



QUESTIONNAIRE & RESPONSES

FIRST NAME: LAST NAME:
SEEKING TO BE ELECTED TO:

GENERAL QUESTIONS

- 1. While in office, what will be your top priorities?**
 - Preserve a Woman's Right to Choose
 - Resolve the insurance crisis - Work to expand SB7028, the 'My Safe Florida Home' bill, to be larger and an annual initiative until the private insurance market stabilizes. This is also a great tool for FL homeowners to reduce their annual premiums.
 - Preserve green spaces & the environment - The most expensive words in business are 'This is how we have always done it'. We need to address the negative effects of concrete and asphalt, runoff and heat-island, with permeable surfaces to reduce those effects.
 - Drive investment Initiatives to Volusia County - District 29 is solely in Volusia Co. A recent report listed Volusia County as one of the lowest-average household incomes in Florida. We need to drive investment to our county.
- 2. What influenced you to run for office?** As a nurse practitioner with 25 years of experience, I have dedicated my career to caring for people, advocating for their health, and ensuring that everyone receives the quality care they deserve. My decision to run for office stems from my deep commitment to service and my profound concern for the direction in which our community and nation are headed.
- 3. Who do you look to for advice and consult when making decisions that will affect the public?** When making decisions that will affect the public, I seek advice and consult from a diverse range of sources to ensure well-rounded and informed decision-making. Here are the key groups and individuals I turn to; not in any particular order:
 - Subject Matter Experts
 - Factual Information: Data & Research
 - Community Leaders
 - Public Opinion
 - The People or Entity being affected
 - Personal Mentors

GOVERNMENT / BUSINESS REGULATIONS

- 1. What are your thoughts on government's involvement with regulations for businesses?** Government involvement in business regulations is a complex and multifaceted issue, balancing the need to protect public interests with fostering a conducive environment for economic growth. Here are some of my thoughts on the matter:
 - Positive Aspects of Government Regulations**
 - Consumer Protection:**
 - Safety and Quality Standards:** Regulations ensure that products and services meet safety and quality standards, protecting consumers from harm. For instance, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulates food and pharmaceuticals to prevent dangerous products from reaching the market.
 - Truth in Advertising:** Agencies like the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) enforce laws against misleading advertising, ensuring that consumers receive accurate information.
 - Environmental Protection:**
 - Sustainability Measures:** Regulations help mitigate environmental damage by setting limits on pollution and encouraging sustainable practices. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) enforces regulations that protect air and water quality, reducing public health risks and preserving natural resources.
 - Fair Labor Practices:**
 - Worker Rights:** Labor laws ensure fair wages, safe working conditions, and reasonable working hours. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) sets and enforces standards to prevent workplace injuries and illnesses.
 - Discrimination Laws:** Regulations such as the Civil Rights Act prohibit workplace discrimination based on race, gender, religion, or other protected characteristics, promoting equal opportunities.
 - Challenges and Criticisms of Government Regulations**
 - Economic Impact:**

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Cost of Compliance: Regulations can impose significant costs on businesses, especially small enterprises. Compliance with complex regulatory requirements can require substantial financial and administrative resources, potentially stifling innovation and competitiveness.

Regulatory Burden: Excessive regulation can create barriers to entry for new businesses, reducing market competition and consumer choice. This is often referred to as regulatory overreach.

Bureaucratic Inefficiency:

Slow Processes: Government regulatory processes can be slow and cumbersome, delaying business operations and innovation. For example, the lengthy process of obtaining permits and approvals can hinder project timelines.

Inflexibility: Regulatory frameworks can sometimes be inflexible, failing to keep pace with technological advancements and changing market conditions.

Balancing Regulation and Freedom

Smart Regulation:

Evidence-Based Policies: Effective regulations should be based on sound evidence and analysis, balancing the benefits of regulation with the costs. This approach ensures that policies are both effective and efficient.

Stakeholder Engagement: Involving businesses, consumers, and other stakeholders in the regulatory process can lead to more practical and widely accepted regulations.

Regulatory Reform:

Periodic Review: Regularly reviewing and updating regulations can help eliminate outdated or unnecessary rules, reducing the regulatory burden on businesses.

Deregulation Where Appropriate: In some cases, deregulation can stimulate economic activity without compromising public interests. For example, deregulating certain industries has been shown to enhance competition and innovation.

