House District 8 primarily covers the area north of Pershing Boulevard on the west side of Cheyenne near Interstate 25.



House District 8



MITCH GUTHRIE (D)



Q: Why are you running for this office?

care, revenue, education and social issues. I feel like I agree with most people on most issues in my district. I am open to change, and I am

NICHOLAS (R), INCUMBENT Serving my neighbors in House District 8 has been a true gift and a great honor. With the approval of my constituents, I would like to

continue and build on the work from the last session.

Q: What distinguishes you from your opponent?

more than just a "no" vote on health-care expansion, revenue diversification, education commitment and labor. I am thankful for what a severance tax has done for Wyoming, and I feel we are at a crossroads.

I am running for office to be a voice

of reason on issues such as health

Serving in leadership and chairing the Joint Appropriations Committee provides Cheyenne and Laramie County with a strong voice in the Legislature.

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

costs of providing a high quality education starting in pre-K through post-high school and health care.

State revenue and the associated

the Legislature will confront over the next two years, including: education funding, budget simplification and matching expenditures with revenues; economic diversification, savings growth and health-care funding. All of these issues are interwoven. Having limited resources necessitates tough decisions and balancing all the interests.

Economic diversification has

There are a lot of important issues

for you? If so, how would you go about helping to diversify the state's economy?

Q: Is economic diversification a priority

Yes, I believe we must move in a socially progressive manner that is inclusive of everyone in order to attract new and exciting businesses. Education is the cornerstone of almost every successful community, expanding the educational opportunities throughout the state. A focus on responsible natural resource development and management, and Wyoming's leadership in wildlife management is a path to the future.

been a priority for the state in one fashion or another since inception. Economic diversification comes in many forms. For example, funding education, highways and infrastructure projects are essential building blocks for diversification. Last year, in partnership with the governor's office, legislative leadership advocated for and helped launch ENDOW - a longterm commitment and investment to further support diversification. Additional affirmative action will be required this year to move forward with ENDOW's mission.

Our education funding formula is

education funding challenges?

Q: How do you plan to address

ciate the burden that additional taxation represents. Had the state acted sooner on severance taxation and acted more responsibly with the money when it was flowing, we might not even be having this conversation. However, that opportunity has passed. With meaningful efforts taken now, we can avoid a lot of pain down the road.

I am not a "no" on ideas surround-

business owner, and I fully appre-

ing state funding ideas. I am a

disproportionally dependent on mineral extraction revenues. The drop in production and price of coal impacted education funding more than any other state program. The next Legislature will likely consider alternative funding formulas. Altering the formula will necessarily have a ripple effect on other constitutionally and federally directed state programs and services. We have worked on several alternative approaches over the interim. Developing and shepherding through new legislation will be challenging. Last year, the Legislature over-

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

I'm not sold on the importance of regional air service with the issues facing the state right now. On the other hand, I lived in Sheridan for several years and lived with intermittent flights.

whelmingly recommended that an additional \$15M be set aside, over the next 10 years, to assist in providing commercial air services to Wyoming communities. This allows us to enter a long-term contract with a carrier service that better leverages our dollars to obtain more reliable and less expensive air services.

Q: How would you plan to address challenges related to providing health care to all Wyoming residents? I am a "yes" on health-care expansion. The department of health has been way too much of a target in budget cuts. I am open to solutions that look beyond insurance.

Wyoming has the second most expensive health care in the U.S. We love our wide open spaces and small, family-oriented communities, but our location and population has it costs. Tackling provider costs, insurance, senior care and federally mandated health-care coverage requires a multi-faceted approach. Long-term forecasts suggest costs will continue to increase. Every year, the Legislature evaluates new ways to maintain quality services and soften the impact of rising health-care costs.

Q: How would you promote transparency, if elected? I believe in a free press as the best. way to shine a light on what your government is doing. I would support legislation that prohibited excessive costs associated with Freedom of Information requests. I would require open meetings. I would support easier access to elected officials' voting records. I support the use of body cameras on officers during citizen encounters.

Transparency is the buzz word of the decade. The Legislature has been, and continues to be, very transparent. All of our work is conducted in public meetings that are recorded and available. Many of the important committee meetings and all legislative debates are broadcast live and preserved. Draft and pending legislation is available on the legislative website. We continually improve the public meeting and public records laws to ensure government transparency, accountability and accessibility.