

State Legislative Candidates – House District 102 – Brian Hosticka

1. Why are you interested in serving the people, families, and businesses in northern Michigan?

I grew up working at my parent's restaurant and later became a small business owner myself. I believe in and will publicly encourage supporting local small businesses and farming which are so important to the economy of Northern Michigan. As a public defender and former prosecutor, I am uniquely qualified to legislate on criminal justice matters to bring both safety and security to the residents of this District and reduce the rate of recidivism and incarceration. I also believe in bringing integrity, civility and moderation to the Lansing political scene. Extremism in all its forms must be countered with earnest and measured discourse. I have the ability to disagree without being disagreeable.

2. How will you use your role to support the economic vitality of our region?

I will champion and encourage the support local small businesses and farms. Part of doing that will be an effort to reverse the shift in recent years of the tax burden away from billionaires and corporations and onto regular working people. I would resist any law that raises the tax burden small businesses and farms and the working people of this District. Reversing that trend is essential to improve access to affordable health care. Finally, I will seek to improve the infrastructure of the District, particularly with accessible high-speed internet.

3. Do you believe local government should have broad authority to regulate short-term rentals?

Yes, I do.

4. How would you address the shortage of skilled labor in northern Michigan?

Improving the region's infrastructure would help a lot. Roads, highways, bridges, locks, dams, harbors, water systems, airports and internet connectivity have been neglected or only marginally repaired in recent years. The money is available and I'll work to direct it to Northern Michigan. Aside from that, providing free community college would be extremely helpful and should be a goal. For those not college-inclined, trade schools and apprenticeships should also be affordable, accessible and encouraged.

5. How would you prioritize leftover funds from federal aid packages and surplus dollars in the state's general fund?

It should be directed toward infrastructure improvement and making both health care and college/trade schools more accessible and affordable.

6. The availability of housing is a barrier to business growth and talent attraction in our region. How do you intend to address the affordable housing shortage?

One thing in particular is affecting Northern Michigan, and that is the prevalence of housing used for short-term rental. Municipalities should have more control over limiting the number of short-term rentals allowed. Also, providing incentives, including tax incentives, for the construction of affordable housing is important.

7. Many families struggle to secure quality child care. This can be a barrier to attracting talent and keeping people in or bringing people back into the workforce. How will you work to increase access to affordable and quality child care?

First, set subsidy reimbursement rates based on actual operating costs for providers. The federal Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG) provides funding to support affordable child care for working families and gives states like Michigan a lot of flexibility in how to determine reimbursement rates. Rates based on market prices is wrong because providers have little choice but to set their rates based on the market, which is skewed with deficiencies and inequities. A rate based on operating costs should also take into consideration enrollment numbers. Second, we should try to increase the use of contracts and grants. These should be designed to promote access to underserved communities. This would level the field for providers in places that use a voucher system which causes feasts or famines in the industry. Finally, I would invest in child care providers. Bringing more money into the system is the best way to bring better, more qualified people into the field. This, however, should be done with the goal to eventually have universal child care (like health care) available.

8. What are your solutions for supporting businesses being affected directly by inflation and supply chain costs?

This is a tough one, as controlling inflation and supply-chain issues are national problems. Small businesses and farms could be provided some knowledge and expertise in revisiting and re-negotiating supply-chain agreements, or to make amendments to existing contracts. Short-term government relief may in some cases be necessary, but thinking strategically, like tying pricing to indexing, is more important to get through this (hopefully) short-term problem.