

Candidate Questionnaire Responses

The West Coast Chamber serves as an advocate for business at the local, state, and federal level for our 1,200+ member organizations and nearly 80,000 member employees. Our commitment is to educate our members on important policy issues, provide access to our elected officials, and serve as an advocate for a business-friendly environment.

In an effort to educate our community and prepare residents to cast their ballots in the upcoming election, we invited candidates in key races to share their perspectives on issues that matter to our local business community. Responses from those who completed the questionnaire are reflected below. Candidates who did not submit responses by the deadline are noted as “No response received”.

Candidates for Michigan House of Representatives, 85th District

Richard Abraham

No response received.

John C. O'Brien

Economic Competitiveness – What do you believe is the state's role in creating an environment where businesses can thrive, grow, and create jobs?

I am running to promote meaningful tax reform in the Michigan Legislature. Michigan should avoid proposals that simply eliminate one major tax, such as property or income taxes, in a way that benefits one group of taxpayers while shifting the burden to others. I have gotten so tired of people electing extremists without leadership skills to try again and focus on My Specialty TAXES.

Yes we all dislike them. We need a long term strategy to both lower public taxation and spending.

Reinstate right-to-work protections in Michigan while accepting a need for skilled union workers.

Preserve and strengthen agricultural property tax credits. Think Food!

Create business tax-free zones, when a business decides to purchase and renovate a building or put a new facility where a property has sat empty similar to those used in Chicago, to encourage manufacturers to return to empty or abandoned properties in communities throughout Michigan. The point being lets refill our cities and existing building spaces before jumping at every new development taking land out of other uses.

Make economic development funds incentive-based, measurable, and distributed on results rather than given all at once.

Workforce & Talent – Employers continue to face workforce challenges. What actions would you support to address barriers to workforce participation and help attract and retain talent in Michigan?

Human Resource departments need to change their thought process on what skills are needed for a job not certificates and degrees. I have seen too many fully qualified people excluded from a job based solely on do they have this piece of paper. Education barriers show the largest disparity. Nationwide the spread between white and non white college educated people has a 14 to 19% disparity* Continuing and expanding job training at M-Tec centers is critical for production facilities, state funding for job training can help with this. Subsidies should be given to employers to hire those who have been incarcerated, having a disability, or in drug recovery help employers develop job sharing programs for working mothers who at times have trouble with work life balance. Transportation for those without their own vehicle.

Childcare – Access to affordable, reliable childcare remains a challenge for employers and working families. What solutions would you prioritize?

I know Gentex has developed an innovative program to stress early child development but It is expensive. Good Childcare is one of the most expensive cost to working families and crucial to be able to be on time and productive. Funding may be a problem looking for a solution is not.

Housing – Workforce housing continues to be a challenge in many communities. What policies would you support to increase housing availability and affordability?

Hudsonville has chosen to follow its long term development making Harvey Street a focus for gathering and community. 25 years ago when I saw the design I laughed. Today I see the city with pride. I helped do that. Just some of it. Projects for housing have filled under the leadership of Mark who beat me in a small voter turnout for Mayor. He has done a great job. I have watched and learned. Local communities can choose to make things grow.

Allowing construction projects has been available and will continue to do such by me. They always require local approval. I believe we already have acceptable tax incentives for housing projects in Michigan.

An affordability problem we have is excessive charges by Bankers. We need to reinstate Michigan's Usury Law with a maximum interest charge at 20%. If a bank can't make money at that rate maximum, they don't belong in business. How does it affect housing its a pocket book issue. Less to banks is more for other things.

Vision & Accountability – What do you want business leaders to understand about your vision for Michigan's future, and what should they hold you accountable for if elected?

Michigan's long term focus must continue to have opportunities for good jobs, small business growth and a strong sense that we are an immigrant nation. Welcoming legal immigration is essential for the long term growth of our economy.

