

State Legislative Candidates – SD 36 – Joel Sheltroun

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

I have lived in Northern Michigan for most all of my life, over 65 years. I owned several small businesses in West Branch for many years. Most all of my immediate family live in the West Branch area. Naturally, I have a strong desire to serve my family's community.

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

As a former state representative, I chaired Tourism and Natural Resources in the House for 4 years. In that position, I pushed through funding for Pure Michigan, ORV access to local roads (if allowed by local government) Crossbow inclusion during Archery Season, and 72 hour fishing licenses. These changes, especially Pure Michigan and ORV legislation, has proven to have had a very positive effect on northern Michigan's economy. I also forced 5 million in grant funding for the construction of the first wide-bodied aircraft repair facility in Oscoda's Wurtsmith AFB. That funding produced 300 high paying jobs for the area and provided the pathway for construction of the 2nd repair facility. Currently, the 3rd hanger is under construction. Governor Granholm vetoed the funding on my first attempt. The second attempt was successful because I put the funding in a bill that she couldn't veto.

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

I generally support strong local control. My ORV legislation would be an example of allow local governments to apply what they feel is best for their community. Concerning short term rentals, I don't think I could support BROAD control over that industry. I am open to discussion on the issue and would have to gather more information.

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

Through my career as state representative, I was primarily the lone voice sounding the alarm regarding MMC graduation requirements, which push every student towards a four year degree. I heavily pushed the skilled trades with my legislation which would have provided a CTE pathway to graduation. In the end, I was able to at least force through a Statistics course in lieu of the Algebra II requirement. I put on town halls all over lower Michigan at my own expense, to highlight the problem with the shortage of skilled trades. At the end of my career, I could have donated the balance of my campaign funds to the party or a non-profit organization. I donated my balance to MITES, an organization that promotes skilled trade support for high school students. I will continue to provide major support for the skilled trades industry.

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

Using the federal funds, I would prioritize Broadband expansion and Tourism programs.

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?

Affordable Housing: I have a number of ideas. Without getting into the weeds too much, I think we can encourage more construction of apartments through “assignable” tax credits. I have already written such legislation for the transportation industry in LA, which has been prefiled and will be formally introduced this January. “Assignable” is the key. They can be sold to those companies with a tax obligation to the State of Michigan. Approval of the award for tax credits can be used to defray some of the cost of construction, and lower finance cost. After completion of the residential building, the credits would be awarded.

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?

Child Care: I would streamline the process of licensing. I would look at eliminating unnecessary barriers to the child care industry. I would look for innovative ways to encourage growth of this area.

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

Inflation and supply chain costs: In 2010, I found that Michigan invested virtually all of the funds which the State Treasury had fiduciary responsibility, OUT OF MICHIGAN! Approximately 60 billion of funds, and only approximately 60 million invested in Michigan. SIX BILLION was being invested in Chinese and other countries around the world, while our Michigan companies, especially in the Transportation Sector, were unable to secure financing....even with signed contracts with the major auto manufacturers. I introduced legislation that would required 5% of these funds would be invested in Michigan. Due diligence would need to be done, and any industry that is producing jobs and bringing industry to Michigan could apply for these funds. I introduced the legislation at the end of my career (about 2 weeks left). My legislation cleared the House, but was killed in the Senate. Along with assignable tax credits, the requirement of 5% of our funds to be invested in Michigan is a great way to attract chip manufacturers and other suppliers around the nation and world. Just providing a tax credit in itself will not compete with other states. It's always about the money. It's always about securing the financing. Assignable tax credits will go a long way to attract new business.

Bonus:

If elected, I intend to eliminate a staff position in Lansing to fund a Business Liaison position IN DISTRICT. It is not new to have a couple of offices staffed for general service, but after COVID and the shutdown of businesses, I believe it is imperative to communicate directly with the business community....to have someone on the ground to immediately engage in the particular problem. The Business Liaison's only responsibility will be to serve the business community in the 36th Senate district. To my knowledge, no current or past

legislative office has done this. This will assure business in the district that they will have a direct line and direct support from my office.