



## State Legislative Races Candidate Questionnaire

**Deadline for submission: 5:00PM PDT, October 4, 2024**

The City of Bend has a vibrant business community, comprised of small, medium and large businesses. As a state legislator, you will play a crucial role in supporting and fostering its growth through the policies you adopt in Salem.

To help Chamber members understand your stance on business-related issues and Chamber priorities, we kindly request your responses to the following questions. **Please limit your answers to 250 words per question.**

Completed questionnaires will be posted on the Bend Chamber website in PDF format for both Chamber members and the general public to view.

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### Bend Chamber Priorities and Policy Principles

Whether reviewing local city and county ordinances or weighing in on legislative proposals in Salem, the Chamber has an active and effective advocacy program.

We are a 501(c6) organization and engage in direct advocacy at all levels of government. Our guiding policy principles, set by the Chamber Board of Directors, include:

- Re-build a state where businesses thrive in our community and ensure sustainable funding sources absent additional impacts on businesses
- Increase the supply of attainable housing, prioritizing workforce housing at 80-120 percent AMI
- Promote economic vitality, workforce development and innovation for a vibrant business community
- Support for transportation and infrastructure projects to alleviate traffic congestion and plan for future growth
- Increase access to affordable, high-quality childcare; and ensure adequate funding for K-12 public education
- Advocate for a thoughtful balance between environmental sustainability and economic health

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**Please provide your name and answer the questions under each of the categories.**

**First / Last name\***

Keri|

Lopez

## **Regulatory & Tax Environment**

1. How would you streamline bureaucracy and reduce regulatory burdens to make it easier for businesses to operate in Oregon?\*

Oregon ranks in the bottom half of the United States to operate a business in. For a state that is supposed to welcome small businesses we aren't doing a very good job. To answer the question, the closer to the problem the better the answer. We need to bring back local control – a business in Portland is not the same as Bend. Every policy or solution should be driven by making it easier to operate in Oregon; more jobs equals more tax revenue for a income state tax state.

2. What are your thoughts on the state's tax system, is it efficient or does it need to be revisited and modernized?\*

Oregon does not have a revenue problem, we have a spending problem. There was a \$5.5 billion dollar tax kicker a year ago because of all the revenues coming in. As we get closer to balanced government we can prioritize our spending on programs making Oregon better and ensuring our essential services are funded to the necessary level.

## Workforce Housing & Growth

1. What specific policies do you propose to accelerate housing development for growing communities in Central Oregon?\*

First off, it shouldn't take longer to get a permit than it does to build a house. I support policies to make building permits required to take less than 90 days for approval. Second, we must expand our land supply for building in Bend. We have done a good job with "in fill" in Redmond and Bend. When we limit land for development, not only does it become scarce, but the price continues to stay high or go higher. As a home builder, lot prices are key to getting home prices down, but also creating more supply in the system to allow the market factors to work.

2. What are your transportation and infrastructure funding priorities for the 2025 session?\*

Critical infrastructure must be first. Bridges, tunnels, and other safety priorities. I will be focused on making sure our Highway 97 gets funding priority as well as our mountain passes need work. It is critical for our business and livable environment in Central Oregon to get over and back on the passes safely.

## Climate Protection Program and Environmental Stewardship

What is your position on the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) Climate Protection Program? How would you work with DEQ in your role as a legislator to draft a program that has business input?\*

It is a mandate from Governor Brown that should not have been enacted without legislative approval. Let's bring it back to the Legislature, discuss it, drive input and get an up and down vote on it. We have a democracy for a reason and let's get all the interest groups ability to weigh in on legislation versus mandates.

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