

Local Election Guide

McLeod County

Four officials run unopposed

There are four McLeod County elected officials on the Nov. 4 ballot. The four current incumbents are running unopposed for four-year terms. They include

County Attorney Mike Junge, County Auditor Treasurer Cindy Schultz, Sheriff Scott Rehmann, and County Recorder Lynn Ette Schrupp.

Cindy Schultz — Auditor-Treas.

What compelled you to run for office?

I am running for re-election to continue my professional career of 32 years with McLeod County; 15 years as county auditor and four years as county auditor-treasurer.

Experience is important in a position like this and I work hard to serve the people of McLeod County. The Auditor-Treasurer's Office is part of the administrative branch of county government and interacts with county departments, county residents, the public, local governments, state and federal agencies, school districts, and special districts.

I feel taxpayers of McLeod County deserve to have honest and dedicated representation working for them.

Throughout my career I have enjoyed working for McLeod County and would like to continue to serve the people of McLeod County as their county auditor-treasurer.

What do you feel are the top three issues facing your department, and how would you like to see those issues addressed?

Budget, property taxes and infrastructure.

My office manages a \$48 million annual budget. I will safeguard county assets while maintaining a balance with revenues and expenditures to keep property taxes from ris-



Cindy Schultz

ing and to ensure the finances of McLeod County remain in good standing. I provide and maintain accurate information needed to conduct business for McLeod County, while keeping the County Board of Commissioners informed with budgeting concerns and issues. In these economic times, we must be fiscally responsible for the taxpayer dollars. I strive to look at new ways to make the county more efficient and effective while providing excellent public service to the McLeod County community professionally.

Please provide some biographical information about yourself.

I have been a resident of Glencoe for 46 years, married to my husband, Jim Ford, for 12 years. Together we have

six adult children, a son-in-law, two daughters-in-law and 10 grandchildren. I'm an active and certified member with the Minnesota Association of County Officers, secretary for the Stevens Seminary Foundation Board of Directors for more than 19 years, district chair for the Minnesota Association of County Auditors, Treasurers, & Finance Officers, named County Auditor of the year in 2000 and received 2011 Honor Roll award from Minnesota Association of County Officers for outstanding service and contribution to the association.

Any other comments?

I will remain informed on my duties and responsibilities that are imposed on the Office of the County Auditor-Treasurer while governed by statutes that are vast and complex. Integrity, honesty, enthusiasm, and commitment are qualities that the voters of McLeod County expect from an elected official, and I feel I have brought these qualities to the office of County Auditor-Treasurer.

It has been an honor to serve as your County Auditor and now as your County Auditor-Treasurer for the past 19 years. I ask for your support and your vote for the next four years.

Scott Rehmann — Sheriff

What compelled you to run for office?

It has been an honor and privilege to serve the people of McLeod County as your sheriff these past eight years. My desire and passion is to work with the people of McLeod County to make this a safe and secure community. My goal continues to be to form partnerships to reach our youth in order to help them make healthy decisions, providing constitutional law enforcement, and fiscal responsibility with the resources that have been entrusted to me to serve you.

What do you feel are the top three issues facing your department, and how would you like to see those issues addressed?

- As your sheriff, I will continue to work with our schools and other organizations to educate our youth in making positive, healthy decisions, to stand against negative peer pressure, and to utilize skills to resist drug and alcohol use.
- Currently, we are in the process of building an addition to our current jail and adding necessary security



Scott Rehmann

features to our courthouse. Once completed, the jail expansion will allow us to save an estimated \$150,000 annually by not having to house inmates in other facilities due to lack of space. The courthouse security upgrades will allow the people of McLeod County and its employees to conduct daily business in a safer environment.

- As your sheriff, I will continue to protect the constitutional rights of the people of McLeod County in how we enforce our statutes and

interact with our public. We, the sheriff's office, will continue to maintain high expectations for our actions and provide the most professional service possible.

Please provide some biographical information about yourself.

I was born and raised in Winsted, where I graduated from Holy Trinity High School. I have been married to Katie (Barton), for 22 years. We have four children: Josiah, 18, currently enrolled at University of Northwestern-St. Paul (law enforcement major); Isabel, 14; Elias, 13; and Alison, 10.

Education: Metropolitan State University, Law Enforcement (B.A.) Ridgewater College, Law Enforcement (A.A.) Minneapolis Community College, Chemical Dependency Counseling (A.A.)

I have been the sheriff of McLeod County since 2007.

Any other comments?
I would appreciate your vote of confidence on Nov. 4. Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns. Thank you.

Michael Junge — Attorney

What compelled you to run for office?

I enjoy criminal prosecution and public service.

What do you feel are the top three issues facing McLeod County, and how would you like to see those issues addressed?

- Drug prosecution, particularly methamphetamine use, has increased. We will pursue vigorous and prompt prosecution of drug offenses.
- Young parents addicted to drugs. We will seek chemical dependency treatment for

these people and, if treatment is unsuccessful, we will seek permanent placement for the children.

- I will continue to help the County Board in the building project for Solid Waste, Courthouse expansion, and Social Services renovation.

Please provide some biographical information about yourself.

I am 58 years of age, married, and live north of Hutchinson in Acoma Township.



Mike Junge

Lynn Ette Schrupp — Recorder

What compelled you to run for office?

My 29 years of experience in the McLeod County Recorder's Office have provided me with the knowledge of the historical infrastructure that has taken place over the years. The public relies on the recorder to provide the knowledge of where they might find certain or extraordinary information, how they can decipher that information, and why it was maintained a certain way. They also rely on the recorder to keep accurate records, protect those records, and keep these records up to date in the latest technology.

At a conference I once attended, a speaker said elected officials are not public servants but are public leaders. He said the voters expect us, as elected public officials, to be leaders who serve in the public's best interest. That gave me a whole new perspective of my job as an elected official. I take this position very seriously and would be honored to lead and serve the citizens of McLeod County for a fourth term as their county recorder.

What do you feel are the top three issues facing your department, and how would you like to see those issues addressed?

- In July 2012, our office began eRecording all document types. eRecording is a new way of recording where by documents are sent to us



Lynn Ette Schrupp

electronically through a secure software system. Our goal is to have more title companies, attorneys and banks participate in eRecording, as it gives a faster turnaround time for their customers and underwriters. Our office continues to find ways to educate clients at every opportunity and to help them become accustomed to a new recording system.

- Disaster Recovery is a continual concern of mine and my office has made great strides in integrating the digitized historical real estate records. We recently had the remainder of general documentation digitized by an outside company and will add these digitized documents into our integration project. It takes years to integrate historical data as each document has multiple phases that need to be implemented. As each step is completed, we will

move on to the next phase of the integration.

- The building that houses the Recorder's office has been evacuated for a day or two, due to outside flooding, two years in a row. This led me to start working on a Recorder's Office emergency operations plan. This plan will be set in place and tested by the end of the year. In the event of a future emergency whereby we cannot access our building, the Recorder's staff will report to a different location and continue most functions of our office including accepting documents for recording. Residents should listen to radio announcements and check the county website for directions.

Please provide some biographical information about yourself.

I am a lifelong resident of McLeod County and live in Glencoe Township with my husband Brian. I have been married to my husband for 30 years and have been blessed with two children, Chelsey and Nickolas.

I was honored to serve as president of the Minnesota County Recorder's Association in 2011 and 2012.

I donate to and participate in collections and fundraisers for charities such as Samaritan's Purse, Little Dresses for Africa, and glove and sock collections for the homeless. I also make Quilts of Honor for veterans.

City of Plato

Three run unopposed

There are two City Council seats and the mayor's position on the city of Plato ballot. Mayor Bob Becker is running unopposed, and did not respond to the questionnaire. Incumbent Council Mem-

ber VeeAnn Wood and newcomer Jake Nelson are the Council candidates. Council Member Julie Wischnack did not file for re-election.

Jake Nelson — Council

What compelled you to run for office?

I moved to Plato this past January and decided at that time that I wanted to get involved with my new community. What better way than to sit on the City Council? I'd get to meet the residents, find out what's going on, and hopefully be able to help keep the town a great place for everyone.

What do you feel are the top three issues facing the city of Plato, and how would you like to see those issues addressed?

The city of Plato has really impressed me. It appears to be a clean, safe and well-managed town. As I have only lived here since January, I honestly do not know what "issues" there are or what the



Jake Nelson

community goals are. I believe once on the City Council, I will learn more about this city and am excited about

being able to help achieve those goals.

Please provide some biographical information about yourself.

I was raised in Alexandria. After high school, I took the advice of many and decided to move about the country a bit before I had real commitments. I spent a short time with family in Iowa, lived three years in Tennessee working as a delivery driver and worked at a Texas airport for a year. Ultimately, I decided that Minnesota was for me and headed back north. Two years ago, I decided to go back to college and study accounting. I am excited about starting a new career,

Nelson

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VeeAnn Wood — Council

What compelled you to run for office?

I have been a member of the City Council for the past four years and would like to continue being on the Council. I have always had an opinion and decided it was time to step up and serve on the Council. I want to be a voice for the people of Plato and want them to feel they can come to me and I will voice their opinion.

What do you feel are the top three issues facing the city of Plato, and how would you like to see those issues addressed?

- The Community Hall needs to be replaced or made accessible for handicapped



VeeAnn Wood

individuals.

- Economic funds are available through the city of Plato for existing and new business. We need to make more businesses aware of these funds by contacting them and the Council is presently working on this.

- Other important items for the city are keeping the water and sewer bills affordable for residents. Continuing to keep Plato a safe and a good place to live. Promote building of new businesses and homes in Plato. We need to grow as a community both socially and economically.

Please provide some biographical information about yourself.

Wood

Turn to page 2C

City of New Auburn

6 run for 2 open council seats

Incumbent Mayor Doug Muesch has filed for re-election, and is running unchallenged. Six candidates have emerged for two seats on the City Council, including incumbent Sheri Lowden, as well as Craig Lowden, former mayor Roger

Becker, Corey Schwanke, Barb Schutte and Vicki Holtz. The other incumbent was Elizabeth Frahm, who resigned her seat this summer. Responding to The Chronicle's questionnaires were Sheri Lowden, Schutte and Holtz.

Barb Schutte — Council

What compelled you to run for office?

I have been attending Council meetings for the past year and have been watching the present Council table issues that need to be addressed. I believe being on the Council is more than attending meetings. You must adhere to ordinances and follow city policies. You must lead by example. I want ordinances followed and action taken to ensure residents are following them. We need to stick to the budget and have a good understanding on where the money is going and use the funds to the best interest of city growth.

What do you feel are the top three issues facing the city of New Auburn, and how would you like to see those issues addressed?

The newest issue is filling the city water and maintenance position. The city has never prepared itself for one of our employees to quit. There needs to be a back-up plan in place also for the city clerk. You have to plan, organize and have a plan ready



Barb Schutte

in case of emergency. This means training back-up manpower. A well-organized spreadsheet for all jobs/tasks will help in running the city smoother and within budget. Please provide some biographical information about yourself.

I was raised by Rogers, Minn. I moved to New Auburn in 1975 with my husband and our two children, John and Jackie. John lives in New Auburn and Jackie lives

in Hutchinson. I also have two grandchildren, Andrew and Crystal. Herman passed away in 2006. I worked full time at New Auburn Oil with my husband until 1985, when I started working for Toro as a quality supervisor. I enjoy volunteering for my church, Immanuel Lutheran in New Auburn; High Island Lake Conservation Club; New Auburn Lions; Sibley County Food Share; and New Auburn Historical Society.