Economic growth is achieved by innovation and modernization. Individual Freedom cannot be used as a weapon to destroy We the People. Individual Responsibility is important. It has to be a learned process. Lecturing a hungry 10 year old from a broken family about this will never bring the desired result. Taking the time to teach him how to cook and then clean up will.

Leadership comes to us through example. I was fortunate to have a judge, doctor, insurance and small business owner, my dad an innovator in Special Education on our block. Our local banker taught me how to pray at his farm while he worked and prayed before the bank opened.

I was a Boy Scout the only place where I ever felt I belonged. I received BSA District Award of Merit in 1994.

Helping people is my life. I fix tax problems. Admitted to practice before the IRS.

Vote for tax reform, please.

Brad Slagh

Economic Competitiveness – What do you believe is the state's role in creating an environment where businesses can thrive, grow, and create jobs?

Create consistent policies and procedures including taxation, then get out of their way.

If we as a State need to provide incentives to bring business here it ought to be related to site preparation.

Workforce & Talent – Employers continue to face workforce challenges. What actions would you support to address barriers to workforce participation and help attract and retain talent in Michigan?

Continue to look for ways to retrain displaced workers to meet today's worker needs..

Seek ways to provide income tax breaks for Michigan youth who get education in the State and get a job here in the State at the completion of their program.

Childcare – Access to affordable, reliable childcare remains a challenge for employers and working families. What solutions would you prioritize?

Incentivize companies that provide childcare.

Treat staffing of child care centers more like education facilities

Housing – Workforce housing continues to be a challenge in many communities. What policies would you support to increase housing availability and affordability?

Seek ways to reduce the pop up taxes on houses being purchased/sold.

Encourage local units of government to relook at zoning laws for better infill.

Vision & Accountability – What do you want business leaders to understand about your vision for Michigan's future, and what should they hold you accountable for if elected?

We can not spend our way into a position of strength, we must invest wisely for our future.

I will continue to hold and work toward incorporating our West Michigan values into all legislation that I have the opportunity to touch.

Candidates for Michigan House of Representatives, 86th District

Nancy DeBoer

Economic Competitiveness – What do you believe is the state's role in creating an environment where businesses can thrive, grow, and create jobs?

The state needs to provide a rules and regulations that aren't onerous and don't do more harm than good. Our tax structure should also be easy to understand, competitive when compared to other states and promote business investment/growth.

Workforce & Talent – Employers continue to face workforce challenges. What actions would you support to address barriers to workforce participation and help attract and retain talent in Michigan?

I am sponsoring legislation to allow public schools to expand their offering for students to participate in innovative programming like career and technical education (CTE), apprenticeships, internships, and competency education. I'm also a supporter of allowing trades education dual enrollment in high school. I have voted many times to support workforce state/private employer partnership programs like the Going Pro Talent Fund.

Childcare – Access to affordable, reliable childcare remains a challenge for employers and working families. What solutions would you prioritize?

I recently voted to expand the MI Tri-Share program in Michigan. I have also written and will be championing a package of bills which will help address the childcare availability issues in Michigan. The bill package will provide targeted tax credits for opening a new childcare or expanding capacity of an existing one by 50% or more. The package would also provide a property tax exemption for employers who open a new location to provide childcare for employees or expand existing capacity by at least 50%.

Housing – Workforce housing continues to be a challenge in many communities. What policies would you support to increase housing availability and affordability?

I support policies which promote building and rehabilitating more quality, affordable homes. I helped pass legislation which bans private equity funds from owning more than 100 single-family homes in Michigan. I'm currently sponsoring legislation to reduce housing costs by lowering of the costs and hurdles associated with building new units. Previously, I voted to allow MSHDA home loans amounts to be issued based on the average area purchase price, instead of a fixed amount set in 2009. This allowed locals to obtain home loans or refinance mortgages again.

Vision & Accountability – What do you want business leaders to understand about your vision for Michigan's future, and what should they hold you accountable for if elected?

