

House District 41

is in north-central Cheyenne, running from Yellowstone Road in the west to Whitney Road in the east. It generally extends from the Dell Range Boulevard area south

to Pershing Boulevard and then Lincolnway east of Converse Avenue. The seat is currently held by Rep. Ken Esquibel, D-Cheyenne, who is running for the Senate District 4 seat.

Neither Clarence Styvar nor Lars Lone, both Republican candidates for **House District 12**, responded to the Wyoming Tribune Eagle's candidate survey. House District 12 is a roughly rectangular

district in the southwest corner of Laramie County that includes all areas south of Interstate 80 and west of U.S. Highway 85, except for a small section along U.S. 85 in south Cheyenne. The seat

is currently held by Rep. Harlan Edmonds, R-Cheyenne, who is not running for re-election. The winner of the Republican primary will face Democrat Lee Filer in the November general

Election

2016

Q&A

House District 41



PATRICK FITZGERALD (R)



BILL HENDERSON (R)



AMY SIMPSON (D)



RICH WIEDERSPAHM (D)

Q: What do you think are the biggest issues Wyoming faces?	Wyoming is facing many challenges like unsustainable health-care cost, declining revenue and changing economy. We should use this time recalibrate, be forward thinking and develop new solutions to ensure Wyoming comes out of the downturn efficient, leaner and stronger without deviating from our Western values.	We have a state budget crisis. People concerned about their jobs, income, families and children (especially health care and education). Less state money available to cities and towns. Federal intrusiveness and overreach (EPA, etc.) on coal leases. Lower natural gas price, lower demand for coal, combined with unwarranted EPA regulations.	a. Medicaid Expansion: Making sure all citizens have access to affordable health care; b. Diversifying the Wyoming economy: Taking advantage of our opportunity to be a leader in renewable energy; c. Fully funding public education: Making sure we are following the Constitution, which mandates full funding.	How to maintain state services and operate state government are some of the biggest issues facing Wyoming. How do we grow our economy as we react to the reduction in natural gas, coal and oil, and under what circumstances can the Legislature access the rainy day fund?
Q: Do you support or oppose Medicaid expansion? Why?	Legislative approval should be based on support of Wyomingites and after study of other states' expansions. If expanded, it must be wanted, fiscally responsible, encourage self-reliance and discourage abuse. As a nurse practitioner I can see the benefits for the state's budget and Wyoming's impoverished – we must tackle these issues.	Support state Medicaid program that's well run and cost-effectively administered. I'm looking forward to discussion on solutions that assist people who need help. Issue is access to affordable health care. Having insurance does not guarantee access to health care. Met with key decision makers – we need a solution – let's look at SHARE.	I wholeheartedly support Medicaid expansion. Wyoming is missing out on millions of federal dollars to assist indigent citizens and is reducing funding for other vital health-care services to compensate. Expanding Medicaid will allow us to provide needed services including preventative health care, which ultimately brings down long-term costs.	I support Medicaid expansion because it will assist the approximately 20,000 Wyoming residents that are without health-care coverage. Additionally, it will infuse approximately \$268 million in federal money to the state's economy. Given the state's current financial circumstance, we cannot afford to pass on this opportunity.
Q: Do you support the development of alternative energy in Wyoming? How?	Yes, there's room for all types of energy development in Wyoming. We must maintain our business-friendly environment and ensure regulatory processes are streamlined and reliable. As with any development, we need to take into consideration wildlife and the natural landscape. Additionally, the tax structure for alternatives should be assessed.	Yes (wind, solar, gasification). Consolidate state and private sector business growth synergies (WBC, UW Entrepreneurship) and promote more collaborative low impact-high tech opportunities in economic development (LEADS-like regional groups). Improve lines of communication and dialogue. Support progress on community needs identified (TOUR23). Promote support not replacing our natural energy resources.	I believe that we have a unique opportunity to diversify our revenue stream by exploring and developing alternative energy sources. We should incentivize wind energy instead of disincentivizing it through more taxes, and we should invest in developing solar energy as well as other sources.	As we continue to draw on our current energy reserves, we must aggressively pursue alternative energy development in the state. We must look to clean energy development such as wind and tech companies. The state should explore incentives in order to attract companies that can provide alternative energy options.