Any other comments?

I feel I have the respect as a New Auburn resident and past experience as a person who can lead by example. I enjoy challenges and I am not happy until they are accomplished. I can work alone or as a team player. I enjoy getting involved in solving problems for myself or other people. I am a resident of the city of New Auburn for 39 years who has paid property taxes, road taxes, water and sewer, and I want the city to grow and continue to be proud of the small town of New Auburn.

Vickie Holtz — Council

What compelled you to run for office?

I am running for office because I want to be a part of the changes for the city. New Auburn is important to me and my family; I have lived in New Auburn for over 20 years (I am the fifth generation of Polzin family to live in the area). I want to continue to make this city a great place to live.

What do you feel are the top three issues facing the city of New Auburn, and how would you like to see those issues addressed?

Budget — like most small communities with smaller tax bases, our community struggles to balance the budget and meet the

needs of the community. Balance the budget and attract more business, and more people to the community.

- Water quality — providing quality water while meeting all local, state and federal regulation requirements, with the budget available. Working with agencies to continue to improve water quality and find monies to do so.

- Taxes — the city struggles with the small tax base to meet the needs of the city and as well as other departments within the city. New Auburn needs to attract more people and businesses to the city to help with the cost of maintaining the city.

Please provide some biographical information about yourself.

I have lived in New Auburn since 1992. I am married to Bill Holtz and we have three children, Michael, Nicholas and Catherine.

I am a volunteer fire fighter for the New Auburn Fire Department since 2007. I am the current president of the Gaylord Chamber of Commerce. I work at Oak Terrace Health Care in Gaylord as the director of nursing since 2009. I have held the president and vice president leadership roles in Immanuel Lutheran Church in New Auburn. I have leadership experience in managing people and challenges while working with state and federal agencies.

Sheri Lowden — Council

What compelled you to run for office?

I have been attending Council meetings for a year, and decided it would be a good way to have a say in how things are done. I would still like to see more people coming out to Council meetings so they are aware of the many challenges we face.

What do you feel are the top three issues facing the city of New Auburn, and

how would you like to see those issues addressed?

- We must find ways to cut our budget.

- Our storm water system is not adequate to handle large amounts of rain water such as this summer. It is being worked on.

- All homeowners need to adhere to the rules and make sure their sump pump is not running into the sewer system.

Please provide some biographical information about yourself.

I have lived in New Auburn for 44 years. I started going to Council meetings about five years ago and decided I would like to try out for the City Council. I am a concerned citizen and would like to see some changes made that would benefit the whole town.

Nelson Continued from page 1C

getting involved with my community and settling down in one place.

Any other comments?

I hope that the residents of Plato don't look at me as an outsider, but as a new neighbor who wants to get to know

them. I look forward to making Plato my home.

Wood Continued from page 1C

raphical information about yourself.

I have been a resident of Plato for 46 years and am a retired teacher from Minneapolis Public Schools with a master's degree. I still sub-

stitute teach in the area. My farm is in Plato and is called Westwood Farm. I am a horse judge for 4-H and Western Saddle Club Association and have judged for over 40 years. I was awarded the

Horse Person of the Year in 2011 from the Minnesota Horse Council. I am a member of St. Paul's United Church of Christ in Plato.

No filings in city of Biscay

The city portion of the Biscay ballot has no candidates. Up for election are the mayor's seat for a two-year term, two City Council seats for two-year

terms, and a two-year Council seat to fill out the final two years of an unexpired four-year term.

City of Stewart

Mayor, 2 council seats open

City of Stewart voters will elect a mayor and two City Council members at the Nov. 4 election. Mayor Jason Peirce is seeking another term and is running unopposed. Council candidates include incumbent Cindy Merrell and newcom-

ers Curt Glaeser, Kevin Masrud and Chuck Kruggel. Incumbent Council Member Mike Knox is not seeking re-election. Glaeser and Kruggel responded to the questionnaire requests.

Curt Glaeser — Council

What compelled you to run for office?

I decided to run for City Council because I feel that our small community has taken on too much government for the size of our town. We need to put back the ownership in the hands of a property owner to make their own decisions on what is right for their property or business. The city's responsibility should be assisting with minimal guidelines to the property owners, not the city being the one making the final decision, leaving the property owners feeling that they have no rights in the decision making process of their own property.

What do you feel are the top three issues facing city of Stewart, and how would you like to see those issues addressed?

More "common sense" or-



Curt Glaeser

dinances/permit processes. Promote business growth for existing businesses or assist with new businesses for our city. Keep homeowners' taxes at reasonable rate.

Please provide some biog-

raphical information about yourself.

I have lived in Stewart since 1980. My wife Julie and I have raised two children in Stewart. I have been a member of the Stewart Fire Department and a First Responder for the past 21 years. I currently serve on the Stewart Zoning board. I enjoy spending time with my family and grandchildren. My wife and I enjoy winter traveling to warmer climates. I love to hunt and spending time in the outdoors.

Any other comments?

I feel that my job experiences as a facility manager will help me as a Council member with procuring contracted services for the city from outside contractors, planning an annual budget and adhering to a planned budget.

Chuck Kruggel — Council

What compelled you to run for office?

What compelled me to run for Stewart City Council was hearing the concerns from Stewart residents and businesses, about dissatisfaction with some of the prior decisions that were made.

What do you feel are the top three issues facing city of Stewart, and how would you like to see those issues addressed?

First, the recent rental property policies are too harsh. I would look for ways to modify them or find assistance for financial hardships that may occur.

Secondly, I don't think the current engineer that was hired is very cost effective. I would like to look into other options that would not cost



Chuck Kruggel

our town these costly finances.

Lastly, I would like to look

at ways to support the current businesses we have and find ways to grow new businesses within our town.

Please provide some biographical information about yourself.

I have been a Stewart resident for the past nine years. I grew up on a farm in rural Winthrop, where I graduated from high school. I then went on to college in Mankato where I received my degree in agriculture/business mechanic. I have three grown daughters and one grandson. I am currently employed at Form A Feed in Stewart as a truck maintenance mechanic. I also filed for the vacant term of the city of Stewart as planning and zoning commission.



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Minnesota Governor

Mark Dayton, DFL

Top priority: If elected, what is your top priority for the 2015 Legislature? Why are you running for office?

I am running for Governor to continue the progress we have made in building a better Minnesota. If I am re-elected, that will be my top priority for the 2015 legislative session.

We need more good jobs, and I will keep working hard to bring them here. Our children and grandchildren need world-class educations, from early childhood through high school and college, to learn the skills needed for their future successes. We all need better highways, roads, bridges, and public transit systems; the wise use of our magnificent natural resources for both commerce and recreation; and efficient, effective public services. We need, deserve, and I'll work to provide, the best place anywhere to live, work, and raise our families.

Budget: Minnesota's economy is outpacing the national economy in many respects. At the same time, the 2013-14 Legislature enacted significant tax and spending increases including one of the highest personal income-tax rates in the country. What is your formula in terms of taxes and spending to ensure continued economic growth? Be specific in which taxes you would increase or decrease.

Four years ago, I said that I would raise taxes on the wealthiest 2 percent of Minnesotans in order to make our tax system fairer, to repay the "school shifts" that I inherited, and to pay for new investments in education and job creation. Those additional revenues dramatically improved our state's fiscal stability, and helped turn chronic budget deficits into projected surpluses. Our growing economy then enabled us to reduce income taxes for more than 2 million middle-class Minnesotans last spring and to put a halt to drastic property tax increases.

My top tax priority remains to reduce the tax burden on middle-income Minnesotans, especially by reducing the property taxes on homeowners, businesses, farmers, and indirectly on renters.

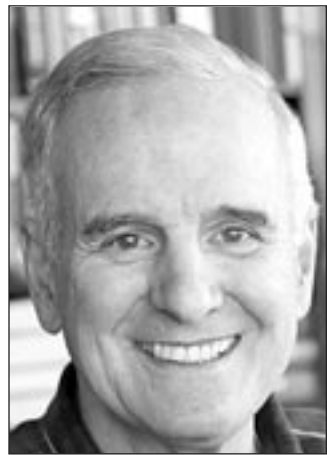
Education, K-12: The latest standardized test scores showed little overall improvement in reading, math and science, plus underscored the persistent achievement gap between white and minority students. How do you propose correcting this problem? Also, statewide implementation of teacher evaluations begins this year. Do you support legislation that would require districts to consider performance as well as seniority when deciding teacher layoffs?

Four years ago, I told Minnesotans I would work to provide state-funded all-day kindergarten for every Minnesota child. We did, and this fall more than 55,000 kindergartners are attending all-day kindergarten. That investment will improve test scores and close the achievement gap in the years ahead.

We also funded preschool scholarships for 9,000 young learners. If re-elected, I want to expand the opportunities for young children to attend high-quality early learning programs. Doing so will also narrow the achievement gap, and give those children a better chance to succeed in school and life.

In 2011, I signed into law the new teacher and principal evaluation systems. This fall, they are being implemented statewide; and they will provide new measures for school boards and administrators. I would want to consult with stakeholders about this new initiative, before deciding upon any revisions to it.

Education, higher ed: Many employers continue to be frustrated in their



Mark Dayton

ability to find qualified workers for the available jobs. What role does higher ed play in addressing this problem? What can be done to better align our higher ed course offerings with employer needs?

We need to better align our higher education and workforce training systems with the expanding employment needs of Minnesota businesses. We need to retool our universities and colleges with programs that will educate and train workers for the jobs of the future, rather than the past. This retooling will require new courses and curricula; new buildings, equipment, and technology; and closer working relationships between those programs and businesses across our state.

In December, I will host a series of regional Economic Growth Summits to ask businesses what they need from their area's higher education institutions and job training programs. We will address those needs in the next legislative session. (Drawn from AP questionnaire)

Health care: MNsure, the state's health care exchange, has come under heavy criticism since its creation. Is it serving its purpose? Do you advocate any changes, or should it remain as is?

I have frequently said that the initial problems with MNsure were unacceptable. However, the health exchange has improved and will continue to get better.

MNsure provides consumers with more comprehensive health care coverage, as required by the Affordable Care Act. There are no disqualifications for pre-existing conditions, which make huge differences to thousands of Minnesotans who were previously denied health insurance because of their medical histories. All health care plans must cover doctors visits, maternity care, hospitalizations, and preventative care, such as blood pressure, cholesterol, and cancer screenings.

As governor, I will oppose critics who want to abolish MNsure, put insurance companies back in charge of deciding what coverage to offer, and remove the Affordable Care Act's important consumer protections. I will continue to support improvements that will allow more Minnesotans access to good quality, affordable health care.

Transportation: Long-range forecasts show a significant gap in transportation needs – roads and transit. Do you support additional revenue? If so, what sources of revenue should be raised for what specific programs?

The future of transportation in Minnesota and adequate funding for it must be one of the 2015 legislative session's top priorities. Whatever is decided – whether to do nothing, a little, or more – will have an enormous impact on the lives of all Minnesotans for decades.

Transportation experts tell us that there is presently a \$6 billion gap between expected state and federal revenues over the next 10 years and what we will need to spend just to keep our roads, bridges, highways, and public transit from getting even worse.

