 tech businesses were on display, as well as over 400 available jobs. Diversification is one large piece of the puzzle, but it won't solve our economic woes alone. We have to get pragmatic about our tax structure to safeguard our economic future.

Yes. Growing up in Wyoming, I experienced the booms and busts of our economy. First, I think we need to further develop our economic strengths, which pay our bills. Second, we need to facilitate growth of new industries like manufacturing and technology. Our own Cheyenne LEADS attracting data centers to the community is an excellent example.

Q: How important is commercial air service to Wyoming communities? If it's important, how would you make it happen? If not, why not?

Subsidizing commercial air service makes good economic sense.

Air service is vital to Wyoming, particularly in rural areas. Business and tourism rely on it. For every \$1 we spend on air service, we realize \$23 in return. It supports 12,000 jobs and has an impact of \$1 billion. We should continue to adequately fund the CASP and ASEP.

Q: How do you plan to address challenges related to providing health care to all Wyoming residents?

I am in agreement with our Republican governor: We need Medicaid expansion. And we needed it yesterday.

We need to make health care more accessible by recruiting and retaining providers, increasing the use of telemedicine and revisiting Medicaid expansion with a waiver. We can make health care less expensive by attracting additional insurance providers to create competition in the marketplace, exploring regional insurance across state lines and supporting the 1332 waiver currently being evaluated by the Legislature.

Q: How would you promote transparency, if elected?

I support recording at all meetings and updates like the majority of Western states. A transparent government is the foundation of a healthy democracy – it maintains integrity, encourages participation and builds trust. Whether in a City Council meeting or at the state Legislature, this vision is dependent upon people having the information, tools and resources they need to be a part of an informed and engaged public. We strive to create a Wyoming where the people are not beholden to their government, but where the government is beholden to the people.

It is essential in a democracy that the work of elected officials is transparent so we are held accountable to our voters. One area we are in desperate need of transparency is our Byzantine state budget. This needs to be simplified.