I believe the role of a state representative is to be the voice of the people in their district. I advocate for state spending to help improve the lives of those who live in my district and am an advocate for statewide changes to which foster economic growth which helps improve the quality of life for all of Michigan.

Joseph McClusky

Economic Competitiveness – What do you believe is the state's role in creating an environment where businesses can thrive, grow, and create jobs?

While people build businesses, state government sets the table. Reliable infrastructure and opportunities for workers to be trained and ready for the workforce are crucial in ensuring businesses can thrive. My job in Lansing isn't to pick winners, it's to get government out of the way where it's just adding red tape, and show up where it actually matters. This includes infrastructure, training, and rules businesses can plan around. An employer in the Greater Holland area should be able to plan five years out, not five months.

Workforce & Talent – Employers continue to face workforce challenges. What actions would you support to address barriers to workforce participation and help attract and retain talent in Michigan?

I moved to Holland for Hope College and planted my roots here because this community is worth staying for. Unfortunately, we're losing that pull for the next generation when they can't afford to live here. I'll support expanding skilled trades pathways starting in high school, real investment in career and technical education, and partnerships between local employers and community colleges so training actually lines up with the jobs on the ground. I'd also point out that housing and childcare aren't separate from workforce policy — they are workforce policy. If people can't afford rent or find a childcare spot, they can't show up for your business, no matter how good the job is.

Childcare – Access to affordable, reliable childcare remains a challenge for employers and working families. What solutions would you prioritize?

Every employer I've talked to in this district has a story about a good employee who had to cut hours, or quit, because childcare fell through. That creates problems for families and businesses. We need to get creative with finding pathways to make childcare affordable for all. I'll support state incentives for employer-provider partnerships, similar to the program Gentex and Outdoor Discovery Center have shown to be successful. I'll work to expand child care subsidies so more working families actually qualify, and funding that helps providers cover the real cost of care so they can pay their staff and keep their doors open — instead of waiting on a one-size-fits-all mandate from Lansing.

Housing – Workforce housing continues to be a challenge in many communities. What policies would you support to increase housing availability and affordability?

Apartments in Holland are running north of \$1,400 a month, and starter homes are getting past what a teacher or a machinist can afford. That prices out the workforce our employers need. We held a housing roundtable, and the biggest takeaway wasn't just the red tape, it was that we don't have enough skilled construction workers to build at the scale this region needs. A lot of that workforce has been pulled to places like North Carolina for hurricane rebuilding work and hasn't come back. So alongside the usual fixes — more housing types, faster local permitting, real support for first-time homebuyers and renters —

I want to put real money behind building trades: apprenticeships, high school and community college construction programs, and making sure a career on a job site pays well enough that we can grow and keep that workforce here instead of losing it to whoever's rebuilding somewhere else.

Vision & Accountability – What do you want business leaders to understand about your vision for Michigan's future, and what should they hold you accountable for if elected?

I grew up in a conservative household where my parents taught me to work hard, tell the truth, and love my neighbor as myself. Even though my politics have changed, those values guide me to this day, and help inform how I plan to legislate. Accountability is a pillar of my campaign. When I talk to voters across the district I hear about their distrust of government. We can rebuild that trust if we are willing to give tools to the people to do so. That's why I am in favor of expanding the Freedom of Information Act to include the state legislature and governor's office. I don't take corporate PAC money, so I answer to the people and employers of this district, not Lansing insiders. Hold me accountable to three things: making this district more affordable to live, work, and hire in; being straight with you even when it's not the easy answer; and actually legislating.

I also plan to actually talk to the people I represent, on a regular basis, not just a coffee hour once in a while that only works if you can get away from your job in the middle of the day. I'll hold hours that fit people's schedules, not just mine, and I'll come to you — your workplace, your neighborhood — instead of expecting everyone to find their way to me.