MnDOT Commissioner Charlie Zelle and I have out-

lined one possible combination of funds, which could pay for maintenance, repairs, and some improvements to our state's transportation network.

I will work with the Legislature to consider all the ways we could afford to adequately maintain our state's highways, roads, bridges, and public transit systems, while continuing to look for new efficiencies that save taxpayers' money. (From AP questionnaire)

Energy: Minnesota currently bans new nuclear energy and has a moratorium on greenhouse gas-emitting resources. Should the expansion of nuclear and coal generation of electricity be included in Minnesota's energy portfolio?

A healthy life starts with, and depends upon, clean air to breathe, clean water to drink, protected natural environments to enjoy, and a secure ecological future.

They will all require us to build upon our progress in energy conservation and the use of non-polluting, renewable energy. These new sources of homegrown, renewable energy are not only good for the environment, but will also help boost our state's economy.

We must continue to make renewable energy sources more efficient and cost-effective, as we substitute them for fossil-burning fuels. I would like to see Minnesota chart a path to the elimination of coal by power plants and other heavy industrial users.

I support the current ban on new nuclear plants until the issue of how to safely store nuclear waste long-term is resolved.

Public notices: Some local government bodies continue to push for eliminating public notices from newspapers and moving them to government websites, even though independent research continues to show that far more people see the notices when they're published in newspapers and on newspaper websites, and that removing them from newspapers would in fact save very little money. What's your view on permitting important public notices to be disseminated only by local government bodies by means of their own websites?

I strongly support requiring public notices to be published in newspapers and public websites.

Open records: The city of St. Paul recently settled a civil lawsuit against the city for \$800,000 (the third largest in city history). However, the settlement agreement includes a provision that prohibits city officials and employees from commenting about the settlement or the reasons it was entered into, especially to the news media. Would you support legislation prohibiting this kind of covenant in settlement agreements entered into by government agencies in Minnesota?

Yes.

Elections: Do you support moving the primary election from August to June in an effort to increase voter turnout?

Yes. For the past 25 years, I have supported an early June primary. The middle of August is not a good time to engage Minnesota voters in political campaigns.

Other issues: Are there other issues you want to address?

No, thank you.

Briefly summarize your personal background and qualifications.

Presently, governor of Minnesota; B.A., Yale University, cum laude; New York City public school teacher; Minnesota Commissioner of Energy and Economic Development; State Auditor; United

Dayton

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Jeff Johnson, Republican

Top priority: If elected, what is your top priority for the 2015 Legislature? Why are you running for office?

Governing is about making things work as well as possible today, and creating the conditions for things to work even better in the future.

In the first legislative session I intend to focus on three main issues: education, business climate, and government reform.

As a state legislator I voted to increase education spending by almost 50 percent, but was frustrated that we were unable to reform the system to make it more effective for the students who aren't achieving as well as they should. My highest priority will be to empower principals and school boards to hire and reward teachers based upon their effectiveness, not just their seniority.

The business climate in Minnesota is abysmal. Under Gov. Dayton, Minnesota has dropped to dead last in new business formation in the Midwest. I will do everything in my power to ensure that Minnesota is open for business again.

I am committed to auditing government programs for both efficiency and effectiveness. The problem isn't just that government wastes money—it is that government often spends money on programs that simply don't work. That is a betrayal of both the taxpayers who pay for those programs, and of the people we are trying to help.

Budget: Minnesota's economy is outpacing the national economy in many respects. At the same time, the 2013-14 Legislature enacted significant tax and spending increases including one of the highest personal income-tax rates in the country. What is your formula in terms of taxes and spending to ensure continued economic growth? Be specific in which taxes you would increase or decrease.

Tax and spending policies aren't the only factor in economic growth, but they sure are important. Mark Dayton and I fundamentally disagree on this issue: I believe that Minnesota doesn't have to have the lowest taxes in the Midwest to succeed, but we have to be competitive with our neighbors to attract and keep good jobs. We need a lower, flatter, and simpler tax code, and as importantly we need to make sure that our regulators work with businesses, not against them.

Education, K-12: The latest standardized test scores showed little overall improvement in reading, math and science, plus underscored the persistent achievement gap between white and minority students. How do you propose correcting this problem? Also, statewide implementation of teacher evaluations begins this year. Do you support legislation that would require districts to consider performance as well as seniority when deciding teacher layoffs?

We have known for years that the key to a good education is to have the best teachers possible in the classroom. The state legislature passed a law that would have allowed schools to hire and retain the best teachers, but Mark Dayton vetoed it. Effectiveness, not seniority should be the most important criterion we use to hire and retain teachers.

Minnesotans have spent decades talking about the achievement gap, and we haven't done much to close it. Every study has shown that the most important factor in student achievement is teacher effectiveness, and yet our hiring policies don't take that into account. I would empower principals to hire and reward the best teachers, give students and parents the freedom to choose the best



Jeff Johnson

school, and focus early education dollars on the programs with proven success.

Education, higher ed: Many employers continue to be frustrated in their ability to find qualified workers for the available jobs. What role does higher ed play in addressing this problem? What can be done to better align our higher ed course offerings with employer needs?

In Minnesota there are too many people either out of work or underemployed, and too many jobs for which there aren't enough qualified workers. Minnesota also has one of the best and most extensive state college systems in the country. State colleges can be more effective at connecting people seeking new careers with employers who need them. Our colleges need to tailor their curricula to the skills needed in today's economy, and ensure that the students they are sending out into the workforce are prepared to succeed.

Health care: MNsure, the state's health care exchange, has come under heavy criticism since its creation. Is it serving its purpose? Do you advocate any changes, or should it remain as is?

MNsure has been an unmitigated disaster—and real people are getting hurt every day by this governor's incompetence. Parents can't get their children insured, out of pocket costs have spiked, and thousands of Minnesotans can't even see their own doctor or get treated in their own hospital. Rates have soared—almost doubling for some people, and the \$150 million insurance exchange website is still broken.

Real people are being hurt every day. The first thing I would do is fire every person on the MNsure board and all the top staff, and replace them with people who know what they are doing. I would also push for more competition and options within MNsure and work to remove barriers that are preventing the private sector from effectively competing with MNsure.

Transportation: Long-range forecasts show a significant gap in transportation needs – roads and transit. Do you support additional revenue? If so, what sources of revenue should be raised for what specific programs?

Minnesota doesn't spend enough money on roads. I would fully fund the Corridors of Commerce program, ensuring that every economic center is connected with great roads.

I fundamentally disagree with Gov. Dayton's obsessive focus on trains and trolleys. For the cost of one light rail line, the state could replace every structurally deficient bridge in the state. Every one.

The latest transportation plan from Dayton's Metropolitan Council is to build no new road capacity in the metropolitan region, reserving new money for bike paths, trains, and buses. I will redirect those resources.

It's about setting priorities, not just raising taxes yet again.

Energy: Minnesota currently bans new nuclear energy and has a moratorium

on greenhouse gas-emitting resources. Should the expansion of nuclear and coal generation of electricity be included in Minnesota's energy portfolio?

In general I oppose both the moratorium on nuclear energy and on clean coal, but the issue is much broader than that. If we eliminated coal and nuclear energy from our electricity supply today, most of Minnesota would be dark.

There are regions of our state that get 80 percent of their electricity from coal, and the state average is nearly 60 percent. Add in nuclear, and 80 percent of our electricity comes from coal and nuclear energy, and natural gas is another 5 percent. That's 85 percent of our electricity.

In Minnesota we want our energy to be clean, safe, and affordable. I support any energy source that meets those criteria.

Public Notices: Some local government bodies continue to push for eliminating public notices from newspapers and moving them to government websites, even though independent research continues to show that far more people see the notices when they're published in newspapers and on newspaper websites, and that removing them from newspapers would in fact save very little money. What's your view on permitting important public notices to be disseminated only by local government bodies by means of their own websites?

The goal of public notices is to notify the public that public meetings are taking place. The essence of democracy is citizen participation. I support using any and every reasonable means to ensure that the average citizen knows what government officials are doing, and oppose any attempts to limit the dissemination of that information.

Open records: The City of St. Paul recently settled a civil lawsuit against the City for \$800,000 (the third largest in City history). However, the settlement agreement includes a provision that prohibits city officials and employees from commenting about the settlement or the reasons it was entered into, especially to the news media. Would you support legislation prohibiting this kind of covenant in settlement agreements entered into by government agencies in Minnesota?

Government shouldn't be in the business of hiding its actions from the public. I support open records, open meetings, and access to all government data that isn't explicitly private.

Elections: Do you support moving the primary election from August to June in an effort to increase voter turnout?

Yes.

Other issues: Are there other issues you want to address?

I want to emphasize how important it is to finally audit state government. Everybody knows there is waste and abuse in government. Yet the more important issue is determining what works and what doesn't. For instance, the Department of Human Services gives out 1750 grants a year, and nobody has a good idea what they accomplish. An audit of just one of those nonprofits found that they were using the money for lavish trips to the tropics, personal loans, huge salaries, spa treatments, and similar luxuries—instead of actually helping people get jobs.

I believe that if we are going to spend taxpayer money, we need to make sure it is accomplishing the goal we set in the best way possible.

Johnson

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Minnesota Governor

Hannah Nicollet, Independence Party

Top priority: If elected, what is your top priority for the 2015 Legislature? Why are you running for office?

As Governor, my first priority would be to reignite Minnesota's economy. We've fallen in many metrics, including private sector job creation. Economic growth over the past year was 0.8 percent, while state spending over the last two years grew 17 percent. Our fiscal policy earned an "F" from the Cato Institute, and Kiplinger's rated us in the bottom four states in which to retire. We need to turn this around by making Minnesota a place that attracts and keeps business and provides an environment where they can profit and grow.

I have spent my whole life in Minnesota and love its culture, natural resources and intelligent and hard-working population. But I've seen a troubling trend. Policy and laws coming out of St. Paul increasingly favor well-connected, well-financed special interest groups. Just this last year we saw Sunday liquor sales defeated; a shady, back-room deal handing the Vikings hundreds of millions of dollars; billions in light rail projects when our basic infrastructure is underfunded and nearing its service life; a Senate Office Building even though downtown St. Paul has plenty of vacant office space.

I'd like to reverse that trend, making state government once again responsive to citizens' interests. Minnesotans shouldn't need "friends in high places" to have a voice at the Capitol.

Budget: Minnesota's economy is outpacing the national economy in many respects. At the same time, the 2013-14 Legislature enacted significant tax increases and spending increases, including one of the highest personal income-tax rates in the country. What is your formula in terms of taxes and spending to ensure continued economic growth? Be specific in which taxes you would increase or decrease.

A functional government, with stable, predictable revenue streams, has a role in creating a good quality of life. However, right now we're the sixth highest taxed state in the nation, and we're seeing the negative results of being overtaxed. To spark economic growth, I would eliminate the state corporate income tax (which represents only 4 percent of revenue) and look at ways to lower the business property tax. Perhaps even more important, however, than the rate of taxation is how we spend our money. I promise you, as governor, I will put our needs before our wants, something that hasn't been done for some time now.

Education, K-12: The latest standardized test scores showed little overall improvement in reading, math and science, plus underscored the persistent achievement gap between white and minority students. How do you propose correcting this problem? Also, statewide implementation of teacher evaluations begins this year. Do you support legislation that would require districts to consider performance as well as seniority when deciding teacher layoffs?

