



Jeff Backer
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PROFILE

CONTACT INFORMATION

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EXPERIENCE

Occupation & Employer: Business Owner

Education: BS in Public Administration and Chemistry

Previous Elected Offices (If Any): Mayor, School Board

Campaign endorsements to date and all endorsements you are seeking:

VOTERS GUIDE QUESTIONS

Why are you running for elected office?

I am running to ensure the priorities of Greater Minnesota are represented in St. Paul. Our region of the state has unique challenges that require someone with business, education and local government experience.

Why do you consider yourself a pro-business candidate?

Because I am a long-time small business owner with 14 employees who has seen the impact state government has on my day-to-day operations.

If elected, what will be your top priority?

Economic issues (please provide details):

Issues of concern are economic competitiveness and business climate, tax policy, environmental and agricultural regulation, education funding and transportation.

Other (please provide details):

TAX & FISCAL POLICY

To help Minnesota's economy grow, what strategy, or strategies, do you recommend for the Governor and the Legislature to enact in 2015?

- Improve Minnesota's business climate to foster economic growth and prosperity by reducing uncompetitive business taxes.
- Make it easier to do business in Minnesota by reducing and simplifying business regulations.
- Reform state government to make government-provided services more efficient and more affordable for Minnesota taxpayers.

Which of the following statements most accurately represents your position on business taxes:
Minnesota business taxes are too high – I support business tax reductions.



In 2013, the legislature increased the individual income tax rate, affecting many small businesses whose income is taxed as “pass through” to the business owners.

I support reducing “pass through” taxes on small and mid-sized Minnesota business owners.

TRANSPORTATION

How should Minnesota address its unmet transportation needs in the near future?

Minnesota should address its transportation needs with existing revenues by focusing on improving efficiencies.

Do you support an increase in the fuel tax for expansion and maintenance of roads and bridges?

No

Do you support raising the metro area sales tax to fund metro transit projects?

No

ENVIRONMENT

Do you support streamlining the environmental review and permitting process in Minnesota?

Yes, permitting takes too long – the system needs to be updated and streamlined immediately.

Do you support new restrictions on nonferrous mining?

No, the current restrictions and standards are sufficient to protect the environment.

Do you support a container deposit bill that will charge consumers ten cents for every bottle, can and milk/juice container sold in Minnesota, and that will be refunded upon return to a recycling center?

No

ENERGY & ELECTRIC RATES

Which of the following statements most accurately represents your opinion on electric rates in Minnesota?

Changes need to be made in how business customers pay for electricity - the cost of service should be the primary factor in setting electric rates (i.e. cost-based rates). The Public Utilities Commission (PUC) should not set electric rates so that one set of customers is subsidizing another.

HEALTH CARE

Which of the following approaches best reflects your position on what Minnesota should do to improve health insurance and the MNsure health insurance exchange?

Fix it - establish a health insurance exchange that complies with the minimum requirements under federal law and provides consumers the ability to shop based on provider quality as well as cost.

Do you support modifying the health care benefits provided through Minnesota’s public health care programs so that they remain high quality, but are more in line with what other states offer?

Yes, we can reform and redesign our benefits to improve quality of care and save money.

EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

In 2013, the legislature eliminated the requirement that high school students be able to pass basic skill exams in reading, writing, and math in order to graduate. Do you believe:

It is important that a student be able to pass basic skill exams to show s/he is college-ready.



Do you support legislation that would require school boards to use teacher performance as a factor in determining teacher layoffs, and not base layoffs solely on seniority?

Yes, school districts should use performance and not just seniority when making layoff decisions.

LABOR/MANAGEMENT

Which statement best reflects your views on requiring all workers in a union shop to pay union dues as a condition of employment:

I would remove this requirement and support legislation to make Minnesota a “right-to-work” state.

Would you support changing Minnesota’s prevailing wage calculation to the average wage?

Yes

ELECTIONS

Do you support moving the state primary election from August (when voter turnout is under 10%) to June in order to improve voter turnout and maximize the time candidates spend with general election voters?

Yes

CIVIL JUSTICE

Do you support reducing Minnesota’s six-year statute of limitations to three years?

Yes - reducing the statute of limitations would reduce the legal exposure of businesses, schools, and governments and would also make it easier to defend cases since memories are more current and it is more likely that witnesses and evidence can be found.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

List any additional comments or explanation to your answers above:

As my experience as volunteer Ambulance EMT, I support patient-centered, free market health care with is not an option under your health care question.