Candidates for Michigan Senate, 31st District

Keagan Host

No response received.

Chris Kleinjans

Economic Competitiveness – What do you believe is the state's role in creating an environment where businesses can thrive, grow, and create jobs?

The state's role isn't to pick winners and losers. It's to create an environment where businesses have the confidence to invest, grow, and create jobs. That means providing a stable and predictable regulatory climate, investing in infrastructure, developing a skilled workforce, and encouraging innovation so Michigan remains competitive.

At the same time, Lansing has to recognize that one-size-fits-all economic development doesn't work. Every community has its own strengths, challenges, and vision for the future. The state's job is to provide tools, resources, and flexibility that allow communities to build on what makes them unique, not dictate their future from Lansing.

That doesn't mean government steps aside. It means government becomes a better partner. Major employers look for reliable infrastructure, a talented workforce, quality housing, and communities where people want to live and raise a family. Those are investments the state can and should help lead.

My approach is simple: create the conditions for success, and invest in the foundations that help businesses and families thrive together. When we do that, businesses have the confidence to invest, entrepreneurs have the opportunity to grow, and Michigan becomes a place where good jobs and strong communities work hand in hand.

Workforce & Talent – Employers continue to face workforce challenges. What actions would you support to address barriers to workforce participation and help attract and retain talent in Michigan?

Michigan's workforce challenges won't be solved by a single program because they're about more than jobs. If we want to attract and retain talent, we have to create communities where people can afford to live, build a career, and raise a family.

One of the biggest barriers today is housing. We need to continue increasing the supply of workforce housing by supporting local efforts to modernize zoning, investing in the infrastructure that makes new development possible, and removing barriers that slow construction. When people can find a home they can afford near where they work, businesses have a much better chance of recruiting and retaining the employees they need.

We also need strong local communities. Completing the modernization of Michigan's revenue-sharing system would give local governments the resources they need to invest in their communities while reducing the pressure to rely on higher local taxes and fees.

The best workforce strategy is creating places where people want to live and businesses want to invest. When we focus on housing, strong local communities practical education, and the infrastructure that supports growth, we're building the talent pipelines that will keep Michigan competitive for decades to come.

Childcare – Access to affordable, reliable childcare remains a challenge for employers and working families. What solutions would you prioritize?

Access to affordable, reliable childcare is not just a family issue, it is a workforce and economic issue. When parents can't find quality childcare close to home, businesses feel it through higher absenteeism, lower productivity, and greater difficulty attracting and retaining workers. The state's role should be to create the conditions that allow childcare providers to be financially successful. Right now, many providers face an impossible balancing act: they can't afford to pay competitive wages without raising tuition beyond what working families can afford. That's a market challenge that deserves a practical solution.

Instead of relying on grants, I would prioritize a revolving loan fund that offers low-interest financing to expand childcare capacity. These loans could help independent providers, employer-sponsored childcare centers, and partnerships between businesses, chambers of commerce, downtown development authorities, and other community organizations build or expand facilities.

In return, participating providers would commit to paying competitive wages to childcare professionals while keeping tuition aligned with the realities of their local communities, not a one-size-fits-all statewide average. Because the loans are repaid, the same dollars can be reinvested to support additional childcare projects over time, creating a sustainable model instead of another one-time program.

Housing – Workforce housing continues to be a challenge in many communities. What policies would you support to increase housing availability and affordability?

Michigan's housing shortage didn't happen overnight, and it won't be solved with a single policy. We need a practical, multi-faceted approach that brings together state government, local communities, and the private sector to increase both the supply and affordability of housing. Programs like MiNeighborhood are a good start, but incentives alone won't meet the demand. Local governments need to examine zoning policies that make it difficult to build the kinds of housing our communities need. We also need to continue investing in the infrastructure that makes housing possible. Expanding the state's revolving infrastructure fund can help communities extend water, and sewer service to areas that are ready for responsible growth.

