



2020 CANDIDATE SURVEY

CANDIDATE NAME: **RON NATE**

OFFICE SOUGHT: **34B**

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?

The state has plenty of money to pay teachers well, provide high education standards, and help our children achieve excellence. We can do this two ways: 1. Remove wasteful spending on mandates from the federal government (Common Core) and the state government. We spend way too much money on meeting regulations, reporting requirements, and administrative inefficiency. 2. Provide more opportunities for districts, schools, and parents to choose the best education possible: including standards, curriculum and even what school to attend.

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?

Idaho spends a ton on higher education already (about 14% of the general fund budget). We know there is a lot of waste and extreme expenses at the administrative level. Many college administrators are among the highest paid in Idaho government. We also waste taxpayer dollars on disciplines not really belonging in higher education. Gender studies and "intersectionality" are not scientific and definitely not academic.

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?

We can start by immediately repealing the sales tax on groceries. Additionally, I would start the process of eliminating the property tax. We can fund government very easily if we both shift some of the property tax burden to sales taxes and also reduce taxes overall.

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. The people have been asking for it for too long already. It should have been done 3 years ago.

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, Idaho should end urban renewal. It is a misguided program and has been abused by districts at the cost of Idaho education and other local needs.

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?

We need to keep healthcare decisions as private choices; meaning people should be free to choose the best insurance and healthcare options for themselves. I will resist all attempts to centralize healthcare into a one or few sizes fits all program.

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, mandatory sentencing for minor drug crimes leads to many instances of injustice. I've heard their personal accounts of how their lives have been affected. We need to restore judges' abilities to make the reasonable consideration rather than be bound by unbending restrictions.

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?

Most if not all occupational licensing laws are ineffective in achieving their goals. They don't keep consumers safe or free from harm. Licenses lead to higher costs and allow the state to collect fees for literally nothing in return.

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, the federal dollars give away too much of Idaho's sovereignty. We should wean Idaho off both education and healthcare federal funding so Idahoans can make the best

choices about Idaho policy.

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?

We need to repeal the Blaine Amendment and create a comprehensive voucher process for all Idaho families and include ALL education options in the mix.

Q11. What is the proper role of state government?

The proper role of state government is only that which is Constitutional. We get into trouble when we expect government to provide for everyone or to be everyone's caretaker. Government is intended to protect rights, not interests, and we have gone astray of those principles to great expense and inefficiency. We can do better.