2. **Where do you see yourself on taxes and fees? What is your opinion on the current structure?** I believe in a tax system that is both fair and progressive, ensuring that the tax burden is distributed equitably. The tax code is overly complex, with numerous deductions, credits, and loopholes that can be exploited by those with the resources to do so. Simplifying the tax code could help ensure accountability and transparency.
3. **Do you believe businesses play a pivotal role in our community?** Yes, businesses play a pivotal role in our community for several reasons, impacting economic development, social well-being, and community resilience. Businesses, especially small and locally-owned ones, contribute to the cultural fabric of a community. They offer unique goods and services that reflect the local culture and identity, helping to create a vibrant and diverse community atmosphere. Businesses often provide training and development opportunities for local residents, enhancing their skills and employability. This investment in human capital is essential for the long-term prosperity of our community.
4. **What role do you see for yourself in helping to grow businesses of all sizes in your position?** As Representative, I see my role in helping to grow businesses of all sizes as multifaceted. My focus would be on creating a conducive environment for business growth through legislative support, advocacy, and fostering a collaborative ecosystem. My approach would include, but not limited to:
 - Identifying sectors where deregulation can spur growth without compromising safety and consumer protection. This can include simplifying permit processes and reducing compliance costs.
 - Advocating for tax incentives and credits for small businesses to reduce their operational costs and encourage reinvestment. This includes simplifying the tax code to make it more accessible to smaller enterprises.
 - Advocating for state investment in infrastructure projects that enhance transportation networks and expand broadband access. Improved infrastructure is crucial for businesses to operate smoothly and reach wider markets.
5. **What are the most pressing issues in the office you are seeking as it relates to local businesses?**
Abortion. The current imitations on abortion
6. **What does growth mean to you as it relates to business?** Growth in business is a multifaceted concept that encompasses various dimensions beyond mere financial metrics. It is a holistic concept that includes financial performance, market expansion, customer satisfaction, workforce development, operational efficiency, and innovation. Growth is often paralleled with community development fostering economic prosperity, enhancing quality of life, and ensuring sustainable development. For businesses, growth involves increasing revenue, expanding markets, innovating products, and creating job opportunities, all of which contribute to a robust local

*Note: Candidates were given a maximum of 250 words per question.
Responses have been copied and pasted directly from Google Forms.*

FIRST NAME: Rosemarie

LAST NAME: Latham

SEEKING TO BE ELECTED TO: State House of Representatives - District 29

economy. Together, business and community growth create a thriving, resilient environment where economic success and social well-being are intertwined, leading to a higher quality of life for everyone involved.

7. **What have you done to enhance the business community in your area?** As a nurse practitioner, local resident, and employee, I've actively worked to enhance the business community in my area. I consistently shop locally, supporting small businesses and keeping revenue within our community. My advocacy for people's medical rights ensures that employees and business owners alike receive the healthcare support they need, fostering a healthier workforce and community. By living and working in the area, I bring a unique perspective and commitment to improving the overall quality of life in our community, bridging the gap between healthcare and business.
8. **What are your thoughts on tax structures for local businesses?** A straightforward tax structure is essential for local businesses, particularly small enterprises, as it reduces administrative burdens and compliance costs. Simplified tax codes make it easier for businesses to understand their obligations and file taxes accurately without needing extensive legal or accounting support. Create local tax incentives providing tax incentives for small businesses can stimulate local economic growth. These incentives can include tax credits for hiring local employees, investing in renewable energy, or improving infrastructure. Incentives encourage businesses to invest in the community, leading to job creation and economic stability. Offer tax breaks or deferred taxes for startups in their initial years can help them establish themselves without the immediate pressure of high tax liabilities. This support is crucial for fostering innovation and entrepreneurship within the local economy

RESILIENCY AND THE ENVIRONMENT

1. **Given our geographical area, what do you believe are some best practices for resiliency, and how do you believe our businesses can play a role?** Given Volusia County's vulnerability to natural disasters such as hurricanes, flooding, and rising sea levels, it is crucial to implement best practices for resiliency. Here are some strategies, along with ways businesses can play a role:
 - Invest in advanced stormwater management systems, such as green infrastructure (rain gardens, permeable pavements) and improved drainage systems, to reduce flooding risks.
 - Encourage the construction and retrofitting of buildings to be elevated above potential flood levels.
 - Promote the adoption of renewable energy sources such as solar and wind to reduce dependence on the grid and enhance energy security. Businesses can install solar panels or wind turbines to generate their own power.
2. **Climate resiliency is becoming a heated topic of discussion as it relates to our community given the natural events that occurred over the past two years. If elected, how do you see your office assisting to alleviate and reduce some of the detrimental effects of such occurrences?** If elected, my office will prioritize climate resiliency through infrastructure improvements, community preparedness, environmental conservation, sustainable development, and policy advocacy. We'll invest in advanced stormwater management and elevate critical infrastructure to reduce flooding risks. Community education programs and regular emergency drills will ensure preparedness. Restoration of wetlands and coastal dunes will provide natural barriers. Promoting green building practices and renewable energy adoption will support sustainable growth. We'll secure state and federal funding for these initiatives and advocate for robust climate resilience policies. Engaging with experts and stakeholders will be crucial for effective implementation.