I also believe the state should think beyond traditional incentives and become a true investment partner. Community Foundations have demonstrated how impact investing can generate lasting community benefits while attracting additional private capital. Applying that mode to housing, could unlock new investment and help finance projects that might not otherwise move forward.

Finally, we can't ignore the workforce behind the workforce housing. If we're serious about building more homes, we need more skilled trades professionals to build them. Rebuilding that talent pipeline is essential to meeting Michigan's long-term housing needs.

Vision & Accountability – What do you want business leaders to understand about your vision for Michigan's future, and what should they hold you accountable for if elected?

My vision for Michigan is built on a simple belief: most people want the opportunity to achieve their goals through hard work, but they also understand that sometimes the difference between getting ahead and falling behind is whether the right support is available at the right moment. If elected, I would bring more than twenty years of experience working with communities across the 31st District. That experience has taught me that while our communities share many challenges, they are not all the same, which means effective policy cannot be one-size-fits-all.

At the same time, there are statewide priorities that affect every community: reliable infrastructure, responsible water stewardship, housing availability, workforce readiness, and public safety. My job would be to connect those larger state priorities with the specific needs of the communities I represent. What should business leaders hold me accountable for? First, listening to the communities I serve rather than assuming Lansing has all the answers. Second, pursuing practical solutions that produce measurable results instead of headlines. And third, recognizing both the micro and the macro: protecting statewide systems that drive economic growth while delivering targeted support that allows individual communities, businesses, and families to thrive.

Kevin J. Maas

Economic Competitiveness – What do you believe is the state’s role in creating an environment where businesses can thrive, grow, and create jobs?

Government should get out of the way. As a Holland business owner, I'll push lower taxes, less red tape, and faster permitting so West Michigan employers can grow, invest, and hire with confidence.

Workforce & Talent – Employers continue to face workforce challenges. What actions would you support to address barriers to workforce participation and help attract and retain talent in Michigan?

I'll cut occupational licensing barriers, expand skilled trades funding, and reform assistance programs that discourage work, so Michigan employers can find and keep the talent they need.

Childcare – Access to affordable, reliable childcare remains a challenge for employers and working families. What solutions would you prioritize?

I support expanding the childcare tax credit, easing regulatory burdens on providers to open more centers, and public-private partnerships so parents can work and employers can staff up.

Housing – Workforce housing continues to be a challenge in many communities. What policies would you support to increase housing availability and affordability?

I'll support zoning reform, streamlined permitting, and incentives for workforce housing so communities like Holland, Zeeland, and Grand Haven can house the workers our employers need.

Vision & Accountability – What do you want business leaders to understand about your vision for Michigan’s future, and what should they hold you accountable for if elected?

I'm a Holland business owner, not a career politician. Hold me accountable for cutting red tape, controlling spending, and delivering real results for West Michigan families and job creators.

Michael J. Markey Jr

Economic Competitiveness – What do you believe is the state’s role in creating an environment where businesses can thrive, grow, and create jobs?

Government should create the conditions for success and then get out of the way. I’ll fight for lower taxes, less red tape, reliable energy, and policies that help Michigan businesses invest, grow, and create jobs.

Workforce & Talent – Employers continue to face workforce challenges. What actions would you support to address barriers to workforce participation and help attract and retain talent in Michigan?

We need to keep talent in Michigan by expanding career and skilled trades education, reducing unnecessary licensing barriers, and creating an economy where families can build successful careers without leaving the state.

Childcare – Access to affordable, reliable childcare remains a challenge for employers and working families. What solutions would you prioritize?

The best way to lower childcare costs is to increase supply. I’ll cut unnecessary regulations so more in-home childcare providers can open, giving families more affordable, reliable options.

Housing – Workforce housing continues to be a challenge in many communities. What policies would you support to increase housing availability and affordability?

