

PAGE 1: Five Brief Questions on Conditions for Kids

Q1: Address

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Q2: Arizona depends on elected leaders to make smart policy decisions that will create the conditions for individuals, families, and businesses to succeed. During the Great Recession Arizona suffered a high rate of people losing their homes, job losses around the state, and huge drops in state revenue. The major ongoing statewide policy directions have been shrinking state government, cutting spending in public K-12 and higher education, eliminating safety net strategies for struggling families, and phasing in additional permanent tax cuts. What direction do you support going forward to promote economic health for families and the state? (Check all that apply)

Comments

My focus is the economy of Arizona with an emphasis on rural communities. As we expand our tax base we will not be left with raising taxes as the only alternative to our economic issues. Steps towards this include that the local community, business, and government entities come together to create and implement strategic plans for economic growth that are a fit for their area. Creating partnerships with Arizona's economic development organizations is essential to help in this process, as is developing an education system that effectively supplies youth with the tools they need to live prosperous and productive lives. Then, as the communities develop, a strong business environment will also develop and these communities will be better equipped to retain their youth. This will help ensure not only a stable and growing workforce, but a growing and stable community base that will support business and industry and result in that community's sustainability. This, therefore, will strengthen the State as a whole.

2016 Candidate Questionnaire

Q3: Arizona stands out among the states in skyrocketing growth in the number of children living away from their families in temporary foster care due to abuse or neglect. The consequences include huge expense to taxpayers, an overwhelmed and unsustainable child protective services system, a shortage of foster families with children left sleeping in offices and living in shelters, and life-changing trauma for thousands of children. Do you support more focus on strategies like parent mentoring, child care assistance, family counseling and monitoring, and substance abuse treatment to prevent family crisis and help more children stay safely with their families?

Yes,

Comment

I support this, but it will depend on the language of said strategies and any legislation.

Q4: Business CEOs, parents, and teachers across the state are calling for increased investments in public education. The Arizona Joint Legislative Budget Committee (JLBC) data show a 25% drop in total state funding for K-12 education per student – a drop of \$1,200 per student from 2008 to 2016. According to the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), just over 1 in 3 eighth grade students in Arizona score proficient in math and fewer than 1 in 3 fourth grade students score proficient in reading. The new withdrawals from the State Land Trust approved by voters for ten years in Proposition 123 settle inflationary funding, but restore less than \$1 for every \$5 of what's been cut from the state budget for schools. Will you support increased investments in the state budget every year for: a) a workforce of qualified teachers with competitive compensation and quality professional development; b) classroom curriculum and supplies with updated textbooks and technology; and c) school building maintenance and repair to give students safe, clean, and functional places to learn.

Comments

From multiple directions, the State is asked for more money. More money for education, transportation, infrastructure, business development, and much more. The only avenues to finance these needs is to either raise taxes or expand the tax base. Raising taxes suffocates economic growth, expanding the tax base increases revenues. I agree that we need all of the above, but we must get the money into the classroom! One example of what teachers have to do is buy their own paper to print out tests. This is unacceptable. I will work hard to see that Arizona schools have what they need to be in the top performing percentile nationwide.

Q5: Reading proficiency by third grade is the most important predictor of high school graduation and career success. In 2016, 6 in 10 Arizona third graders failed the AzMerit reading test. Reading success begins long before third grade. Many children start Kindergarten already behind their peers; poor children have heard 30 million fewer words in their young lives. The high cost of quality child care and preschool education put them out of reach for many hardworking parents (costs of up to \$8,000 per year or more). Often, the children who start out behind stay behind. Please indicate the strategies you would support to promote reading success: (Check all that apply)

Comments

Reading is the foundation for education as a whole and, I believe, that all teachers, in every subject area, should be responsible for teaching reading. People can create a lot of programs for just about anything they decide we need a program for, but coming back to basics in the classroom and equipping teachers with the tools they need to teach their students is the key to the success of those students. Teachers are stymied in our current system and they need to be able to inspire their students, motivating them to explore, learn through, and basically cultivate a love for reading and learning. If given the freedom teachers once enjoyed, they can introduce programs that will incentivize their students with the abilities and pleasures of learning and reading. This will have a compound affect, inspire those student's families to do the same and spiral through their community.

2016 Candidate Questionnaire

Q6: Arizona has cut taxes every year (except one) for the past 26 years. Tax cuts passed just since 2009 will remove \$900 million from the state budget every year when they are phased in. Tax credits, like tax cuts, are permanent because they require a 2/3 vote of the legislature plus the signature of the governor to reverse or reduce. Tax credits have been growing far faster than state revenue, the state's economy, or state investments in public education without any evidence that they have created a single job. The amount taken out of state revenues for tax cuts and tax credits is not available to invest in public district and charter schools. What are your priorities for tax policy?(Check all that apply)

Comments

From my stance, that we need to expand our tax base, a quoted statement by the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC) in their March 2016 State Tax Cut Roundup confirms this, "Overall, the economic evidence strongly suggests that states with lower tax burdens and more economic freedom regularly outperform their higher tax and more restrictive counterparts." As stated early in this questionnaire, expanding the tax base is my focus and will provide increased revenues for the needs of communities and the State. Also, State Trust Land's usage and volume can be increased and built upon to enlarge the trust fund, thus providing more monies to the education system specifically.
