

Rep. Ken Borton, House District 105

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

Northern Michigan is my home. Our community is rooted in a deep sense of togetherness unlike any other across the state. It's not very often you find this many people who really just want to be left alone in the woods. I'm proud to represent the best interests of our rural communities and businesses.

2. Describe three statewide strategies/policies that you would support to enhance economic growth in the region.

I think the first step to spur economic growth is lowering taxes across the board. If small businesses owners have less of a tax burden, they could lower costs and thereby draw more people in to shop. Second, I think we have to take a serious look at the regulatory environment in our state. There are likely duplicative and burdensome rules that make owning a business far too difficult. I'm not saying all rules are bad, but we need to ensure that any rule we do have truly needs to be there. Finally, our state invests a ton in huge corporations who may not even have an office in Michigan yet. We need to make sure that our small businesses that have been here for generations are getting the same consideration as huge corporations. Our small towns would be empty without the family businesses that give our main streets life.

3. Describe the policies that you see being the most effective/ineffective at addressing the housing shortage in our region?

I think the first step to address housing is again removing burdensome and duplicative rules made at various state agencies. We are desperate for housing. So, it shouldn't take a perfect ACT score to figure out how to get a housing development going.

4. What statewide policies best support talent retention and attraction in Northern Michigan?

Our kids in northern Michigan are talented. If we could keep more of them right out of high school, I really think that we wouldn't have to do much more attracting. But our talent is jumping on the interstate as soon as they graduate and driving south. We need to focus on policies that lower costs for young people, bring in more exciting career paths, and make it accessible to purchase a starter home. Our high

school kids know how special our communities are, it's up to us to help them stick around.

5. How will you work to increase access to affordable and quality childcare?

Childcare, like everything else, is absurdly expensive. But instead of carving out tax breaks and subsidies for a specific industry, I think if we take a wholistic approach toward the entire economy we can lower costs across the board. One specific thing we can look at for access to childcare again falls on burdensome state rules. We need to make sure we're not discouraging potential childcare providers because the paperwork and rules at the state level scare them off before they can even get started.

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

As I've said again and again, lowering taxes. Inflation is hurting everyone across the board. But if we can lower the tax burden on businesses we can give them more flexibility to weather the high costs they currently face.