We need more attainable housing while respecting local control. I’ll support cutting unnecessary regulations, streamlining permitting, and encouraging responsible development that meets community needs.

Vision & Accountability – What do you want business leaders to understand about your vision for Michigan’s future, and what should they hold you accountable for if elected?

I want Michigan to be the best state to raise a family, start a business, and build a career. Hold me accountable for defending taxpayers, supporting local communities, and putting Michigan families first.

John Wetzel

Economic Competitiveness – What do you believe is the state's role in creating an environment where businesses can thrive, grow, and create jobs?

The state's role is to create an environment where businesses can succeed—not to stand in their way. That means keeping taxes competitive, reducing unnecessary regulations, protecting property rights, and ensuring government is efficient and accountable.

Michigan should invest in core priorities that support economic growth, including reliable infrastructure, a skilled workforce, and public safety. We must also expand career and technical education, strengthen apprenticeship programs, and partner with employers to meet workforce needs.

Small businesses are the backbone of our economy, and they deserve a level playing field—not burdensome mandates that make it harder to hire, invest, and grow. By streamlining permitting, encouraging innovation, and supporting free-market principles, we can attract new investment while helping existing Michigan businesses expand.

The best way to create jobs is to empower entrepreneurs, reward hard work, and allow the private sector to lead. Government should be a partner that removes barriers to opportunity, not an obstacle to success. A strong economy benefits everyone by creating better-paying jobs, expanding opportunities for families, and keeping Michigan competitive for future generations.

Workforce & Talent – Employers continue to face workforce challenges. What actions would you support to address barriers to workforce participation and help attract and retain talent in Michigan?

Michigan must become a state where people want to live, work, and raise a family. That starts with creating an economy that rewards work, supports small businesses, and offers opportunities for young people to build careers without leaving the state.

I support expanding career and technical education, apprenticeships, and partnerships between schools, community colleges, and local employers to prepare workers for in-demand jobs. We should reduce unnecessary licensing requirements and eliminate regulations that make it harder for people to enter the workforce or start a business.

To attract and retain talent, Michigan must keep taxes competitive, improve public safety, invest in reliable infrastructure, and promote affordable, attainable housing through policies that encourage private-sector development. We should also make it easier for veterans and skilled workers moving to Michigan to have their credentials recognized.

A strong workforce is built by empowering individuals, not expanding government. By removing barriers to employment, supporting job creators, and ensuring students graduate with the skills employers need, we can strengthen Michigan's economy and create opportunities that keep our best talent here.

Childcare – Access to affordable, reliable childcare remains a challenge for employers and working families. What solutions would you prioritize?

Affordable, reliable childcare is essential for working families and a strong economy. I support solutions that increase access without creating unnecessary government mandates. We should reduce burdensome regulations that limit the number of childcare providers while maintaining strong health and safety standards. Michigan should encourage employer-sponsored childcare, expand flexible childcare options, and support public-private partnerships that help families find care that fits their needs. We should also make it easier for qualified individuals to open and operate childcare businesses by streamlining licensing and reducing unnecessary barriers.

Parents—not government—should have the freedom to choose the childcare option that works best for their family, whether that's a licensed center, in-home provider, faith-based program, or care from a trusted family member. By expanding choices, supporting providers, and fostering a strong economy that raises wages, we can help more families access quality childcare while strengthening Michigan's workforce.

Housing – Workforce housing continues to be a challenge in many communities. What policies would you support to increase housing availability and affordability?

Michigan needs more housing that working families, young professionals, and seniors can afford. I support reducing unnecessary regulations, streamlining permitting, and cutting red tape that delays construction and increases costs. Local governments should have the flexibility to encourage responsible development while protecting the character of their communities.

We should promote private-sector investment, expand infrastructure that supports new housing, and review zoning policies where appropriate to allow for a wider range of housing options. I also support incentives to rehabilitate existing homes and redevelop vacant properties rather than relying solely on new construction.

