



QUESTIONNAIRE & RESPONSES

FIRST NAME: LAST NAME:

SEEKING TO BE ELECTED TO:

GENERAL QUESTIONS

- 1. While in office, what will be your top priorities?** One of my top priorities in office will be to continue to strengthen Florida's financial sector as I have done in the past through my work with the Office of Financial Regulation. I also will continue to fight for conservative principles and to advance conservative legislation through the House. Finally, I will continue to push for appropriations that will improve the cities within my district. While I have a number of other goals, these are my top priorities.
- 2. What influenced you to run for office?** There is a great Ronald Reagan quote that goes "We are only one generation away from losing our freedom." I think about this quote often and I think it sums up my desire to run for office well.
I came to this country as an immigrant, waited my turn and became naturalized, and I have loved every second of being an American. I realized that if I love this country so much, I cannot allow it to be ruined by someone who doesn't understand how awesome it is to live in this country. I know every day in Tallahassee I get to fight to preserve our freedoms and it motivates me to fight hard every single day.
- 3. Who do you look to for advice and consult when making decisions that will affect the public?** I look to people who have mentored me for advice. One person that comes to mind is Speaker Designate Sam Garrison. When there is a tough vote or something controversial goes to the floor, I can rely on Rep. Garrison to have a clear and level-head to offer advice. I also like to speak with my staff to get their perspective. I believe I have the smartest staff in the Florida House and I often seek their advice on complex issues.
I also tend to consult with many experts in the fields. Whether it be engineers or doctors, I believe talking with those most affected by the law is paramount to molding good legislation. Finally, I pray and consult God on many decisions. We pass laws that affect the entire state and many people's lives; being a Christian man I would be remiss if I did not seek guidance from my Lord and Savior when passing legislation.

GOVERNMENT / BUSINESS REGULATIONS

- 1. What are your thoughts on government's involvement with regulations for businesses?** The government should play as small of a role as possible when regulating businesses. It is the duty of government to protect its people, so there must be some regulations to ensure that workers and consumers are not being taken advantage of. However, this country was built of free-market enterprise and capitalistic principles. Allowing businesses to operate without being under the thumb of government incentivizes progress and innovation. We as the government must recognize where our leash ends and remember that laissez-faire principles built this country and will keep it afloat.
- 2. Where do you see yourself on taxes and fees? What is your opinion on the current structure?** I, like most people, want there to be as little tax as possible. Now as a government official I understand that taxes are pivotal to government functions, but there are a number of ways we can continue to raise funds while lowering taxes. I believe Chair McClain has done an incredible job with our current tax structure. He, along with the rest of us on the Ways and Means committee, have worked tirelessly to provide Floridians with more tax holidays and less to pay in taxes. I am hopeful that the new Ways and Means chair will seek to continue to improve upon the foundation we have laid.
- 3. Do you believe businesses play a pivotal role in our community?** Of course businesses play a vital role in our communities. They are often cornerstones of communities that have stood on corners or along Main Streets for years. Businesses, especially local businesses, they can not only bring a community together, but they can mesh generations. Helping community businesses achieve success will in turn help the community achieve success.
- 4. What role do you see for yourself in helping to grow businesses of all sizes in your position?** I see myself in a role that can help these businesses grow by pushing and supporting legislation. It is my job as a legislator to ensure that the Mom and Pop Hotdog shop has just as much opportunity to succeed as McDonald's opening a new franchise. Part of my role is to help create a business friendly environment to encourage this competition and allow for new businesses to enter the market and challenge its norms.

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- 5. What are the most pressing issues in the office you are seeking as it relates to local businesses?** I think one of the most pressing issues is the business rent tax. Florida is the only of the 50 states that has a business rent tax (2.5%). While it may seem small, 2.5% is a lot for small businesses. I would like to see us in the Legislature continue to work on bringing this down to 0%. I also being access to funding is a major issue. Over the past 2 years I have helped rewrite our securities regulations in Florida to help fix this issue but I hope to continue working on it moving forward.
- 6. What does growth mean to you as it relates to business?** Growth means to bring in more customers or get your current customers to buy more of your services. It means to cast a wider net of influence in your community by reaching as many people as possible. A successful business will never stop growing and I think that is an important facet for business owners to remember.
- 7. What have you done to enhance the business community in your area?** I have worked closely with the Office of Financial Regulation to modernize Florida's securities statutes which has created a more welcoming business environment in the state. Gaining access to funds has been one of the only preventers keeping new business out of the State and I believe my work to fix this issue will bring a number of new businesses and opportunities to Florida. I plan to continue to work closely with OFR to continue to improve our business environment.
- 8. What are your thoughts on tax structures for local businesses?** I believe Chair McClain and the Ways and Means committee that I serve on has done a great job with the current tax structure for businesses. Our one big area of improvement will come from getting the businesses rent tax completely removed but taking it from 6% to 2.5% in 3 years, I think, has a been a great step in the right direction. Obviously there is always more we can do; but I think priority number one should be the removal of the business rent tax.

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?** I believe businesses would be best suited to follow guidelines put in place by the appropriate government agencies here in Florida. By adhering to these guidelines, businesses will prepare themselves for any situation and can help the State be prepared as well. No matter how good our best practices are, without businesses willing to follow them they are useless. So I suggest businesses work with the appropriate state agencies to get in a position of resiliency.
- 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?** In Tallahassee, we constantly look for ways to alleviate some of the suffering. One way the Legislature has attempted to address this and will continue to is through a number of appropriations. Projects like the sea wall or better flooding prevention areas have found funding through the Legislature and I believe continuing to do so will be paramount to avoiding severe damage. The House also had re-instated the Hurricane Resiliency committee which I believe will have a number of great initiatives to improve resiliency in our State.

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?** We absolutely have a need for attainable housing within working communities. The Live Local Act was one our attempts as a Legislature to help bring this attainable housing forward. I believe that through the glitch bills we ran this Session we have truly made the Live Local Act the model legislation for states looking to address attainable housing issues.
- 2. There is need throughout every industry. Construction, service, you name it and there is a need for employees. Creating attainable workforce housing in the community would be a huge step towards retaining many of our workers we are currently losing to other states.**
- 3. Workforce housing is only a part of the problem. How can we hire the best employees? How do we attract good applicants?** To some extent, workforce housing and attracting the best applicants go hand-in-hand. If you can't live somewhere nice and affordable close to your workplace, you probably won't work there for very long. So, creating attainable housing is huge.

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

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4. But we also must incentivize our citizens to work in the State. Good applicants expect pay that is paramount to experience and utility. Florida's businesses have consistently been in the lower third of paid wages. If we want to attract good applicants, it is also the onus of businesses to pay these good applicants fair rates- not just within the state but rates that compete with our neighbors. Hopefully as we continue to lower taxes on these businesses, capital will be freed up to recruit the best and brightest candidates.

*** 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.** My office can continue to support legislation aimed at fixing the property insurance crisis we are seeing here in Florida. I have supported the measures aimed at tackling this issue in the past and I will continue to support good ideas to bring property insurance down. I will also continue to work with my colleagues to find incentives to lower the cost of insurance.
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?** I absolutely believe the current measures will create a positive impact and I think we are already starting to see some of that. Insurance prices have been trending down for the first time in years. The thing about fixing these types of issues is that you generally don't see the positive results in the immediate. There were 1000s of lawsuits that still needed to be settled, laws had to go into effect, fiscal years had to reset. Now one year later we have started to see a positive turn, but this will continue to take time. We will continue to search for solutions in Tallahassee which will speed up the process, but over time the insurance market will continue to correct and return to equilibrium thanks to the solutions we have implemented.