



2020 CANDIDATE SURVEY

CANDIDATE NAME: **TAMMY NICHOLS**

OFFICE SOUGHT: **HOUSE 11B**

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?

I believe there needs to be more accountability, transparency, less 'upper management', and proof that the money we are spending is giving us the return we are wanting. I think that until we starting seeing proof that our education is moving in a upward trend, that no additional moneys (and even cuts) should be utilized. We also need to get back to the basics of education and get rid of the costly fluff.

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?

Get rid of the unessential positions, decrease the salaries of 'upper management', demand transparency and accountability. Further freeze the tuition cost, get rid of the fluff.

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?

I would still like to get rid of the grocery tax; also the income tax, and find a real way to fix property tax. Much of the cost of property tax needs to be addressed at the local level because budgets drive taxes, but at the state level we can address this issue by decreasing the county/city budgets, end urban renewal, quit giving so many tax breaks to companies, and figure out a way for people to truly own their homes and land when the have paid off their homes.

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

Yes...Should have been done in 2017.

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?

Urban renewal is a double tax and should be eliminated in actuality. If that cannot be done at this time then I believe that urban renewal boards should be elected positions if they are to exist at all, and that they should be reformed back to their original objective, which was to help areas that had gone into disarray, not pet projects.

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?

Healthcare should not be controlled nor funded by the government, with the possible exception of helping the poor and elderly. Now, it is out of control and the more the government gets involved the worse and more expensive it has become. We need to go back to basics...let the free market work, open state lines for insurance purchasing, encourage real non-profit health clinics, end the tax exempt statuses for hospital on property and equipment. Reform Medicaid and get it back to its true purpose of helping the poor. I also like the idea of upfront cost...I know of no other industry where you do not know what you will be paying upfront.

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, it needs to be reformed. Some areas I would like to see are mandatory minimums done away with, providing opportunities for inmates to learn trade skills so that they have the ability to provide for themselves once they are out, and to do away with some of the drug laws especially with possession.

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 we should continue. I would like to see further repeal with licensing regarding the trade industry, and to continue to remove obsolete rules/fees from the books.

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, we need to stop the dependency on the feds. We need to regain our state sovereignty, and stop spending so much money as that will help alleviate the amount we need.

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?

I would support a form of parental choice in education. I believe a savings account could be plausible, or a form of school vouchers (as long as the feds stay out).

Q11. What is the proper role of state government?

Governments role at the state level is to manage the affairs of the state, specifically the economy, creating state legislation that can become state law, and they are responsible for approving the state budget. Powers not granted to the federal government are reserved for the state.