My daughter spent four months in a North Minneapolis school, but we pulled her out because she wasn't learning. Not every family has this luxury. The achievement gap for students of color in our schools is unacceptable. There are fantastic models around the country where gifted principals and teachers have turned failing schools into high-achieving ones. It's time we start looking at



Hannah Nicollet

adopting those models, and that requires relaxing rules that hamstring innovation in our public schools.

Student interests need to count more than union bosses, and teachers need to be empowered to do what inspires them and their students, rather than teach to a test. By the way, our students should also have enough to eat. I suggest we cut ties with the Federal Department of Education in all these areas and return autonomy and flexibility to our local school boards. Minnesota will be better off for it.

I support legislation that would PERMIT districts to consider performance as a factor in layoffs. I'm not into mandates.

Education, higher ed: Many employers continue to be frustrated in their ability to find qualified workers for the available jobs. What role does higher ed play in addressing this problem? What can be done to better align our higher ed course offerings with employer needs?

The economy has changed dramatically over the past several decades, but our higher ed system hasn't. Rather than investing in additional buildings and facilities, which some colleges may even struggle to fill given recently declining enrollment, our higher ed system ought to be preparing for, and embracing alternative models. Here is some of what we can do now:

1. Expand the Post Secondary Options Enrollment Act to bring more college instruction into the high schools, with classes dually accredited by MnSCU institutions.

2. Modernize high school industrial arts education by asking employers to help advise schools on curriculum development and offer apprenticeships.

3. Hold MnSCU and the University of Minnesota more accountable for tuition increases, which have rapidly outpaced inflation. This might be addressed by requiring a cost-benefit analysis for new construction and remodeling projects, and the benefit would need to be defined in the context of educational outcome. Additionally, some interesting "no frills" college models exist, and the savings can reach up to 75 percent. State universities were created to provide a low-cost alternative to private schools that were not accessible to poor and middle-class families. We need to restore and preserve that tradition.

4. Expand distance education and e-learning options.

5. Consolidate certain programs, offices, and departments (even across locations). Not every institution in the MnSCU system needs to offer its own version of everything.

6. Success in college often depends on how well our high schools prepare students. Cultivating a rigorous curriculum in our high schools by raising standards, eliminating time-consuming mandates, increasing access to excellent educators and leveraging technology, ought to position our students well for whatever follows.

Health care: MNSure, the

state's health care exchange, has come under heavy criticism since its creation. Is it serving its purpose? Do you advocate any changes, or should it remain as is?

Families waited for months to get insurance because of how poorly this website was designed. Someone should be held accountable for that. In addition to a full investigation of how that occurred, the state should look at successes in other state exchanges and implement them here. It should be as easy to purchase insurance from MNSure as it is to book a trip on Expedia or Travelocity.

We should limit MNSure to those who qualify for the federal subsidy. We need to enlist the expertise of people who actually know the insurance market to refer people who don't need subsidies to the private market and focus on helping people who qualify for subsidies choose the best policies.

Transportation: Long-range forecasts show a significant gap in transportation needs - roads and transit. Do you support additional revenue? If so, what sources of revenue should be raised for what specific programs?

Lawmakers have been incredibly derelict in taking care of our transportation infrastructure. Half of our state highways are now more than 50 years old and our bridges are in similar shape. The state spent billions for professional sports stadiums and nearly \$1 billion on an unnecessary light-rail corridor while it neglected basic infrastructure. Now, because of decades of misplaced priorities, we will probably have to increase the amount we bond for road construction. This should only come with a complete halting of bonding on non-essential projects (i.e. community centers, civic centers, etc.).

Another option is to examine construction and maintenance methods to look for savings. For example, Wisconsin and Iowa both spend about half what we do in Minnesota per lane-mile for state highway maintenance. We should look at what those and other states are doing and emulate it.

Energy: Minnesota currently bans new nuclear energy and has a moratorium on greenhouse gas-emitting resources. Should the expansion of nuclear and coal generation of electricity be included in Minnesota's energy portfolio?

My administration would take bold steps to expand the use of nuclear-derived energy, similar to the initiative that Independent-Republican Governor Arne Carlson took in the 1990s when he solved the nuclear fuel waste storage problem.

I would work with the Nuclear Regulatory Agency and local utilities to modernize existing nuclear reactors and add capacity to both the Monticello and Prairie Island nuclear plants. This will make us more energy independent and reduce future electricity costs. Nuclear waste storage has improved dramatically, and American nuclear energy facilities are the highest regulated plants in the world. If much of Europe can do it, why can't we?

Although coal-generated power is definitely cleaner than it once was, nuclear is still by far the cleanest, safest form of energy with the least amount of impact on the earth and humans. Plus it isn't intermittent like wind energy. Alternative forms of energy, like wind and solar are important and promising, but the technology needs to improve significantly, along with the cost-benefit analyses, before the state invests heavily in them.

Public Notices: Some local government bodies continue to push for eliminating public notices from newspapers and moving them to government websites, even though independent research continues to show that far more people see the notices when they're published in newspapers and on newspaper websites, and that removing them from newspapers would in fact save very little money. What's your view on permitting important public notices to be disseminated only by local government bodies by means of their own websites?

For now, I support continuing this requirement because a large percentage of Minnesotans still get their news in print, versus online. However, newspapers should be required to publish notices online for free.

Open records: The City of St. Paul recently settled a civil lawsuit against the City for \$800,000 (the third largest in City history). However, the settlement agreement includes a provision that prohibits city officials and employees from commenting about the settlement or the reasons it was entered into, especially to the news media. Would you support legislation prohibiting this kind of covenant in settlement agreements entered into by government agencies in Minnesota?

Whenever government decision-making is done in secret, it's always a bad thing. That's how the Vikings stadium deal was negotiated, along with its faulty funding projections, all against the people's will. Legislators found a creative way to close their meetings to the public. Minnesota residents should be outraged by this. It's for similar reasons I support transparency in settlement agreements.

Elections: Do you support moving the primary election from August to June in an effort to increase voter turnout?

I support moving it up, but for a different reason. The current primary date is too close to the general election, so voters don't have enough time to consider the final candidates on the ballot.

Other issues: Are there other issues you want to address?

I don't support re-instating the death penalty, as my opponent Commissioner Jeff Johnson does; nor do I support taxpayer-funded or late-term abortions, unlike Governor Mark Dayton. I support ending the war on drugs, and would argue that drug use/abuse should be treated as a health care issue, not a criminal issue. Our current approach makes criminals out of addicts and prevents rehabilitated people from getting decent jobs. Other unintended consequences include a militarized, more aggressive police force, abuses of asset forfeiture, and tearing families apart either by incarcerating parents or putting children in foster care over minor offenses. I also am a strong supporter of Second Amendment rights, although I do support changes to prevent mentally ill patients from acquiring weapons.

Briefly summarize your personal background and qualifications.

Former software developer; B.A., History, University of Northwestern - St. Paul (summa cum laude); married to Mark, a Navy reservist; two daughters, 3 and 7; Alpha USA ministry leader; volunteer, International Justice Mission (anti-trafficking organization) and Habitat for Humanity.

Dayton Continued from page 3C

States Senator; father of Eric and Andrew Dayton; grandfather; live in St. Paul with two

German Shepherds, Itasca and Wanamingo.

Johnson Continued from page 3C

ble. Right now, nobody can answer that question, and I will change that.

Briefly summarize your personal background and qualifications.

I was born and raised in Detroit Lakes, Minnesota by wonderful, hard-working parents. I graduated from Detroit Lakes High School, Concordia College in Moorhead and Georgetown Law School in Washington, D.C.

Sondi and I were married in 1993. Sondi grew up in Crookston and graduated from Concordia with me. We now live in Plymouth with our sons Thor (16) and Rolf (13) and our bulldog, Chester.

In 2000, I was elected to the Minnesota House of Representatives and served for six years. In 2008, I was elected to the Board of Com-

missioners in Hennepin County, the largest County in Minnesota.

Being active in my community has always been an important part of my life. I've tutored in homeless shelters in Chicago and Minneapolis, taught Sunday School and confirmation classes and coached youth football, baseball and soccer (16 teams in all, over the past 12 years).

I am running for Governor for a simple reason: my experience, my temperament, and my ability to work with people of all parties and ideologies make me the right person to break the political gridlock that grips state government today.

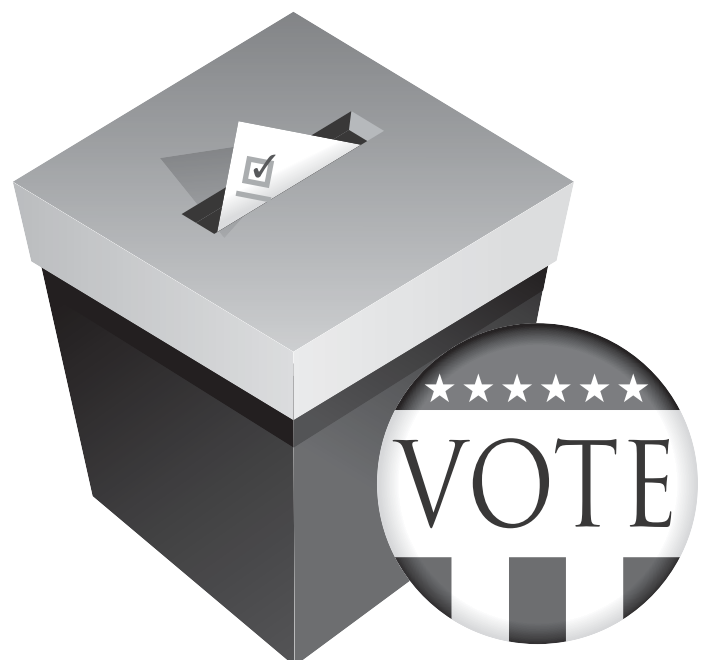
It doesn't help anybody to fight about who to blame for problems; I am interested in solving them.



Committed to Serve

If elected, I will commit to the people of District #2 and McLeod County, serving them with stronger representation and working with the townships, city and the county boards. My past rural experience, business owner knowledge, and interest in state and local government, gives me the background to be a great commissioner. My understanding of local issues and taxpayer concerns is a high priority. I believe in and will uphold the U.S. Constitution and fight for your rights.

Please vote for Doug Krueger on Nov. 4th.



Remember to vote Tuesday, November 4th



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U.S. Senate

Al Franken, DFL

Top priority: If elected, what is your top priority for the 2015 Congress? Why are you running for office?

Too many Minnesotans feel like the economy is rigged against them. We've experienced 55 straight months of private sector job growth but most of that has gone to the top—not to middle class families. Every day I wake up thinking of how I can help the middle class and those aspiring to be in the middle class. My grandson Joe is 18 months old. When I put him to sleep I think about his future and all of the things he can grow up to be. He has two parents that love him and will be able to support him—I want that for every kid. I want to create an economy where our kids feel like I did when I was growing up, like they could do anything. It hasn't been easy in Washington, but I've gotten things done and I want to keep working hard to ensure everyone has a fair shot.

Foreign affairs: More than half of Americans say President Obama is not tough enough in his foreign policy and they believe the world is getting more dangerous with the Islamic State posing one of the greatest security issues, according to the latest Pew Research poll. Should the United States be more aggressive in its foreign policy? Be specific.

