

Respondent



28

Anonymous



301:37

Time to complete



1. Name & office you are seeking *

Andy Nelson House District 98

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?**

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Yes and No This is a tough question. I would absolutely support legislation that streamlines and supports new housing because housing inventories are at all-time lows and as mentioned above are resulting in all-time highs for home sales prices and rents. However, the necessity for affordable housing is of my utmost concern. Yes, we can streamline the process to support new housing, but for who? The wealthy the can afford it? We MUST create housing for median and low income folks that live here as well. I've had so many friends and acquaintances leave Missoula and Western Montana in the last few years because our city has become unaffordable. Yes, we need more housing to keep up with the demand, but we need affordable housing as well and I believe that this will require partnership between government and housing developers.

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?**

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First of all, I want to state that I will strongly oppose CI-121 which would impose a residential property tax cap of 1% of total assessed value for all taxing jurisdictions. This would be detrimental to maintaining adequate funding for public schools, local governments and public services. I would propose diversifying tax revenue across-the-board in Montana so that local governments do not have to rely so heavily on property taxes to fund local governments and schools.

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?**

Yes. 100%. As someone who has yet to buy my own home, but hope to someday, I would want complete transparency between myself and the seller.

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, in order to keep up for the demand for housing in Missoula and Montana in general, I would support streamlining water right permitting as long as the process is equitable and in line with environmental regulations.

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, as long as it makes sense. Montana is ultimately a very rural state and the need for septic systems is great, however, there are reasons why local health departments enforce regulations. I think middle ground can be found and more consistent regulation on septic systems around the state can be made.

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 believe the 2 align. It is in the public interest for people to own their own property. I believe the American dream is still for individuals to one day own their own homes. However, it has become much more difficult for this dream to become a reality for younger generations, the working class, etc. The cost of a home today in Missoula is not affordable for a median wage earner. There are so many factors that play into this: the economy, housing market, employee wages, and more. We're seeing a greater gap between the "haves" and the "have nots," when it comes to buying and selling homes. This bring equity into the equation. I believe that in order to balance private property rights with the public interest, this gap must be narrowed and equity achieved.

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?** *

YES! As an out and proud gay man, the Executive Director of an LGBTQ+ nonprofit and advocate of the community, I believe that it is high time we pass legislation at the state level in Montana to prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation and/or gender identity. Let's be real, discrimination continues to persist and the LGBTQ+ community continues to

suffer for it. This is personal. In the summer of 2011 after I graduated from Culbertson High School, I spent a few months helping my dad construct his 8-unit apartment complex before I moved to Missoula to attend school at UM. One day, we were talking about how my dad would now be a land lord for the first time in his life after spending most of it being a renter. For some reason, I felt the need to ask him, hypothetically, if he were to choose to rent to a gay person or a straight person, who would he choose and why? (This was years before I, myself, came out as a gay man). He said he would pick the straight person with no hesitation. His reasoning was because he "disagreed with gay lifestyle." This was over a decade ago and my dad has come a long way learning, growing and accepting LGBTQ+ people as equals, now knowing that his son is part of that community. Unfortunately, there are landlords and sellers all over this state that currently have the same mentality my dad did and the LGBTQ+ community continues to suffer for it.

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

Hilary Easton, 3023 Rattlesnake Drive, Missoula, MT 59802 (443)742-5487

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.