The best long-term solution is a strong economy with good-paying jobs and lower costs. Government should remove barriers that drive up housing prices, encourage responsible growth, and create an environment where builders can meet demand and families can achieve the dream of homeownership.

Vision & Accountability – What do you want business leaders to understand about your vision for Michigan's future, and what should they hold you accountable for if elected?

My vision is for Michigan to be the best state in the Midwest to live, work, raise a family, and start or grow a business. I believe government should be a partner—not a barrier—by protecting taxpayers, supporting job creators, and focusing on its core responsibilities.

Business leaders should expect me to fight for lower taxes, fewer unnecessary regulations, reliable infrastructure, a skilled workforce, and policies that encourage investment and innovation. I will work to create a stable, predictable business climate where employers have the confidence to grow and create jobs.

Hold me accountable for listening, being accessible, and delivering results. If elected, I will make decisions based on what strengthens Michigan's economy, protects our communities, and creates more opportunities for families and future generations. My commitment is simple: honest leadership, fiscal responsibility, and policies that help Michigan compete and win.

Candidates for U.S. House of Representatives, Michigan's 4th Congressional District

Diop Harris II

No response received.

Bill Huizenga

No response received.

Sean McCann

Economic Competitiveness – What do you believe is the federal government's role in creating an environment where businesses can thrive, grow, and create jobs?

Our government's role should be in creating the conditions for businesses to succeed and thrive here in West Michigan, not get in the way.

That means investing in Michigan. From reliable roads and energy infrastructure to a state of the art education and workforce development, our businesses can only succeed if the environment allows them to.

It also means supporting domestic manufacturing, helping small businesses access capital, and ending reckless tariffs that raise costs and create uncertainty for local Michigan businesses. In Lansing I always believed that our government should provide clear and consistent rules, protect fair competition and give businesses the confidence to make long-term investments that create good-paying jobs so that everyone can succeed.

Workforce & Talent -- Employers across industries continue to face workforce challenges. What actions would you support to address barriers that keep people from participating in the workforce and to attract and retain talent?

It's on us to continue to make Michigan a place where people can make a name for themselves and see prosperity for generations to come. Whether it's a budding entrepreneur starting a business out of their garage, or a growing small business – good talent staying here means making sure we make life affordable and enjoyable for everyone in Michigan.

That means affordable health care and housing. It also means strengthening career and technical education, apprenticeships and partnerships among schools and local employers so workers are trained for the jobs businesses actually need to fill.

In the Michigan legislature, I have supported initiatives like the Going Pro Talent Fund, ReConnect, Michigan Works!, and registered apprenticeships that help support and expand our workforce. I will continue to support similar initiatives at the federal level.

Regulatory Environment -- Businesses often cite uncertainty and regulatory complexity as barriers to growth. How would you improve predictability, transparency, and efficiency in federal regulations?

It's important that businesses have clear, consistent rules so they can plan, invest and grow. And in Congress, I will stand up to both parties to make sure that we eliminate any barriers to growth for West Michigan's businesses. We can make our government work for us, and do it faster, while still looking out for our workers and our communities. The goal should be smart, transparent regulation that solves real problems without creating

unnecessary delays or paperwork. When I'm in Congress, businesses can always count on having a direct line to our office to help with any red tape.

Healthcare Costs -- Healthcare costs continue to impact employers, employees, and taxpayers. How would you balance expanding access to care while managing costs?

In the Michigan legislature, I was proud to expand access to healthcare for West Michigan families because I believe nobody should have to choose between getting the treatment they desperately need or being able to afford to pay for their monthly bills.

But make no mistake, I think it's crucial that we have our businesses – especially our small businesses – at the table as we make these decisions. Both businesses and workers alike would benefit from lowering healthcare costs.

Vision & Accountability – What do you want business leaders to understand about your vision for the future, and what should they hold you accountable for if elected?