ISIL is an absolutely barbaric group. They are a threat to the region and to the United States. That's why I supported targeted airstrikes against ISIL in Iraq and in Syria, and it's why I voted to train and arm some of the Syrian rebels. We need to do everything we can to degrade and ultimately destroy ISIL, and to make sure that nobody from this organization can make it back to the United States to threaten us here at home.

Terrorist recruitment is an issue I've been working on since my first weeks in the Senate. In 2009, we had concerns about young people from Minnesota joining the terrorist group Al-Shabaab. In my first weeks in office, I met with the FBI on their efforts to stem terrorist recruitment in Minnesota. I've continued to work with the community and law enforcement throughout my term. I've publicly pressed the Administration—the Director of the FBI, the head of the Department of Homeland Security—on this issue in Senate Judiciary Committee hearings. Most recently, I urged the Department of Justice to double down on its efforts to combat terrorist recruitment in Minnesota, and they took action. Now there are going to be more resources to work with the community to prevent terrorist recruitment among at-risk groups in the Twin Cities.

We need to continue working with the community to stop this recruitment and to also stop any terrorists who fight with ISIL from returning from to the U.S. The State Department already has the authority to revoke people's passports, and we need to do everything we can to stop anyone who fights with ISIL from returning to the U.S..

Health care: Cost and quality of health care is an ongoing concern. What can be done at the federal level to ensure Americans have access to quality and affordable health care? Do you support changes in the Affordable Care Act?

I support the Affordable Care Act and I'm working hard to make sure it works for all Minnesotans. Repealing the law would take us back to a time when women were charged more than men simply because they are women, when insurance companies could deny coverage for people with pre-existing conditions, and drop coverage for Minnesotans who be-



Al Franken

come sick.

Because of the Affordable Care Act, the state's uninsured rate has been cut nearly in half, and 95 percent of Minnesotans now have health insurance.

I've also been working hard to improve the Affordable Care Act. I've fought the medical device tax since it was first proposed, and although I was able to get the original proposal cut in half, I'll keep fighting until it's fully repealed. I have also introduced legislation to make sure families who need help buying their health insurance get tax credits, and to support businesses and labor unions who provide their own insurance to their employees and members. I'll keep working to make sure the Affordable Care Act works for Minnesota.

I worked hard to ensure that the law would hold insurance companies more accountable. I wrote one of the largest cost-saving measures into the law which requires insurance companies to spend at least 80 percent of people's premium dollars on actual health care as opposed to profits, CEO salaries or marketing. Consumers have already received \$1.9 billion in rebates because of my provision.

Education: What role should the federal government play in ensuring that U.S. graduates can compete in the global economy? Are there specific reforms that you advocate?

Attracting and retaining quality teachers is vital to the success of our education system, and part of building respect for educators means letting them actually teach and developing a system that does a better job of measuring students' actual growth, which No Child Left Behind (NCLB) failed to do. Under NCLB, a sixth-grade teacher who took a child from a third-grade reading level to a fifth-grade reading level was considered a failure, when in fact that teacher is a hero. I have been proud to support legislation in the Senate that makes real reforms and improvements to No Child Left Behind that would help us achieve that end. We have a temporary fix now, but I will continue to work with Minnesota's teachers to ensure as best as we can that any bill that reforms No Child Left Behind helps us move toward a system where teachers are given the flexibility to teach our kids effectively. We also need to address the needs of the "whole child," which means making sure kids don't go hungry at school and that they have access to mental health services.

We also need to align education with jobs that exist—that's why I have championed STEM curriculum (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math), and it's why we need to support Community Colleges and Technical Colleges to get students into the workforce and address the skills gap to fill the more than 3 million jobs that currently sit open in this country. That's why I worked to pass the first bipartisan bill to reform our workforce training since 1998.

Energy: Do you support

removing barriers to increased domestic oil and natural gas production?

America needs a diverse energy portfolio that includes renewables as well as fossil fuels like natural gas, where we've seen a real renaissance. But in Minnesota, we don't produce fossil fuels—we have no oil, gas or coal, which is why I've been a champion of renewable energy and energy efficiency. It's also why I co-wrote the energy title in the Farm Bill to help Minnesota's burgeoning renewables sector.

That's why I have been pushing for investments in renewable energy and in energy efficiency technologies that will create jobs and reduce consumer energy bills. They will reduce our reliance on foreign oil and keep a clean environment. The atrocities we are seeing in the Middle East are yet another reminder that we need to wean ourselves off of foreign oil. That's why I'm also a big supporter of homegrown bio-fuels.

Social Security/Medicare: What role should these entitlement programs play in Americans' retirement plans? Be specific in any changes you may support in the existing programs to ensure they remain solvent.

My wife's family made it after her father died in large part because of Social Security survivor benefits, so protecting this program and making sure it's there for future retirees is personal for me. I am fundamentally opposed to any form of privatization of Social Security, and would oppose attempts to cut benefits. I have long supported improving Social Security's future solvency by asking the wealthiest to pay a little more while holding the middle-class harmless.

I am also committed to protecting and strengthening Medicare so it can continue to provide quality affordable health care coverage to seniors in Minnesota. I am opposed to any efforts to privatize Medicare or turn it into a voucher program. Instead, we should build on the reforms in the Affordable Care Act that improve benefits while reducing costs for seniors and taxpayers. I have also introduced legislation that would allow Medicare to negotiate with drug companies for lower prices which would save \$240 billion over the next 10 years. Expanding the Diabetes Prevention Program—which I wrote into the health care reform law—to Medicare, will help improve seniors' lives and save taxpayers money.

Economy: What steps do you support to stimulate the growth of jobs?

Our economy is starting to grow after the worst recession in generations, but too many Minnesotans aren't seeing the economy get better for them. We know what the keys to prosperity are in the 21st century. They're the same things that helped make us great in the 20th century: education, infrastructure, and research and development. Those are the things we need to support to help create new middle-class jobs. And we need to cut wasteful tax loopholes and spending to reduce our deficit.

I also think we need to create more demand, and to get more demand you have to put more money in peoples' pockets. Right now there are 3.5 million good, middle-class jobs that are going unfilled because employers can't find the workers with the right skills to fill them. I've heard from many Minnesota businesses that are struggling with these same problems. So, I helped pass a bill to reform our workforce training system, and am pushing legislation to do more to train workers for unfilled jobs. There are two other

Franken
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Mike McFadden, Republican

Top priority: If elected, what is your top priority for the 2015 Congress? Why are you running for office?

I am running because we can do better. My wife Mary Kate and I have been married for 23 and are blessed with six children. I'm concerned with what we're leaving for our kids. Between a stagnant economy and over \$17 trillion in debt, a broken health care system, and an education system that fails to serve everyone, Minnesotans know we're headed in the wrong direction. I'm a problem solver. My priority will be sitting down with leaders from both parties and bringing real solutions to our nation's challenges.

Foreign affairs: More than half of Americans say President Obama is not tough enough in his foreign policy and they believe the world is getting more dangerous with the Islamic State posing one of the greatest security issues, according to the latest Pew Research poll. Should the United States be more aggressive in its foreign policy? Be specific.

The United States should be more deliberate in its foreign policy. I have been appalled by the lack of a cohesive foreign policy under President Obama and Senator Franken. Our world has become more dangerous because of their misguided effort to "lead from behind." An ambassador was murdered and we did nothing, and the world watched. A red line was crossed in Syria and we did nothing, and the world watched. We have conflicts in Ukraine, Gaza, Iraq, and Syria because our allies don't trust us while our enemies no longer fear us. These issues are coming home to roost as Minnesota grows as a key location for the radicalization and recruitment for ISIS and other terrorist organizations. Congress has failed to take appropriate steps to protect us, like revoking the passports of Americans fighting for groups like ISIS. We need leadership in Washington that demonstrates strength and decisively addresses our nation's challenges.

Health care: Cost and quality of health care is an ongoing concern. What can be done at the federal level to ensure Americans have access to quality and affordable health care? Do you support changes in the Affordable Care Act?

We have a health care problem in this country, but Obamacare is not the right solution. Obamacare has been a disaster and we need to start over with health care reform. Health care has three parts: costs, quality, and access. We need to replace Obamacare with a plan that actually reduces costs, improves quality, and increases access. I have put forward a set of proposals to address these three parts. Rather than continue to implement one-size-fits all federal government policies, my proposals are state-based, market-based and patient-centered, and promote innovation and transparency throughout the health care system.

Education: What role should the federal government play in ensuring that U.S. graduates can compete in the global economy? Are there specific reforms that you advocate?

Success for our students begins when they are young. We need to provide a world-class K-12 education to all of our children, regardless of their zip code. Minnesota has one of the worst achievement gaps in the country and that is unacceptable. In particular, we need to encourage strong and hands-on STEM education, so that our scientists and engineers can compete globally.

Energy: Do you support removing barriers to increased domestic oil and natural gas production?



Mike McFadden

We are on the doorstep of an energy renaissance in this country and we have the opportunity to be energy independent for the first time in decades. I believe that we can pursue energy independence in an environmentally responsible way. All Minnesotans care about being good stewards of our environment. We need the full portfolio of energy to drive down energy and electricity prices, facilitating growth in agriculture and manufacturing. I support expanding our energy infrastructure to facilitate domestic production. In particular, I support the building and expansion of pipelines to carry production. Railcars travel through Minnesota daily carrying crude from North Dakota's Bakken region, creating distribution bottlenecks for propane and crops. Pipelines are the safest and most efficient way to transport crude.

Social Security/Medicare: What role should these entitlement programs play in Americans' retirement plans? Be specific in any changes you may support in the existing programs to ensure they remain solvent.

We need to preserve and protect Social Security and Medicare to ensure that they are available to our children. I do not support any changes to these programs that affect those at or near retirement. That would not be fair. But it also is not fair to make promises to our young people that we cannot keep. We need to address the looming insolvency of our entitlement programs now, so that we can ensure that we can meet our promises to everyone. If we do nothing, in the future, three things could happen: payroll taxes could go up, debt could go through the roof, or we could be forced to make cuts to benefits. We can avoid that situation with thoughtful planning now. We need to do right by our seniors of today and tomorrow.

Politically, I'm a problem solver. For my whole career, I have sat down at tables with groups who want different outcomes and I have led negotiations to find solutions. That's what I'm going to do when I get to Washington. I will sit down with leaders from both parties, put many options on the table, and preserve our entitlement programs.

Economy: What steps do you support to stimulate the growth of jobs?

Our economy has been stagnant. Labor force participation is lower than it's been in decades, and underemployment in Minnesota is over 50 percent. Prices of everything—from food to gas to electricity to health care—are going up, but wages are stagnant. In the last six years, average weekly wages have only grown by \$8. We can do better. I know how to get us on the path of growth and prosperity.

My plan has three E's: Energy, Education, and Effective Government. Firstly, by embracing the energy renaissance, we can lower gas prices and electricity prices, putting more money in Minnesotan's pockets and boosting our manufacturing sector. Secondly, every child deserves a first-class education, regardless of their zip code. Minnesota has one of the worst achievement gaps in

the country, and we need to radically rethink our education system. Thirdly, we need to get government out of the way of growth. This means smart regulation instead of over regulation. It also means comprehensive tax reform, to make the tax code simpler and fairer for everyone.

