



2022 Legislative Candidate Questionnaire

The Missoula Organization of REALTORS® advocates for REALTORS® and consumers. Our members would like to know your thoughts regarding several key areas of real estate that are of importance to us and the community we serve.

Our Process for Candidate review and endorsement:

1. Completion of the questionnaire
2. MOR Committee review of answers
3. MOR Committee selection of candidates to meet and interview
4. MOR Committee recommendation to Board of Directors for Endorsement
5. MOR Endorsements

MOR has endorsed candidates in past elections and may do so in these elections. If we consider an endorsement in your race, we may ask you and your opponent(s) to each meet with us for candidate interviews. Endorsement decisions are made by the Board of Directors.

Survey Background

Home prices in Missoula County have increased rapidly since the end of the economic downturn and incomes have not kept up. The median sales price of a home in 2021 was \$450,000, making it challenging for many Missoulians to buy a home. The rapidly increasing price is due in part to a shortage of housing, particularly in more attainable price ranges. As a state legislator, you will evaluate policies that will impact housing and economic development in Missoula County.

With this context in mind please address the following questions:

* Required

1. Name & office you are seeking *

Lyn Hellegaard, House District 97

2. Housing inventories are at all—time lows in many Montana communities. As a result, rent and home sales prices are at all—time highs. Local land use regulations and development review processes add unpredictability, delays, and extra costs to developing new housing stock, directly contributing to the housing shortage and lack of affordability. State law provides the framework and authority for these local regulations and review processes. As a state legislator, you will be asked to balance many competing interests in debates over land use policy. **Will you support legislation that streamlines and supports new housing, even if it means local governments are given less control over housing development?**

The last legislative session passed SB294 which was a step in the right direction, by giving property owners a methodology to correct governmental zoning.

I would support legislation to streamline regulations on housing, even if local governments are given less control, as long as it doesn't violate the U.S. or Montana Constitutions and doesn't increase taxes.

3. Property taxes are the primary funding source for local government services and infrastructure and help to fund public education. Increasing mill levies and increasing property value assessments have left many homeowners and commercial property owners asking for relief. How would you propose providing property tax relief to Montanans?

The legislature should put pressure on the Land Board to increase revenues from state lands. In the past this is how schools were funded. Returning to funding our schools with revenues from state lands we could assist all segments of the housing market. When checking my property tax bill, removing school funding would cut my taxes in half.

We also need to require any implementation, extension or new debt on Urban Renewal Districts to be placed on the ballot.

4. Montana is one of only a few **states** in which sellers of real estate are not required by state law to provide potential buyers with a statement disclosing the condition of the property. **Will you support legislation that requires sellers to provide buyers a disclosure statement?** *

I would have to read the legislation and what information sellers would be providing.

I would be supportive of a voluntary policy of sellers having an inspection done by a disinterested third-party. I believe this would be a more reliable source of information, as an inspector could be more knowledgeable about issues involving the structural soundness of the property.

5. New housing and businesses require a source of water. Connecting to municipal water services is not always an option as cities are not always able or willing to extend infrastructure. In these cases, a water right must be secured through a process governed by state law and Department of Natural Resources and Conservation regulations. Reform is necessary as securing a water right is often costly, uncertain, and time-consuming. This ultimately hurts consumers and our growing communities. **Will you support legislation to streamline water right permitting processes?** *

Yes. I believe most industries and property owners are over regulated. We have seen first hand what reducing regulations and taxes can do for our economy and the benefits to individual citizens.

6. One in five homes in Montana is serviced by an onsite septic system. If properly installed and maintained, septic systems are a safe and cost—effective means of waste disposal for homeowners and businesses. Some regulations on septic systems are enforced by local health departments, and enforcement is inconsistent. For instance, how bedrooms are counted for determining what size of system is necessary and how nonconforming systems are handled varies. **Will you support legislation that brings greater consistency to enforcement of regulations on existing septic systems?** *

Yes. I would also support legislation that would apply to new septic systems.

7. REALTORS® believe that private property rights are fundamental to our free—market system and are a cornerstone upon which this nation was founded. Our United States and Montana Constitutions recognize and protect the right to own property. A strong economy depends upon preserving the right to freely own, use, and transfer real property. If elected, what approach **will you take to balancing private property rights with public interests?** *

I will oppose any unconstitutional legislation. I believe there needs to be balance between the property owner and neighbor's interests. I believe the best results occur when developers and neighbors communicate and come to agreeable solutions to issues. If that is unrealistic, the rule of law requires we follow zoning regulations.

8. The National Association of REALTORS include sexual orientation and gender identity anti-discrimination language in their code of ethics. Montana does not prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation and /or gender identity. As a **state legislator** would you **support legislation to prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation** and /or gender identity? *

I am against discrimination of any kind.

Governor Bullock has put this into all state contracts, cities wanting this policy have passed ordinances to address it.

I will not support any infringements on the First Amendment rights.

9. Treasurer's Name, Address and Phone Number *

Lyn Hellegaard, 3828 Bellecrest Dr, Missoula, MT -- 406-531-2990

10. Will you accept PAC contributions? *

☐ Yes

☐ No

Thank you!

We appreciate you taking the time to complete our survey so that we might better understand your position on key issues facing our community. The committee will be evaluating surveys received and responding within a few weeks regarding next steps.

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