Q: How should Wyoming compensate for lost revenue from the fossil fuel industry?	Wyoming should recalibrate as leaner, efficient and forward thinking, accomplished through increased effort in diversification of economy, education and workforce. Spending should reflect budget realities accomplished through efficiencies, department-led strategic cuts based on priorities, reallocation of one-third of funds going into PWMTF, and conservative usage of the reserve fund.	Diversify state revenue sources. Reduce cost of government (consolidate, eliminate duplication, reduce transportation/travel and number planes/vehicles). Leverage technology. Resolve issues with broadband connectivity. Develop new coal uses as feedstock (activated carbon). Eliminate costly, unnecessary state regulations, over-auditing and impediments to growing businesses. Export kilowatts, coal, oil, gas, etc.	We should invest in coal conversion and sequestration technologies while seizing the opportunity to be a leader in renewable energy. We should double down on our recreation and tourism assets and invest in creating the kind of business climate and communities that will attract the Gen Y and millennial generations.	The legislature set aside millions of dollars in a rainy day fund for circumstances such as this. While this is not a long-term solution, it can provide some immediate relief. We should make every effort to reduce expenses where we can and look for opportunities to grow our economy.
Q: How do you think the state should respond to major infrastructure issues, such as roads and building maintenance?	Investment in infrastructure is vital. During times of increased revenue, additional work on rebuilding infrastructure should be performed. During times of falling revenue, increased priority should be set for maintaining our investments and rebuild based on current need.	Stop wasting money. Procedures to assure state funds expended for specific purpose. \$279 million distributed by WYDOT to cities/towns for road maintenance and repair – only \$70 million used for roads. Use more accurate metric for budget planning. Extend budget-planning horizon. Increase portion fourth penny allocated to cities/towns.	Wyoming can't recover without the infrastructure to support economic development. In times of economic crisis, instead of spending millions on new buildings, we should maintain the buildings and infrastructure we have. We should find ways to fund this crucial need now instead of kicking the can down the road.	Our state infrastructure is in desperate need of maintenance and repair. Projects should be placed on a maintenance schedule with the most critical issues given priority. Funding should come from reserves. We will not be able to solve all of the issues immediately; over time they can be addressed.
Q: Why should voters select you over your opponents?	I'm running for office because I believe our community deserves a representative that listens to the community first and then takes action. As a nurse practitioner, I know how to listen, diagnose and find solutions. I do it every day, and it's experience I can use to serve the community.	Proven leadership, business, education, CFO, fiscal management experience. Active community involvement. Positive advocate working to ensure people's voices heard, represented and concerns resolved in interests of community. I listen and value their input so our community is where people choose to live. My record shows preparation, commitment and results.	I have extensive experience developing and maintaining large budgets and working with constituents to achieve their goals. I am a respected, determined and energetic leader whose reputation for sincerity and hard work has allowed me to be elected to prominent state and national positions on behalf of public education.	I have had the opportunity to work in senior management positions in education as well as local government. I have been required to make difficult decisions and work with diverse groups of individuals. Legislators are required to make difficult decisions, and I believe that I am up to the task.
Q: Do you support or oppose a ban on discrimination in housing and employment for LGBT Wyomingites? Why?	I oppose discrimination, but protection of religious freedom is important.	Oppose discrimination of any kind. Covered under applicable federal law.	Support. Discrimination is wrong and is not a Wyoming value.	Support the ban, because discrimination in any form is wrong.
Q: What are your opinions about marijuana legalization, whether for medical or recreational use?	As a nurse practitioner, I support continual research of marijuana's utility in disease management. Research-based facts must guide policy.	Open mind and learning more about potential medicinal use. Governor's panel concluded (nothing good) can come from use.	We should proceed with caution and analyze Colorado's legalization experiment as the "jury" comes in. Medical legalization should precede recreational.	I can support the legalization of medical marijuana, if regulated. I do not support legalizing marijuana for recreational use.
Q: Do you think marijuana possession should be decriminalized for small amounts?	No, there's still federal law against the use and possession.	Punishment must be reasonable and appropriate for the offense.	Yes. Excessively harsh penalties are counter-productive.	No arrest, prison time or criminal record. Fine is appropriate.
Q: Describe your political views.	A representative's vote should be a direct reflection of the community's values, interest and concerns. Government works for the people.	Republican; Navy veteran; pro-jobs, education, children, seniors, veterans; defend Constitution, freedoms, values. Limited government. Fiscal conservative. Respect all human rights.	I believe in examining issues from all sides and using the art of compromise when necessary to advance Wyoming's interests.	I see myself as moderate in my political views. I do not see myself as a liberal or a conservative.