

Rep. John Roth, House District 104

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

I have lived in Northern Michigan my entire life with the last 37 years in the Grand Traverse Area. I have either run or managed small businesses for most of my life. My family and I love this area and only want the best for it. I have for many years believed I owe this area a debit of service for what it has given to me. The first four years of service I have served on the Economic Development Committee in Lansing making sure Northern Michigan's voice is heard on issues that we deem important. I have always listened to the concerns of the Northern Michigan Chamber Alliance when making decisions that effect Northern Michigan.

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

- A. The potential of revamping the S.O.A.R. program that was started during my first term. The separating out of the three parts to a business component, a transportation component, and a housing component looks promising if the terms work for Northern Michigan
- B. Senate bill 293 addressing the missing middle of the housing problem. I believe this will pass in the fall session of this year. We have dollars for lower income housing and some for multiple units but, we need middle-income housing.
- C. R&D tax credits for community colleges. The house passes a series of bills that would allow businesses and larger colleges to benefit from a research and development tax credit. Unfortunately, there are no larger businesses or colleges in our area that would benefit.

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

Probably the allocation of more money into our system for housing is a positive move. There is much more to do to make sure those allocations are done properly. The change to allow certain brownfields to be used for housing

is a good move by the legislature. We need to follow up with MSHDA to get this money out. MSHDA is not releasing funds to brownfield developments because they are revamping their grant application which could cost time and a possible loss of builders. We need municipalities to look seriously at their zoning to allow for a more robust building of new homes. I think the use of more revolving funds to qualified entities make sense and the state needs to recognize this is an important tool. There is no silver bullet to make housing affordable and more abundant, but we need to look at all possibilities

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

Number one to me in the Pure Michigan Campaign. Showing the beauty that is Michigan is the first attraction to interest people either to come or stay in our diverse state. The recreation value that is our state should not be ignored.

The issue of tax and regulation burden on employers/workers today is not making Michigan as competitive as other states. We should not be allowing groups outside of Michigan determining what our business climate should look like. We need incentives for entrepreneurs in Michigan for the new business start ups that will be the future of our state. Groups like 20 Fathoms receiving some grant funds is a way to promote new start ups like they have been doing. Keeping our youth here in Michigan is critical. In my recent interactions with two of our local schools at least a third of our graduates will be leaving the state either after high school or college.

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

I started working on the childcare issue my first year. I was part of an 8-bill package that changed some of the ways daycares operated. Allowing for more funding and for more sensible rules for in home daycares. My bill allowed for the commongrounds to operate a daycare inside of a multiple use building. Some of the money has been distributed but, there is still money that has not. We need to do oversight to figure out the problem.

I think our focus now should include how can we help center-based daycares. Center based did not get the attention they could have and it is now time to look at what would help them.

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

Reducing regulations during this time of inflation that are making matters worse. Listening to businesses on what are those issues creating their problems. We must be willing as a state to pivot when situations like this take

place. This supreme court decision with tipped wages and paid time off is going to exacerbate the problems our small businesses are going to have to deal with. I think there are a couple things that we could do. 1. Keep the tip wages. 2. Try to lessen the blow that the paid time off will create by removing some of the paperwork and long-term costs. We need to go back to Lansing immediately to fix the problems.

