



# 2020 CANDIDATE SURVEY

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CANDIDATE NAME: **KENNY WROTEN**

OFFICE SOUGHT: **HOUSE 13B**

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 would eliminate Common Core. Continue support of teachers to encourage them to stay in Idaho. I also believe education starts at home and parents need to be involved and ensure students are ready to learn. I support STEM, CTE, and developing a robust intern/apprentice program.

**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?**

Eliminate the social diversity type curriculum and salaries related to it. Reduce unrelated "requirements" courses not associated with the chosen Major. Review levels of, and layers of, administration and tenured professors. A reduction in "overhead" could reduce tuition costs and in turn lower debt.

**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 like to see income and sales taxes reduced. Citizens, not government, are better stewards of their own money. I would support an indexing of the Homeowners Exemption to move with increasing/decreasing home values.

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

A repeal would be nice, but implementing it is another thing. What would qualify as

“grocery”, and what would not. Is it wheat, or flour, or bread? I would like to see a reduction in grocery tax, and sales tax, to perhaps 3%. More money, and food, would be put in citizens pockets for the entire year. This could eliminate the year end grocery credit and the cost of the State monitoring it, processing it, and all the costs associated to it. Plus, visitors and those passing through Idaho participate. A compromise may have a better chance of getting passed than would an all-or-nothing approach.

**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?**

The law should be changed. We have seen citizens of recent pushing for more transparency, more say, and more decision ability. The incremental tax increases can be a burden if the project does not fit the purpose of revitalizing blighted areas. A downtown, pet project that takes prime commercial real estate off the tax rolls is not a good use of urban renewal funds.

**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 still don’t know what the Medicaid initiative will cost. Perhaps a limit relative to the state budget and reductions in the indigent fund to offset. Insurance should be competitive and market-driven, as should health costs. Interstate markets for insurance and transparency in health costs can provide lower costs and better patient evaluation.

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

Idaho should focus on reducing criminals - educate and employ our citizens. Focus should be given to programs that keep those that have served their time from returning to crime and jail.

**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?**

Idaho should look for ways to reduce these burdens and barriers as much as possible. As opposed to collecting fees the State could provide a “noticing” system as an alternative. People should be able to work with as little government oversight as possible.

**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?**

Federal Funds come at a cost. Control is lost for every federal dollar received. Items like infrastructure will likely always include a certain amount of federal funding. But good strategic planning and developing local and private partners may reduce this dependence.

**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?**

Let parents decide where they send their children. Private charter or home school.

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

Government should play as little a role in citizens daily life as possible. State government should provide support in the areas of infrastructure and public safety. Economically, it should provide an environment that supports business and citizens so they may thrive.