

#49

**COMPLETE**

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Page 1

**Q1**

Name

Paul Weich

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**Q2**

What race are you running in? (LD? House? Senate?)

House, LD12

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**Q3**

Email

PaulWeich4AZ@gmail.com

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**Q4**

Respondent skipped this question

Phone Number

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**Q5**

Children who have year-round health Insurance do better in school, are more likely to graduate from high school, are healthier, and earn more in adulthood. There are approximately 161,000 uninsured children in Arizona. If elected, how would you help ensure that all children and families have access to the health care that they need?

Besides working through the budget process, I will be making the case for expansion of KidsCare and AHCCCS. I will be emphasizing not only the justice arguments, but also the economic case to be made.

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**Q6**

We know that a child's earliest years, birth to age 8, are the most important for the development of their brains. High-quality early childhood experiences can enhance that development. How can the state take a role in helping parents give their children the best start in life?

Since there are many interwoven programs and agencies which receive state and federal funds, we have several places where budgets may be increased. Perhaps a comprehensive strategy bringing together the many parties could result in streamlining our childcare system (resulting in more programmatic dollars). I expect to be working with CAA-AZ on this issue.

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**Q7**

Many families in Arizona are struggling. Housing is becoming increasingly unaffordable, nearly one in four children live in poverty, and resources that used to be available to help families are no longer there. Research shows that when access to safety net resources are low, foster care populations are high. What is your plan to help children and families get the resources and services they need to keep them out of the child welfare system?

This, too, is going to require an approach that both looks small and big. Increasing the more tangible supports (such as Medicaid, housing, etc) would help. And, more global solutions -arrived at by the many stakeholders - need to be pursued.

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**Q8**

Arizona has been among the bottom states in per pupil K-12 funding for the past decade which has resulted in severe challenges including teacher shortages, crowded classrooms, and insufficient student support services. How will you ensure that students in every neighborhood have access to quality, well-funded education in Arizona

The lack of adequate funding is more than partly responsible for all of the issues identified in the question. With more funding, we will be better able to recruit/train/retain teachers like the professionals they are. Staff and support services would also be more stable and effective. And, our children will receive a better education and our state's economy will benefit. We also need to prevent funds from being drained from the public education system - vouchers and tax credits should be limited and the non-public schools which benefit should be held to the same standards as public schools.

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**Q9**

Arizona's elected leaders have created a tax code that is upside down and regressive— meaning that those with low incomes pay a much higher share of their income in taxes compared to Arizona's highest income earners. If elected, what will you do to make sure that wealthy and corporations pay their share of taxes?

The so-called flat tax (and the other two measures) passed in 2021 to thwart the public's surcharge to fund education have made our regressive system even worse. Especially now that the Supreme Court struck down 208 AND 307. Since they will be hard to repeal, we are going to need to come up with creative workarounds to try to move us towards a progressive tax code. (And, of course, that will require Democrats to gain control of at least one legislative chamber and/or the Governor's Office. I will be working tirelessly on all of these.

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**Q10**

As the cost of living is rising faster than wages in Arizona, many households are struggling to afford basic needs. If elected, what are three ways that you will improve economic well-being for Arizonans?

Permitting and encouraging cities to pursue affordable housing and/or measures to curb steep rental increases. Preemption is out of control at the Legislature. The ideas discussed above to address the child healthcare, welfare and education systems. Reforming the tax code to be more progressive, including such things as the EITC expansion proposed/passed by Sen. Bowie.

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