In Congress, my office will be an open door for any and all people and businesses in West Michigan. For too long, politicians in Washington have looked out for nothing but their own hide - increasing their wealth, taking advantage of insider trading, and giving tax breaks to the highest bidders. We might not see eye to eye on every issue, but you can have my word that I will be honest, transparent and forthright about what I support, and what I do in Congress. I'll be accountable to the people.

Philip Tanis

Economic Competitiveness – What do you believe is the federal government's role in creating an environment where businesses can thrive, grow, and create jobs?

The federal government should ensure that there is a strong system in which American businesses can thrive. The federal government must negotiate fair trade policies that protect American companies from unfair practices abroad, expand tax incentives for companies to relocate and grow domestically, support public-private partnerships to properly educate and reeducate workers at all stages of their career, invest in infrastructure that moves goods and ideas across the country, reform immigration policies to admit the necessary number and types of workers, promote entrepreneurs and small businesses through simplifying regulations and taxes, and commit to renewable energy sources to stabilize electricity prices and reliability, as well as protect the environment.

Workforce & Talent -- Employers across industries continue to face workforce challenges. What actions would you support to address barriers that keep people from participating in the workforce and to attract and retain talent?

Working with the states, the Federal government should coordinate an educational system that properly educates—and reeducates—workers throughout their careers, especially as technologies rapidly change. This should include incentives for workers to take classes while still employed.

Immigration reform is critical. The current system is broken and must be fixed to allow for both highly educated workers to safely and easily enter the country, as well as to allow those seeking a better life entry through a clear, secure, and safe system. To ensure its continued growth, the US needs to welcome immigrants on both ends of the economic spectrum, respectively driving innovation and taking on those necessary jobs that are challenging to fill.

Regulatory Environment -- Businesses often cite uncertainty and regulatory complexity as barriers to growth. How would you improve predictability, transparency, and efficiency in federal regulations?

Everything the federal government does, especially as it relates to regulations, must be transparent, as well as easily understood. While some regulations are important to safeguard the health and safety of the nation, they should not unduly inhibit companies. As President Teddy Roosevelt said, a “square deal” for America includes everyone: business owners, workers, and consumers.

It is high time that professional reviews and streamlining of the regulatory process be undertaken. The chaos unleashed by DOGE and the uncertainty over tariffs (which are a tax on Americans and US businesses) are just two examples of how unprofessional actions have hurt Americans, rather than helping them. Yes, government regulations (and bureaucracies) can be streamlined; but this needs to be done in a manner that it transparent and predictable. Congress should provide oversight in these areas, reforming laws where necessary, so that American businesses can participate in these processes.

Healthcare Costs -- Healthcare costs continue to impact employers, employees, and taxpayers. How would you balance expanding access to care while managing costs?

The quality of healthcare in the US is the best in the world—if one can afford it. Unfortunately, the US is an outlier in healthcare affordability. These outsized costs especially impact small businesses and the self-employed. This is an area where public-private partnerships can benefit everyone. The federal government should leverage the critical mass of healthcare “customers” to exert influence on the healthcare marketplace to lower prices. The government should support research into new medicines and procedures with the stipulation that costs for the results should be reasonable. For vaccines that are (and should be) required the federal government should offer subsidies. A healthy nation is a prosperous nation.

Vision & Accountability – What do you want business leaders to understand about your vision for the future, and what should they hold you accountable for if elected?

I am committed to representing everyone in Michigan's 4th Congressional District and will prioritize meeting constituents over special interests. In-person town hall meetings will be regularly scheduled; all my offices, especially in Washington, will welcome district residents with or without an appointment; and I'll establish a “hot line” network with local elected officials to ensure that communication flows both ways.

Michigan's 4th Congressional District is an amazing area, combining strong businesses, vast farmlands, and natural resources and beauty with an entrepreneurial spirit, commitment to core principles, and a drive to prosper. We need to work together to continue to make this the best place to live in the country.