

# Questions for State Representative Candidates

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What do you think are the 3 biggest issues Maine faces over the next four years?

**Maine is on a downward spiral regarding taxation, spending, and job creation/disappearance. All three of these issues are related, as each one directly impacts the others. Much of our spending woes comes not from what the money is spent on, but how that funding is misused. Efficiency is at a minimum, and many state organizations exist solely to perpetuate their own existence. The size of government must be reduced, greater emphasis must be placed on small business and sound economic policies which will help them grow, and taxes must be lowered to a level where more people than the very wealthy can afford to live a comfortable life in Maine.**

How will you represent *all Portlanders*, including the traditionally marginalized members of our community (for example, the homeless, the poor, those with mental or physical disabilities)?

**I believe that President Theodore Roosevelt said it best when saying that everyone was entitled to “a square deal – no more, and no less”. Those people who the question refers to as “marginalized” should be assisted to find ways to productively give back to the community as well, in such a way that they are able to. I don’t believe that anyone should get anything for free, but it should also be recognized that many of these people may not have the ability to pick themselves up, but no government should play a role in allowing them to stay down; rather, government should help those who also try to help themselves.**

How will you deal with the budget shortfall? Augusta has been committed to only dealing with one side of the budget, by cutting expenses. Are you open to raising revenues? If so, in what ways?

**Revenue *must* be raised, but NOT by raising taxes. Raising taxes will do exactly the opposite: it will drive even more people, jobs, and capital out of the state. On the contrary, lowering some taxes will allow small businesses to regain some stability and hire more workers. By fostering an environment favorable to small business, revenue will eventually increase. This will be a long and slow process that will be difficult, but it is the only way to get out of the hole we are in. You can’t argue with facts: over the last thirty years taxes in Maine have gotten higher, the state has gotten poorer, and this is directly related. By putting more money in the pockets of Maine’s working families, they will be able to spend more, live better, and be more secure in their futures. You cannot be economically solvent with the belief that the state has to grab an ever-increasing share of a smaller revenue source. Instead, the state should focus on increasing the size of the revenue pool, and then you’ll never need to raise taxes again. All that said, I do believe in a progressive tax system in the state. It is not fair for a person who makes \$30,000 to pay the same taxes as someone who makes \$100,000, but it’s also not fair for that same person making \$100,000 to pay the same**

**taxes as someone who makes \$1 million or more.**

There has been persistent uncertainty regarding federal subsidies for Rail in Maine (specifically the Downeaster). Are you committed to Maine's Amtrak link? How would the state make up any short fall in federal funding for Amtrak?

**I believe that the Amtrak link in Maine is a wonderful thing, but part of the problem that Maine is currently in stems from the belief that everything needs to be funded – so by trying to fund everything you eventually are able to fund nothing. In order for things like this to remain economically solvent without massive governmental funding, creativity must be used to encourage use of it by people and investment by business.**

Do you support same-sex marriage? (please answer yes or no) If yes, what will you do to further the cause? If no, why do you oppose same-sex marriage?

**No. I support civil unions and/or domestic partnerships, the latter of which currently exists in Maine. I believe all people should have the same rights under the law, but that is not the definition of marriage. Marriage is more than a legal recognition, and for the government to mandate something that is not a traditional part of society is an infringement upon what the constitutional limitations of government are.**

What policies do you believe need to be enacted to support Maine's growing immigrant and refugee population?

**I believe a better question should be what policies need to be enacted to support hard working people in Maine who have lived there for generations in poverty without hope of improvement despite their best efforts.**

How can the government of Maine keep our youth from leaving and attract new youth to the State?

**One word: jobs. However, government's role is not to create jobs, but rather to create an environment where free enterprise is able to create jobs. Small businesses are the backbone of Maine's economy, and the state needs to do a much better job of allowing them to operate profitably so that they can create jobs. At the same time, it must be remembered that large business is not the enemy and that many large corporations are the sources of the highest paid jobs. Maine's government needs to do more to lure business to Maine. Doing so will not only lead to more job creation and growth, but greater tax revenue.**

How would you improve access to healthcare in Maine? What steps would you take to improve Dirigo Health? Do you support single payer healthcare?

**Several efforts in the legislature to allow interstate competition of private insurance companies in Maine have failed. Why is this, when allowing such competition would only serve to decrease the rates of quality health insurance? It is obvious that a single-payer system, or the watered down version of that which is Dirigo Health, does not decrease the cost of health care but only increases the taxpayer burden, state bureaucracy, and limits the quality of care that doctors are able to provide. It is all too easy to be enticed by the myth that a single payer system will solve our healthcare woes, especially since the entire country's health care system is in dire need of reform. But to do so at the expense of the greater economy is akin to killing the goose that lays golden eggs. The real way to lower health costs is tort reform, greater competition between private companies (which the state**

**could promote by offering tax incentives to companies that give discounted rates to Maine people), and stricter limitations on both state and governmental administration and bureaucracy. Too much money spent on “health care” goes to administrators in both the public and private sectors who do little more than justify their own roles in the system. There should be as little red tape as possible between a patient and their doctor.**