



# 2020 CANDIDATE SURVEY

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CANDIDATE NAME: **ALEX BARRON**

OFFICE SOUGHT: **SENATE 3**

PARTY: **REPUBLICAN**

**Q1. The K-12 Education budget is the state's largest by far, yet some people still believe that we are not spending enough. What would you do to help Idaho's K-12 students receive a stellar education?**

Educational Scholarship Accounts, only through the power of competition will we ever get a handle on this cost. Also why does Idaho recognize a "union like" organization to negotiate for Idaho teachers who may not be in any union? That is why I have worked with various organizations and supported Ron Mendive on his work with ESA. I look forward to continuing that work as a sitting State Senator.

**Q2. Graduation rates at Idaho's four-year universities are stagnant while tuition continues to increase (with the exception of the one-year tuition freeze). What would you do to bring down the cost of higher education and help students graduate with less debt?**

First I would advocate for congress to change the crony-capitalist policy that college debt cannot be expunged like any other debt. In addition I would look at the colleges endowments to cancel some of the debt they incurred. This would hopefully incentives the colleges and university to change their enroll polices. At this time an average of 50% of the student body does not graduate, but they must be provided resources for x number of years. If colleges paid even a portion of the cost for failed students, they could shrink and be more attentive to their enrollment polices. Also the incredible rise of administrative positions while enrollment has remain flat, or in some cases actually declined must be reversed.

**Q3. Idaho has both an income tax and a sales tax, while five of our six neighbors have only one or the other. Idaho also has high property taxes. What changes do you suggest, if any, to Idaho's state tax structure?**

Unless there is a drastic cut in government services in Idaho, than the overall "cost" to

taxpayers will be similar. Get rid of property taxes, and the sales tax could double. I am an advocate on reducing government size and cost, so I would work with various organizations and individuals to figure out which of these approaches would lead to the greatest tax relief for the Idaho tax payer.

**Q4. The grocery sales tax has long been debated in Idaho. Should Idaho repeal the tax on groceries? If yes, when?**

Yes. As soon as possible.

**Q5. Urban renewal districts receive all the increases in property tax revenue within their borders, which forces other property owners to fund increased service requirements. Should Idaho end urban renewal? If not, should state lawmakers change urban renewal law?**

Yes, urban renewal programs should be ended and that roll should be returned to city and county elected officials.

**Q6. Healthcare is a significant expense in Idaho's state budget, rivaling education in total appropriations. How would you tackle ever-increasing state Medicaid costs? More broadly, what ideas do you propose to help make quality healthcare more affordable for all?**

There are many ideas. Cross state-line competition, increasing free market options land transparency in pricing and outcomes. Medical cost sharing programs for different groups. Allowing us to re-import our own pharmaceuticals from nations. It is immoral that American pharmaceutical companies charge one price to poor nations, yet often a much higher cost to poor Americans.

**Q7. Criminal justice reform has become a bipartisan issue in recent years. Should Idaho explore further reforms? If so, which reforms would you support?**

Yes. An example is that some misdemeanors make it nearly impossible to have your firearms returned. Often more difficult than felonies. Another is to look at reforms for sentencing of primarily cannabis infractions.

**Q8. In 2020, Idaho saw some reduction in occupational licensing mandates. Should Idaho continue to identify and implement alternatives to licensure burdens? If yes, which licenses should be reviewed or repealed?**

Yes. Unsure, but things like barbers, hairdressers and such are prime examples.

**Q9. Federal dollars always come with strings, yet a significant portion of Idaho's annual state budget is funded with federal money. Should Idaho work to reduce its dependence on federal funding? If yes, how?**

Yes. I have a program called Idaho Resources for Idaho Jobs. This would enable us to manage and use in an appropriate way the massive natural resources here in Idaho. It would mean massive new jobs for Idahoans, and a much stronger tax base.

**Q10. Education choice allows parents and students to choose the education that best suits their needs. What policies would you support to strengthen education choice in Idaho?**

Educational Scholarship Accounts, only through the power of competition will we ever get a handle on this cost. I have worked with various organizations and supported Ron Mendive on his work with ESA. I look forward to continuing that work as a sitting State Senator.

**Q11. What is the proper role of state government?**

Per the Idaho constitution; All political power is inherent in the people. Government is instituted for their equal protection and benefit, and they have the right to alter, reform or abolish the same whenever they may deem it necessary; and no special privileges or immunities shall ever be granted that may not be altered, revoked, or repealed by the legislature.