

League of Young Voters' Questions for Gubernatorial Candidates

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What are the three biggest issues Maine faces over the next four years?

- 1. Economy- need to support existing business and draw businesses to the state to increase states revenue so we can help pay for essential services such as education, DHHS, public safety, transportation etc.**
- 2. Education- 25% dropout rate and the flow of young people out of the state.**
- 3. Energy- affordable energy costs and the development of renewable energy**

Pick two of Maine's greatest natural resources. Describe your vision for how those resources might best foster economic growth AND be conserved for future generations.

- 1. Forests – Comprehensive forestry management programs to keep our forests healthy and productive. Promote wood bio fuel to help reduce our carbon footprint ie: Pellet stoves / biomass electricity at our mills etc.**
- 2. Hydro power- According to the U.S. Department Of Energy Secretary Steven Chu, “One of the best opportunities we have to increase our supply of clean energy is by bringing our hydropower systems into the 21st Century. With this investment, we can create jobs, help our environment and give more renewable power to our economy without building a single new dam.”**

What approach will you take toward Maine's growing immigrant and refugee population? What policies would you enact to support these new communities?

I would support the non-profit organizations that have been started already to help immigrants and refugees. I haven't heard of a lot of feedback regarding the immigrant population. As for additional support, we need to figure out our economic and budget problems before we start adding on additional government spending.

What role does government have in creating jobs? What jobs do you think we should be trying to create? What resources do you see as necessary to accomplish this goal?

The government's role in job creation is listening to the concerns of businesses here in Maine and also the criticisms of businesses that choose not to come to Maine and then making their suggested changes. Creating jobs is as simple as helping the businesses already here grow as well as bring new businesses to the state. One problem that has been mentioned is that the degrees offered in our schools do not match the degrees needed for the jobs that we need right here right now which leads to unemployment and also dissuades businesses from coming to the state.

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

Yes, as a business owner I know very well that cutting spending is only one half of the solution and raising revenue is critical to sustaining important government programs.. Most people focus on raising taxes as a way to increase revenue, but raising taxes puts a higher burden on the people of Maine when they can least afford it. What tends to be ignored are the positive ways to raise revenue. Getting people into the workforce and earning an income also raises revenue for the state. Bringing new businesses to Maine raises revenue for the state. Increasing the success of businesses raises revenue for the state. These are all positive ways to raise revenue and being a small business owner, they would be at the forefront of my policy decisions.

Appointing agency heads is one of the most important jobs the governor has. What qualities are you looking for in state department commissioners? How will you choose the next commissioner of the Department of Environmental Protection, for example?

One major quality we will be looking for is a commitment to implement lean practices and processes which create efficiency and savings. Any fool can spend money but it takes intelligence and discipline to save money. Obviously experience in the area would be important as well, for example the commissioner of Environmental Protection would be someone experienced with Maine's environmental initiatives and regulations.

If a bill supporting same-sex marriage came across your desk, would you sign it into law? If yes, what would you do to further the cause of same-sex marriage? If no, why are you opposed to same-sex marriage?

I believe that as Governor my vote on that issue should not be worth more than any other voter in Maine, so for that reason I would not sign a bill supporting or opposing same-sex marriage until it was voted on by the Maine people, in which case I would uphold their decision.

Please describe how the government of Maine can keep its youth from leaving the state and attract new young people to move here?

We constantly proclaim that the only opportunity exists outside of Maine. We need to stop indoctrinating our young people to believe there's no opportunity in this "one horse" State. To attract new young people to move here, we need to lower the tuition for out-of-state students. Statistics show the majority of students settle in the State they were educated in.

What will you do to address Maine's health care concerns and help Mainers without coverage? What role does Dirigo Health play in your plan? Do you support a single payer system?

Dirigo Health will be phased out because it is not helping enough people to be worth the money that is put into it. It has become a "black hole". In order to lower health care costs we need to increase competition. The way to increase competition is to ease the regulations that have forced all the health care providers out of the state. NH's health care premiums are 30% lower than ours. They have 14 companies to choose from. We have two or three. We do not support a single payer system. It won't support itself !

What is your vision for public transit in Maine?

Busing for our elderly residents should be a big priority. As far as “mass” transit, it’s not feasible in Maine due to our lack of population density and independence.

What actions will you take to improve labor conditions in Maine?

Create job opportunities so people have a choice on where they’re employed. That provides a healthy environment for workers to get the best pay and benefits.

What are your top three priorities regarding public education?

1. Lower the high school dropout rate by 30%

2. Lower the cost of post-secondary education (consolidating administrative duties)

3. Increase availability of co-op programs and vocational school

In what ways will you improve the quality, affordability, and accessibility of Maine's pre-kindergarten through college public education system?

We will introduce merit-based pay into education. It will consist of a three part process involving the principal, the parents, and peers. This will provide a solid basis for evaluating performance and compensating accordingly. Affordability and accessibility go hand in hand and we can improve affordability by reducing administrative costs and duplicate programs. Our University system needs to focus on colloborating instead of competing with each other.

What action (if any) will you take to ensure that Mainers with developmental disabilities would get the proper services that they require? What is your stance on budget cuts for community support programs and shared living programs for this population?

Mainers are honest hard working people that care. It’s a priority to take care of people in need. Focusing on giving them a hand up, not a hand out. We believe in taking care of people and helping them to establish healthy, productive lifestyles that benefit all.