Agriculture: The proposed definition of the Waters of the U.S. would subject nearly any property owner, including farmers, to new layers of reviews and permitting. Do you support this proposal?

I strongly oppose the Waters of the U.S. rule and believe that Congress should take action to prevent the Environmental Protection Agency and the Army Corps of Engineers from implementing the rule. The rule is another example of an expansionary bureaucracy giving itself more authority. It would create unfair and burdensome bureaucratic hurdles for farmers, builders, businesses and local governments. Senator Franken had the opportunity to vote for an amendment that would have halted implementation of the rule, and instead he opposed the amendment. I will fight against bureaucratic overreach and the Waters of the U.S. rule.

Immigration: Do America's immigration laws need to be changed? What should be the tenets of any immigration reform legislation?

We need to address our immigration problem. Washington has kicked the can down the road for 15 years rather than sit down and come up with a solution. I do not support amnesty, but doing nothing is de facto amnesty. We need balance. I don't want to tear families apart, but we do have immigrants here who have broken the law. I support a solution that will first and foremost secure the border. After securing the border, reform should require that people pass a background check, learn English, pay a fine, and demonstrate employment before they can go to the back of the line for citizenship, during which time they would not receive government benefits. We need a 21st Century immigration policy that helps our economy grow while handling our immigration challenges.

Open records: The federal Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) is widely regarded by citizens and the news media as being deeply flawed and often completely ineffective in achieving the purposes that it was enacted to serve. Would you support a federal study aimed at identifying reforms that could be made to the FOIA, so that it in the future it will function more effectively on behalf of citizens?

I believe transparency is key to effective and just government. I also strongly believe in a free, fair, and open press. I would support investigation into reforming the Freedom of Information Act to ensure that citizens and media are able to access the information they have a right to access.

Other issues: Are there other issues you want to address?

Partisan gridlock has paralyzed Washington, preventing progress on just about every issue. Republicans have been just as bad as Democrats in this regard. We need leaders who will work with both parties to get things done for Minnesota. We're not helped by the fact that Al Franken is the most partisan Senator in Washington and votes with President Obama 97 percent of the time. I think we can do better. We must do better. That's why I've promised Minnesotans that if I vote with any party or President 97 percent of the time, I will come home and not seek a second term.

McFadden
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U.S. Senate

Steve Carlson, Independence Party

Top priority: If elected, what is your top priority for the 2015 Congress? Why are you running for office?

My top priority is to restore the Constitutional functioning of Congress and the Senate, including restraining the current president's actions. If he follows the Constitution from here on out, I would not vote to impeach him. I have solutions on each of the issues which are workable, from immigration to reining in the national deficit and debt, to creating millions of jobs right now, on my website at www.stevecarlsonforcongress2010.com. But if all the Democrats and Republicans want to do is fight from election to election, while the people's business goes unattended, solutions to each of these issues which do exist will continue to be shelved while America basically flounders. I am running because I have solutions, I've been frustrated and shocked by the actions of Obama and Al Franken, and jumped in the race to roll my sleeves up, do the hard work, and straighten America's course out.

Foreign affairs: More than half of Americans say President Obama is not tough enough in his foreign policy and they believe the world is getting more dangerous with the Islamic State posing one of the greatest security issues, according to the latest Pew Research poll. Should the United States be more aggressive in its foreign policy? Be specific.

We need to be less aggressive and overbearing, as unfortunately Hillary Clinton's foreign policy has been. We need to excel in true diplomacy and leadership. In a case such as ISIS, our national security is threatened because we mistakenly elected a leader, President Obama, whose goals are political and even anti-American. He has not represented the best interests of the country. The result is ISIS. Now we need to take the required action, swiftly, because he dithers and misleads America.

Congress must declare limited war specifically to force the dismantling and surrender of the ISIS state. Use air power and all military resources available to destroy their force or their will to fight. The ground troops role should be limited to rounding them up as they surrender and keeping them in a prison camp, to identify terrorists and turn them over for prosecution under American and international law.

We should get the support of major military powers, including Russia. Stop the fighting. We should not be threatening Russia with NATO, we should work with them to return to the stage where we supported free-market reforms and democracy there, and did not view them as an enemy.

Health care: Cost and quality of health care is an ongoing concern. What can be done at the federal level to ensure Americans have access to quality and affordable health care? Do you support changes in the Affordable Care Act?

I support changes to what is left of the so-called "affordable" care act, or ObamaCare. It has been repealed already, piece by piece by Obama's illegal regulations, which render the whole program unconstitutional. The tax, too, is unconstitutional. ObamaCare is actually interfering with the nation's health care efforts.

While I agree the cost and



Steve Carlson

quality of health care is an ongoing concern, the most critical issues are not just saving money, but saving lives. Specifically, the federal government must lead a public-private partnership to target killer diseases — cancer, heart disease, lung disease, diabetes and the others, including AIDS. Health disparities right now are costing America tremendously, because specific groups, minorities, low-income, nationalities and language and cultural minorities are suffering disproportionately and cutting those increased costs of treatment and suffering will yield great rewards for health care and involve all Americans in the benefits of health and high quality of life. Even workplaces will benefit from a healthier workforce and their families. And we must maintain our commitment to Medicare and to aging with dignity, which under Sen. Franken we are not doing.

Education: What role should the federal government play in ensuring that U.S. graduates can compete in the global economy? Are there specific reforms that you advocate?

I advocate a high-quality education, which means developing the knowledge and learned abilities of each American, according to the store of knowledge we now have, and creating new knowledge.

Knowledge and information are today our major resource for success of all kinds, including economic. The specific reform we can provide in the federal government is liberty, including our federal courts and Constitution.

As far as liberty, today, most American students are locked in failing public schools and can't get out. We are attacking the Catholic Church, and other churches, and even secular entities, blocking them from providing a quality education which advances their own worldview. Thus we are enforcing a mindless ideology on our educational system rather than educating in reason as well as faith.

Allowing school tuition organizations, as they have in Arizona, would allow students and their families to break out of this prison of the mind.

The federal government, by pushing for protection of religious liberties and access to real, successful education, can best prepare our people for the future — and to compete internationally, where we are falling behind in science and mathematics, even though English is still the dominant educational and scientific language.

Our land-grant universities, such as the University of Minnesota, are federal institutions, given to the states to provide higher education for the industrial classes — the working man and his family.

Energy: Do you support removing barriers to increased domestic oil and

natural gas production?

We shouldn't have any barriers. We should have intelligent and justifiable regulation that protects the environment and water. And when we say "domestic" we should be talking about America benefiting from these energy resources. This isn't to bar sale of energy to other countries, but we need to give Americans a chance to get at this energy and use it to create jobs and improve our lives as consumers. It seems as if the Obama administration is blocking energy projects just to block energy projects. We should be purposeful in any government regulation, and there is a regulatory overreach now that is political and ideological.

It is important that we develop our energy resources, and I would listen to arguments in support of the subsidies. I understand much of it is a depletion allowance, which incents oil and natural gas companies to extract their reserves steadily, and not hoard and wait for the highest prices. This approach makes the resources more helpful to the economy and society. I would in fact extend this depletion allowance to the big oil and gas companies, not just the smaller ones as it applies now.

Social Security/Medicare: What role should these entitlement programs play in Americans' retirement plans? Be specific in any changes you may support in the existing programs to ensure they remain solvent.

Barack Obama and his Democrats are attacking Social Security, and Medicare, and attacking our commitment to aging with dignity, because they are seen as white privilege. This attack must be stopped, because what we need to do is to extend our commitment to aging with dignity. The lifespan of whites is still significantly higher than non-whites, because of cultural differences, and also because of the failure of our education and workforce to successfully integrate.

We need to pay back money to these programs which the politicians have used for other purposes. We need cuts in discretionary spending, by transitioning the power and resources back to the 50 states, not cuts to "entitlements" like Social Security and Medicare. Medicaid, unlike Social Security and Medicare, is not an entitlement. This is an agist attack clothed in the rhetoric of white privilege, on aging with dignity, which divides America and diminishes the American Dream.

One of the attacks is from ObamaCare. Sen. Franken has claimed that ObamaCare has "extended" Medicare solvency 11 years. And Rep. McCollum claimed, "The Democrats did not cut Medicare, the Democrats did not cut Medicare." But I have on my website President Obama, prior to the destructive passage of ObamaCare, saying plainly that he will fund one-third of the cost of implementing ObamaCare with cuts to Medicare. Cuts to Medicare. And that has happened.

In general ObamaCare's approach to Medicare is mindless and destructive, and even malicious.

So the Democrats are not "extending" Medicare, they are cutting Medicare.

Economy: What steps do you support to stimulate the growth of jobs?

First, let the 50 states enforce their own usury laws on consumer debt. This will cre-

ate millions of jobs, including tens of thousands in Minnesota, because new or growing businesses will spring up to provide goods and services needed by families, but which they cannot afford because they are drowning in debt to out-of-state lenders, lenders benefiting from an archaic law which allows their states, not Minnesota, to set the usury limits when they lend to Minnesota borrowers. We can do this simply by amending an 1864 federal statute called the National Bank Act, which the Supreme Court interpreted against Minneapolis Marquette Bank in 1978 as allowing other states to set our usury rate in any out-of-state loan. Loading Americans up with usurious consumer debt is stifling the ability of households even to form, and to consume products and services.

Other federal initiatives also oppress our businesses and consumers, such as ObamaCare, which seeks to install a socialist health care system which stifles innovation (from companies like Medtronic) and also detracts from health care for the aging, does nothing to fight killer diseases, demands that all employers provide unaffordable health care plans loaded up with the federal government's demands, demands all Americans pay for health insurance that is unaffordable and low quality, and is unrealistic in view of the numbers of doctors and nurses in America today. Take this load off our back and jobs can grow.

Let employers hire based on qualifications and retain workers based on performance. Get rid of the EEOC, and let the states be responsible for fighting discrimination against or exclusion of minorities from their workforces.

Agriculture: The proposed definition of the Waters of the U.S. would subject nearly any property owner, including farmers, to new layers of reviews and permitting. Do you support this proposal?

No, I do not support this proposal at all. This is an overreach by the federal government, no doubt based on the interstate commerce clause. But farming is not commerce. Sale of produce is, and not all of it is interstate.

What we do not need to do is to over-burden farmers with regulations. Al Franken said his farm bill is "good for farmers" but this kind of federal intrusion is definitely not good for farmers. What I do support are plans which I would help formulate, for a water infrastructure, in response to indications of droughts increasing in frequency and severity, to help farming. Presently we have crop insurance seeking to pay farmers to offset losses caused by drought. Some states, like Texas, have extensive water infrastructure plans which help farmers, as well as consumers and businesses, all of whom need reliable water supplies. But initiatives to help fight drought do not require getting the EPA involved or the federal government involved in every waterway or body of water.

Immigration: Do America's immigration laws need to be changed? What should be the tenets of any immigration reform legislation?

We need to change our immigration law, continuously, but not give up our principles or Constitution. We need to secure the borders first. The current approach is unwork-

able.

To have good neighbor relations and secure the border, I will propose that the Border States Governor's Association, consisting of the Mexican states bordering the U.S. and the U.S. states bordering Mexico, take a leading role to help in a bi-lateral effort to provide security, human rights, and an environment for productivity and progress, in an international border zone created through that cooperation. This will create a space for the development of factories, replacing fences. It will create jobs on both sides of the border, and add to our GDP by providing products for the U.S. market and for export to Mexico and Latin America.