WORKFORCE HOUSING / LIVE LOCAL ACT / EMPLOYMENT

1. **There have been conversations about workforce housing in our area, and the need to keep those that are working in the community, living within the community. Where do you see the need? And what are your thoughts on the Live Local Act?** Workforce housing is an essential piece of the puzzle for affordability, proximity, and economic stability. Rising housing costs make it hard for essential workers to live in the community they serve. Affordable housing options close to workplaces reduce commute times, lower traffic congestion, and support local businesses. The Live Local Act addresses these needs by incentivizing affordable housing development, allocating funds for construction and maintenance, and promoting zoning reforms to increase housing supply (Florida Housing Coalition, Enterprise Community Partners).
2. **Workforce housing is only a part of the problem. How can we hire the best employees? How do we attract good applicants?** To attract high-paying jobs and stimulate local investment, it is crucial to invest in infrastructure. Upgrading transportation networks, such as roads, public education, public transit, and airports, facilitates smoother commutes and logistics, making the area more attractive to businesses and investment.

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Enhancing digital infrastructure, including widespread high-speed internet, supports the needs of tech companies and remote work, fostering innovation and productivity.

Investing in modern utilities and green infrastructure can also draw businesses committed to sustainability, reducing long-term operational costs and promoting environmental responsibility. Additionally, developing business parks and innovation hubs with state-of-the-art facilities can provide the resources and environment needed for high-tech industries and startups to thrive.

By creating a robust infrastructure, we not only improve the quality of life for residents but also make our community a desirable location for businesses seeking to invest and grow, ultimately leading to the development of high-paying jobs and economic growth.

* ** For State Candidates Only ***

PROPERTY INSURANCE (STATE CANDIDATES ONLY)

- 1. Name ways that you believe your office can assist with the cost of property insurance. As State Representative, I would advocate for legislation that would:**
 - Expand current Home Preparedness Initiatives, such as SB 7028 - 'My Safe Home Bill' - to be annual initiatives with greater funding until we can prove to private market insurers that Florida's insurance industry is a safe investment and our homes are safe!
 - Advocate and support legislation for increased transparency around the physical costs of damage and insurance. This will create accountability around pricing and provide Florida homeowners with the best market-options.
- 2. Do you believe current measures taken to lower insurance, such as, reducing frivolous lawsuits, will have a positive impact? If not, how so and how can it be fixed at the local level? Current measures aimed at lowering insurance costs, such as reducing frivolous lawsuits, are often implemented with the intent to decrease the burden of litigation on insurance companies, which theoretically should lower premiums for consumers. However, the effectiveness and fairness of these measures can be a subject of debate.**

Potential Impact of Reducing Frivolous Lawsuits

Positive Impacts:

Lower Litigation Costs: By curbing frivolous lawsuits, insurance companies may save on legal fees and settlements, potentially passing these savings onto policyholders through lower premiums.

Improved Business Climate: Reducing unnecessary litigation can create a more stable and predictable business environment, which can attract more insurers to the market, increasing competition and possibly lowering costs.

Negative Impacts:

Access to Justice: Measures to reduce frivolous lawsuits can sometimes be overly broad, making it harder for legitimate claims to be heard. This can disadvantage consumers who have valid grievances.

Deterrent Effect: Lawsuits, even those perceived as frivolous, can act as a deterrent against corporate negligence. Reducing the ability to sue might reduce this deterrent effect, potentially leading to lower standards in service and safety.

Improvements at the Local Level

Balanced Tort Reform:

Narrowly Targeted Legislation: Ensure that laws aimed at reducing frivolous lawsuits are carefully crafted to target only truly meritless cases without impeding access to the courts for legitimate claims. This can be achieved through clear definitions and criteria for what constitutes a frivolous lawsuit.

Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR): Encourage the use of ADR mechanisms such as mediation and arbitration to resolve disputes more efficiently and cost-effectively. These methods can reduce the burden on the court system and lower costs for all parties involved.