

State Legislative Candidate Questionnaire

Please answer as succinctly as possible. Your responses will be shared on the Community Website and in the Community newspaper the O'odham Action News.

Why are you running for elected office?

I'm running for re-election to continue addressing and working towards an end to the political and economic inequalities that too many of us work so hard under to provide for a better environment for our families and our futures. Through college here, at ASU, and since graduating I've committed myself towards working and building relationships to ensure positive outcomes for our communities. Through personal experience I have found that investment in community is the best way to contribute to collective, and shared good fortune, both economically and socially for us all.

But today under our current republican leadership, we've simply watched our incomes continue to stagnate and our inequality deepen for too long. It is impossible to climb out of poverty, let alone secure oneself in the middle class. I am running for re-election to improve the quality of our existing and future jobs we hope to attract and retain. Our jobs need to provide a living wage, benefits, and security.

What qualifies you to serve in the State legislature?

I value democratic deliberation. I view my position as an opportunity and responsibility to mediate the public policy process with the voices, opinions, and perspectives of my community. I honestly enjoy my position. Every day I learn about issues across our state and I get to connect the people who care to the people in need, I get to connect the answers with the problems. I am not just honored to advocate for our community, I learned how to survive my own hardships by serving people through a nonprofit I managed. I've helped thousands regain hope in themselves and in their community. Seeing so many people go from despair to realizing their potential simply by connecting them to a more resilient community has emboldened me to take on the root causes of our political and economic inequalities.

Representing LD26 that includes the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community. What is your view of tribal sovereignty and how should the state legislature work with tribal communities to address their respective priorities?

I believe it is the state legislatures' responsibility to recognize, celebrate, and honor tribal heritage, culture, and identity. Tribal sovereignty guarantees tribal identity for future generations and means we are equals as we work to solve shared problems and work together towards shared goals. We will always need to reconcile with our past, or there isn't going to be much progress moving forward. In order to work together to address your priorities we need to create more opportunities for deliberation.

In general, if elected, what will be your main objectives?

Once re-elected one of my main objectives will be to fight back against the relentless attacks on our revenue and the cult-like attitude that tax cuts for corporations and the wealthy will lead to prosperity for anyone but the wealthy. These policies only lead to profits for the privileged and cuts to the public goods and programs we all share. To correct the generations of republican ideological abuse, we need to secure permanent equitable sustainable revenue. That would require voters electing a 2/3 majority in both chambers that wants to change the 30 years of tax cut ideology that has been starving our schools and teachers.

Once we have secured more revenue we need to make much-needed investments into our education system. Our teachers need a living wage and our students can't learn with underfunded schools with 30+ students when the classrooms are falling apart.

How do you plan to build your relationship with the Salt River Pima Maricopa Indian Community members, specifically during this extraordinary time?

I maintain an open line of communication with SRPMIC state government liaisons. We have consulted over various pieces of legislation to understand how bills will affect the tribe and its members. Every year we host the council at the legislature to hear of the state of the state from the perspectives of the tribes and we have attended many events sponsored by your Young River People's Council in the community. I also help coordinate a SRPMIC youth day at the legislature where students get to learn how the capitol works and how to get involved in legislation. Going forward during this extraordinary time we can't rely on just internet dependent communication when so many areas are lacking the proper infrastructure. If the community would like I could organize a recurring phone conference where we can share ideas.

Revenue from Gaming is a vital tool that helps fund many important programs for tribal communities across the state. In 2002, voters provided gaming exclusivity to Arizona's Indian Tribes. Do you believe tribes should continue to have tribal exclusivity in gaming?

Yes, I believe tribes should continue to have exclusivity in gaming in Arizona. I will vote against any legislation that threatens the tribes' exclusivity and I will fight any attempts to threaten the gaming compact.

What benefits do you believe the Salt River Pima Maricopa Indian Community brings to the economy of Arizona?

No one is successful unless a lot of people want them to be successful, the same is true for communities. We are only stronger together. SRPMIC brings much-needed diversity and knowledge to the local and statewide economy. The industries the community has invested in will keep us all resilient and keep us all thriving into the future.

Unlike cities in Arizona, the Salt River Pima Maricopa Indian Community and all other Arizona Indian Tribes do not receive any portion of the Transaction Privilege Tax (TPT) that is generated on tribal lands. Do you believe the Salt River Pima Maricopa Indian Community should have parity with other local governments and be able to receive TPT that is generated on tribal land? If so, would you support legislation to resolve this issue?

Yes, I believe SRPMIC and all other tribes should have parity with other local governments and should be able to receive TPT that is generated on tribal land. This is only the next step in helping the tribes to become more self-sufficient. I would sponsor legislation to resolve this injustice that only holds the tribes back.

COVID19 has affected all Arizonans. What are your priorities for Arizonans from both a health and financial perspective?

It's a travesty what these republicans will get away with and we're still in the first wave. Masks should have been required from the beginning. Delegating this responsibility to the cities so late into the pandemic was cowardly at best and at worst makes Ducey just as culpable for needless death and suffering as Trump is for slowing down testing.

If we are truly safer at home then we should be helping people stay at home with more unemployment, food assistance, and eviction protection. It's already hitting 115* in AZ, and poverty was already expensive before the pandemic. We need to help people stay home.

Small businesses need confident consumers. It does no good if we open up but no one feels safe outside of their homes. Our economic downturn isn't affecting everyone the same. Rich people are still buying \$300K+ homes, while most of us are struggling to keep the light on and food on the table. If we want our economy back up and running we need to make sure we can all participate.

COVID19 has also impacted education. What are your priorities for both K-12 and higher education?

COVID 19 has shown everyone else how unequal our education system has always been. All schools in Arizona should be funded appropriately and equitably, your zip code should never determine the level of investment in your children's future. When we allow for schools to be neglected we are only committing people to be left behind. All our children deserve an equitable investment in their education. I also believe higher education needs to be as close to free as

possible. Our public schools have been systemically defunded by republican legislators my entire life. Everyone needs to be investing their fair share of taxes.