If the Border is seen as a place to go, to work and raise a family, rather than a place to run through real fast to get low-paying jobs up north, we will not have to solve the issue of amnesty.

Open records: The federal Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) is widely regarded by citizens and the news media as being deeply flawed and often completely ineffective in achieving the purposes that it was enacted to serve. Would you support a federal study aimed at identifying reforms that could be made to the FOIA, so that it in the future it will function more effectively on behalf of citizens?

I can tell you right now what the problem is. The federal government claims privilege in the courts, and the courts defer. They cite some case achieved in some court by some state litigant that establishes precedents and preferences for the government side. And this is to protect the failures of the courts as much as the failures of government. When you go up against the government you'll face claims of absolute sovereign immunity, costs and fees, and claims of how hard it is to produce the desired information. By the time the lawsuit's settled, the information could have been produced, in all or most cases.

Our court system is completely dysfunctional and Congress is in control of all the federal courts except the U.S. Supreme Court. These other courts are all created by Congress. They need to give jurisdiction to the courts, and instruction that they cannot fail to exercise that jurisdiction or penalties such as impeachment will follow.

Other issues: Are there other issues you want to address?

In 2012, in an election characterized by attacks on American values, the DFL promised a "conversation" on whether marriage could be defined by the state in some way different than what we have always recognized (and Minnesota only began to issue marriage licenses at all in the 1970s, so marriage is not a creation of the state). The DFL promise was empty and false, and they quickly rushed through a repeal of the statutory definition of marriage. But our Minnesota Constitution still provides, in our Bill of Rights, Section 16 "but the liberty of conscience hereby secured shall not be so construed as to excuse acts of licentiousness or justify practices inconsistent with the peace or safety of the state." And yet the expectations of the DFL statute are that small farmers have to be fined by the state if they don't "celebrate" acts of licentiousness, i.e. homosexuality on their property. The State is actually taking or burdening private property. Sen. Scott Dibble

said that there are no defenses for this kind of small farmer at Rice Creek. He said teachers who do not want to teach homosexuality will have to find work in private schools, not the public schools. I will work to impeach federal judges who set aside state definitions of marriage whether traditional or homosexual. I will use the restoration of religious freedom act to protect employers, families, property-owners and small businesses who don't need to be told by DFL politicians what marriage is.

I am pro-life. I would support exceptions to protections of the unborn fetus if the mother has been raped or the victim of incest producing a child. The state cannot force this kind of thing. But I support pro-life teaching in the schools, free exercise of religion to protect Americans from being forced to kill innocent human beings. I will fight for this and we will win. It's not a war on women. It's a war for life.

Briefly summarize your personal background and qualifications.

My work leading the Minnesota Independence Party (IP) beginning in 2010 is not so much different than my efforts from 1977-1984 at the University of Minnesota in university governance. I believe I am a leader, first because I was a very successful IP candidate in both 2010 and 2012. In 2010 there were 13 candidates statewide for U.S. Congress from parties other than the big parties, Democrats and Republicans. I had the highest percent of the vote, even though I was running in a safe DFL district, CD4. I increased my vote in the redistricted CD4 in 2012. In 2010 I was supportive of Tom Horner, and attended a few functions. However, it was already evident that the party insiders were leading the party toward basically running on vice—homosexuality, marijuana, abortion and the like. The great message of Horner was a pro-growth strategy. But Minnesota voted for the DFL's Dayton.

At the U of M I majored in Political Science and Economics, inter alia. I met and worked with diverse people. I'm a person of faith. I was a Vietnamese linguist in US-AFSS, and studied Vietnamese with outstanding success at the Defense Language Institute in 1971-72. I founded two political parties at the U of M. Human rights activist. Managing editor of Asian publications in Minnesota. An economic development consultant working with SBA, SCORE and Asian Small Business Development Center at University of St. Thomas, and Hubert Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs. IP Nominee 2010-12 CD4. Effective litigator who recently won a case pro se at the U.S. Supreme Court (Carlson v. MNDEED) that can help thousands of Minnesotans and all in the workforce.

I held many leadership titles in governance at the University of Minnesota from 1977-1984. Such as MPRG State Board Chair, Alternate Representative to the Board of Regents, President's Consultative Committee, Vice-President of Minnesota International Students Association, Vice President of Board of Publications of the Minnesota Daily, University Senator, CLA Assembly member, founder of the Human Rights Party and Chicano Liberation Party.

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U.S. Congress — Minnesota District 7

Collin Peterson, DFL

Top priority: If elected, what is your top priority for the 2015 Congress? Why are you running for office?

What's most important to me is continuing to be an independent voice on the issues for Minnesota's Seventh District in Washington DC. I represent my district and I'm proud to serve as the top Democrat on the House Agriculture Committee. Earlier this year I helped write and pass a bipartisan five-year farm bill, and I will continue working with USDA to make sure that the bill we passed is implemented as it was intended. I also plan to continue the work I've done to help mitigate flooding in the Red River Valley and other parts of my district, and to get a multi-year transportation bill passed.

Foreign affairs: More than half of Americans say President Obama is not tough enough in his foreign policy and they believe the world is getting more dangerous with the Islamic State posing one of the greatest security issues, according to the latest Pew Research poll. Should the United States be more aggressive in its foreign policy? Be specific.

We're a leader in the world and have to work with our allies to try to confront the threat from ISIS. I supported arming the Syrians rebels and airstrikes because of the direct threat they represent for our safety and way of life. Although we must do everything we can to protect Americans, the U.S. cannot police the world. My constituents do not want another ground war in the Middle East.

Health care: Cost and quality of health care is an ongoing concern. What can be done at the federal level to ensure Americans have access to quality and affordable health care? Do you support changes in the Affordable Care Act?

In 2010, I voted no on the Affordable Care Act because I did not believe it would lower the cost of health insurance, it would not fix the regional disparities in our Medicare reimbursement rates, and it would only cover around 30 percent of the uninsured people in my district. However, we need to make sure that we keep elimination of pre-existing condition exclusions, keep children on a parent's health plan until they're 26, and abolish discrimination based on disabilities, having a high-risk job, or being a cancer survivor. I do support changes to the ACA, and I believe there's room to fix and improve many of the problems over time.

Education: What role should the federal government play in ensuring that U.S. graduates can compete in the global economy? Are there specific reforms that you advocate?

I believe we should fully fund the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to make sure our school districts aren't over-



Collin Peterson

burdened with rising special education costs. I also support getting rid of the Common Core Standards Initiative. I also believe we need to do more to control the cost of higher education for all Minnesotans. The 7th District has a strong manufacturing sector, and that is why I continue to support STEM education, community colleges, and trade schools to ensure that workers get the skills they need to be successful in today's competitive economy.

Energy: Do you support removing barriers to increased domestic oil and natural gas production?

Yes, I support all energy sources, including ethanol, coal, wind, solar, and natural gas. We need to keep the government from over-regulating these industries. That is why I support expanding oil and gas production on privately and federally owned land. I also have voted to streamline the permitting process for energy projects. To take advantage of our domestic natural resources, we need to build more pipelines to move oil and natural gas, and make sure that railroads keep moving and do their part as well.

Social Security/Medicare: What role should these entitlement programs play in Americans' retirement plans? Be specific in any changes you may support in the existing programs to ensure they remain solvent.

Because of changes being put in place as a result of the Affordable Care Act, I think Medicare should be left alone, with the exception of making efforts to control the rising cost of medications by requiring Medicare to negotiate for lower drug prices like they do at the VA.

Social Security should be left alone. I support eliminating the cap on earnings and having Social Security taxes on all income (like Medicare). Doing that makes Social Security solvent for many years to come. I will continue to oppose changes like those in the Ryan Budget that would undermine Medicare and Social Security.

Economy: What steps do you support to stimulate the growth of jobs?

The federal government can stimulate the economy by investing in our country's infrastructure. We need an efficient transportation system that allows farmers, manufacturers and energy producers

to keep our businesses the most efficient in the world. We also need to make sure that the tax system is more favorable to business, and make sure that they're not overregulated. I also believe that we need more certainty coming out of Washington. We cannot expect businesses to make investments when Congress is constantly engaged in brinkmanship that threatens to shut down the government without thought to how much that action costs our country.

Agriculture: The proposed definition of the Waters of the U.S. would subject nearly any property owner, including farmers, to new layers of reviews and permitting. Do you support this proposal?

No, and I have led efforts to prohibit EPA and the Army Corps of Engineers from redefining "waters of the United States" under the Clean Water Act. In September, I testified in support of a bill before the Agriculture Committee saying, "This legislation is necessary because, in my view, the EPA does not seem to understand the real world effects these regulations will have on farmers across the country."

Immigration: Do America's immigration laws need to be changed? What should be the tenets of any immigration reform legislation?

I support comprehensive immigration reform that enforces existing immigration laws, that includes reforms to the work visa programs, that makes e-verify permanent, and will address undocumented workers that are already here. We also have to recognize the growing demand for more agriculture workers in our country. I believe that we need immigration reform because America is losing its top immigrant job creators — particularly those in science, technology, engineering, and math — to our competitors abroad.

Open records: The federal Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) is widely regarded by citizens and the news media as being deeply flawed and often completely ineffective in achieving the purposes that it was enacted to serve. Would you support a federal study aimed at identifying reforms that could be made to the FOIA, so that it in the future it will function more effectively on behalf of citizens?

Yes
Briefly summarize your personal background and qualifications.

I grew up on a farm in Baker, MN and attended Minnesota State University Moorhead before becoming a small business owner and CPA in Detroit Lakes. I served in the Minnesota State Senate before I was elected to Congress in 1990, and serve a primarily rural and agricultural district that spans more than 35,000 square miles of western Minnesota.

Torrey Westrom, Republican

Top priority: If elected, what is your top priority for the 2015 Congress? Why are you running for office?

My top priority in Congress will be fighting the out of control spending that has led our nation into \$17 trillion in debt and the overregulation from this Administration that is stifling economic growth and hurting small business. We shouldn't be spending money we don't have and we shouldn't be enacting policies that hurt small businesses and families just trying to make ends meet. We need to get our great nation back on track, which starts with bringing common sense, rural Minnesota values to Washington. When elected, I will work to represent 7th District values in D.C. so our state has a brighter, better future.

Foreign affairs: More than half of Americans say President Obama is not tough enough in his foreign policy and they believe the world is getting more dangerous with the Islamic State posing one of the greatest security issues, according to the latest Pew Research poll. Should the United States be more aggressive in its foreign policy? Be specific.

I am deeply concerned that the president's failure to address the growing threat of ISIS let the organization grow virtually unchecked for months. Today, we face a grave threat from a sophisticated and brutal terrorist organization. I support President Obama's objective of eliminating ISIS and its radical allies in the Middle East, but I am concerned the president has failed to lay out a clear path for doing so. I believe the threat will only be eliminated with a clear strategy and firm commitment from our allies in the region.

Health care: Cost and quality of health care is an ongoing concern. What can be done at the federal level to ensure Americans have access to quality and affordable health care? Do you support changes in the Affordable Care Act?

I believe we must repeal the president's unworkable and unpopular health law and replace it with a bipartisan plan centered around doctors and patients. While I believe some aspects of the law are a good idea, like extending coverage to people with pre-existing conditions and allowing young people to stay on their parents' insurance until the age of 26, much of the law is placing a harsh burden on Minnesota's families and small businesses. Across the 7th District, I've met people who are seeing their plans cancelled, their insurance premiums skyrocket, and their options limited. We can do better, and it starts by working across the aisle to find ways to increase portability and choice in a difficult to navigate marketplace.

Education: What role should the federal government play in ensuring that U.S. graduates can compete in the global economy? Are there specific reforms that you advocate?

It is vital that America maintain its competitive edge in a rapidly changing global economy, which starts



Torrey Westrom

with ensuring American students get a first-rate education. I believe every American child is entitled to a first-rate education, and that it is our responsibility to ensure they have access to the tools they need to succeed. Instead of placing the decision-making in the hands of D.C.-based bureaucrats, we should allow local leaders and states to determine the needs and requirements of their individual communities.

Energy: Do you support removing barriers to increased domestic oil and natural gas production?

One of my top priorities is increasing America's energy independence by building critical pipelines, like the Keystone XL Pipeline and others that will benefit western Minnesota. I believe that by supporting an "all of the above" approach to energy, which also aims to boost renewable fuels, we can increase America's energy production, leading to a more stable and secure U.S. economy.

Social Security/Medicare: What role should these entitlement programs play in Americans' retirement plans? Be specific in any changes you may support in the existing programs to ensure they remain solvent.

Social Security and Medicare are vital and important programs, on which millions of Americans rely. I believe we should be doing everything we can to maintain the health and solvency of these programs, so generations to come will be able to enjoy the benefits they earned during their working years. I believe it is critical that we keep these programs solvent, which may require reforms in the coming years, but that any reforms we under take must protect and make good on the benefits we have already promised to seniors.

Economy: What steps do you support to stimulate the growth of jobs?

The best thing the federal government can do is to get out of the way of small businesses and job creators by reducing the regulatory burden businesses face. Today, one of the biggest costs small businesses face is the cost of paperwork to comply with federal regulation. Agencies like the Environmental Protection Agency continue to expand their jurisdiction through rulemaking and new regulation, which increases the costs to doing business in this country. By checking regulatory creep from federal agencies, we can move toward increasing growth and job creation in our great nation.

Agriculture: The pro-

posed definition of the Waters of the U.S. would subject nearly any property owner, including farmers, to new layers of reviews and permitting. Do you support this proposal?

I do not support the EPA's proposed rule to expand their jurisdiction by redefining "Waters of the U.S." or "navigable waters" under the Clean Water Act. In August, I submitted a public comment to the EPA explaining that the move will hurt farmers by opening everything from small ponds to ditches in a farmer's field up to EPA regulation. The rule is radically unpopular with farmers across the 7th District. I believe that any changes to the Clean Water Act should be made through Congress and the legislative process, not through rulemaking from an unaccountable federal agency.

Immigration: Do America's immigration laws need to be changed? What should be the tenets of any immigration reform legislation?

Any reform to America's immigration system must start with securing our nation's borders, first and foremost. Second, we need a commitment from this administration that any laws passed by Congress will be faithfully upheld and enforced by the executive branch. With that commitment, we can work together on a bipartisan basis to address the top priorities of immigration reform, including the need to reform our agriculture work visa program to better meet the needs of America's farmers.

Open records: The federal Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) is widely regarded by citizens and the news media as being deeply flawed and often completely ineffective in achieving the purposes that it was enacted to serve. Would you support a federal study aimed at identifying reforms that could be made to the FOIA, so that it in the future it will function more effectively on behalf of citizens?

As Justice Brandeis famously said, "Sunlight is the best disinfectant." I support measures that will lead to more transparency and more openness for federal agencies, with the exception of instances that pertain to national security or classified information. By increasing transparency, we can increase federal oversight and ensure that taxpayer dollars are being spent as wisely and efficiently as possible.

Briefly summarize your personal background and qualifications.

I am a small business owner, attorney, and current state Senator representing Minnesota's District 12. I was born and raised in western Minnesota, where I grew up on a dairy farm. At the age of 14, I lost my sight in a farm-related accident, but continued working on the family farm each summer. I went on to attend Bemidji State University and William Mitchell College of Law, and was elected to the state House of Representatives at the age of 23. Today, I live in Elbow Lake with my wife, Anna, and our three children.



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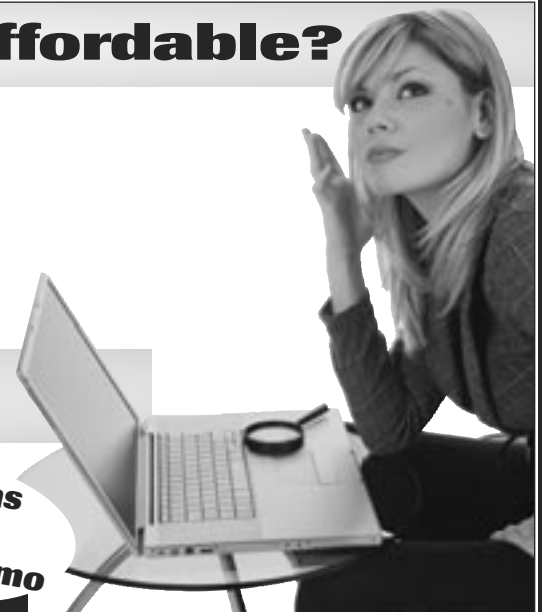
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Franken Continued from page 6C

simple things we can do to help make that a reality: pass legislation that will allow people to refinance their student loans and raise the federal minimum wage—I'm working hard to get both of these done.

Agriculture: The proposed definition of the Waters of the U.S. would subject nearly any property owner, including farmers, to new layers of reviews and permitting. Do you support this proposal?

Minnesota is a state that already has strong protections in place when it comes to water quality. Minnesota farmers are great stewards of their land. They want clean water. In fact, they do conservation practices voluntarily.

Waters of the U.S. is a confusing rule and we need to clarify it in a way that isn't burdensome to farmers and doesn't lead people to stop the good practices they've been using. Farmers want to know that they can continue to do what they're already doing. They don't want to have paperwork just to dig a fencepost hole.

I'm working to make sure this rule strikes the right balance of protecting our water quality without making it any harder to farm than it already is, especially because Minnesota farmers and ranchers are already doing things right. And if the EPA oversteps or if the final rule isn't right for Minnesota, I'll fight back. I've stood up to the EPA before and I won't hesitate to do it again.

Immigration: Do America's immigration laws need to be changed? What should be the tenets of any immigration reform legislation?

I was proud to support the Senate's comprehensive immigration reform bill. I look forward to continuing to work to pass comprehensive immigration reform that contains a tough but fair pathway to citizenship. I am especially proud of my amendment to protect children whose par-

ents are caught up in immigration raids by allowing parents to arrange care for their children, and ensuring the children are kept informed about where their parents are. The bill will also significantly bolster border security.

Open records: The federal Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) is widely regarded by citizens and the news media as being deeply flawed and often completely ineffective in achieving the purposes that it was enacted to serve. Would you support a federal study aimed at identifying reforms that could be made to the FOIA, so that in the future it will function more effectively on behalf of citizens?

I strongly support the Freedom of Information Act and believe that it is a valuable tool that allows citizens to hold the executive branch accountable. We need to ensure that it is functioning as it was intended to. Government officials need to respond to FOIA requests in a timely fashion while still protecting individuals' privacy rights, national security and other important concerns.

Other issues: Are there other issues you want to address?

The cost of a college education continues to rise, and the burden of student loan debt is holding our young people and our economy back. This is a real pocketbook issue for middle class families, which is why I've been working to do to something about this burden.

The total amount of student debt in America is \$1.2 trillion, and the average student in Minnesota has over \$30,000 in student loan debt — among the highest in the nation. We have to address this, and I've been working on several pieces of legislation to do just that.

I've been pushing a bill to enable students and graduates to refinance their loans at lower interest rates. You can refinance your car loan, your

home loan, your business loan. But you can't refinance your federal student loans. My bill would have allowed 560,000 Minnesotans to refinance their loans and keep more of their hard earned paychecks.

I also have two bipartisan bills with Republican Senator Chuck Grassley of Iowa that would help students and families understand the true cost of college and easily compare costs between colleges when selecting a school. I hear from families all the time that they find this process way too confusing, and we need to make it simpler.

I've got another bill to lower the huge amounts of money students have to spend right now on textbooks, which in Minnesota, costs an average of \$1400 per year. My bill would help expand the use of free, online college textbook that would save students a lot of money.

This is a real pocketbook issue for middle class families, and it's a real issue for our economy. And that's why I'm working to fix it.

Briefly summarize your personal background and qualifications.

It's been an honor serving the people of Minnesota in the United States Senate. And I'm proud of my record of working across party lines to get things done.

I grew up in St. Louis Park. My dad didn't graduate high school. My brother and I grew up in a two bedroom, one bath house. But I considered myself the luckiest kid in the world. Because I was. I was growing up middle-class, at the height of the middle class in America. I felt like I could do anything. I wake every day fighting for the middle class and for those aspiring to be in the middle class. I want to build an economy for the future. So our kids can feel like I did. I ask for your vote on November 4th so I can have the honor of continuing my work. Thank you.

Vote to Bring Your Voice

to St. Paul on Tuesday, November 4

John Lipke

State Representative 18B

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McFadden Continued from page 6C

Briefly summarize your personal background and qualifications.

While I don't have political experience — something I am

proud of — I do have the real-world experience Washington seems to be lacking. I've spent over 20 years working with small and medium-sized

businesses in Minnesota and across the country, giving me the insight we need to jumpstart this stagnant economy.

UNITED WE STAND

Attention Armed Forces Families and Friends!

We are proud to announce that we will be publishing a special page in the Nov. 5 edition of the McLeod County Chronicle, saluting our area service men and women who are currently serving here and abroad. We would like you to include your loved one on this page. Please send or bring a picture of your armed forces special person with the completed form below. Include a self-addressed, stamped envelope and we will mail your picture back to you after November 5 (or you may pick them up at our office after

Name _____

Branch of Service _____

Where Serving _____

Daughter/Son/Wife/Husband of _____

From (Town) _____

Mail to:

Military, c/o McLeod County Chronicle
P.O. Box 188, 716 E. 10th St.
Glencoe, MN 55336
or you may bring it in to our office.

Deadline to drop off photos is Nov. 3.

If you have any questions,
call 320-864-5518.

PETERSON

Getting Things Done

“No one in Congress — and we mean no one — knows more about farm policy and the mechanics of farm legislation than Peterson.” — The Fargo Forum

While most politicians talk, Congressman Collin Peterson is the one guy who works with leaders of both parties to get things done. His record speaks for itself.

ENDORSEMENTS

- Minnesota Farm Bureau
- Minnesota Farmers Union
- Alliance for Retired Americans
- National Rifle Association
- National Federation of Independent Business
- The Fargo Forum

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Helped write and pass a bipartisan Farm Bill that helps farmers and cuts the deficit by \$23 billion
- Author of Critical Access Hospitals provision in 2003 Medicare bill that saved small rural hospitals
- Helped start VA outpatient clinics in Fergus Falls, Montevideo, Alexandria and Bemidji
- Spearheaded economic development in his district while opposing high taxes and burdensome regulations
- Returned nearly \$2 million of his office budget to the federal treasury

Congressman Collin

Peterson

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