



## Questions for Candidates for November 2018 Election

1. What is your opinion/position on lowering the cap on Texas' Rainy Day Fund?

With yet another budget shortfall on the horizon, I would support a vote lowering the cap in order to access monies in the rainy day fund. The fund should be used to help provide additional funding for education in Texas in two areas: general funding of our schools has declined due to an accelerated rate of population growth that has left our schools underfunded at the state level. Secondly, the State has not adequately funded special education for years, and those services need to be restored immediately. Overall, I would support the use of the Rainy Day fund to prevent budget cuts like those in 2011 so that we do not put an entire generation of our students behind due to a desire to pass tax cuts to corporations.

2. What is your opinion/position on tax rates for local governments and the rollback rate?

Local governments are in the best position to determine what tax rates are acceptable to their communities. The Texas Republican leadership cannot continue to beat up on local entities for raising taxes when they are passing out tax cuts to corporations in order to gain political advantage. If local taxes are high, it is because the State has neglected its duty to adequately fund the services it should be providing. Focusing on the rollback rate is a tactic used by the current legislature to not take responsibility for adequately funding State services. Cities are being impacted by population growth and the impact that has on the services they provide. If city leadership is doing a poor job of spending taxpayer money, the local elections should correct those issues rather than overreach from the Texas legislature.

3. Do you support creating a Texas Plan for Medicaid? Why or why not?

I would propose legislation that the governor be forced to accept the Medicaid expansion package so that Texans can begin to reap the rewards of their tax dollars and get access to the care they have been denied because of partisan politics. The Medicaid expansion would make the biggest difference to low-income adults with chronic conditions such as diabetes or asthma. Accepting the Medicaid expansion would also help bring more psychiatrists to Texas – we are currently 5,000 short to meet the existing need of Texans.

4. What percentage of the M&O funding should the State provide to school districts? Please explain your opinion.

The method of funding our education is broken and needs to be addressed. The legislation passed in 2006 has left school districts grasping for copper pennies in an attempt to deal with rising population,

leaving local taxpayers with limited returns on their investment. The continued diversion of funding away from public schools to the charter system takes tax dollars from public institutions and funnels it directly to private corporations. Taxes for schools should only be used for funding schools, not for lining campaign coffers and private business pockets. The impact on local businesses alone is ridiculous - why should one class of businesses be given direct tax funding that comes from the hard work of all other businesses in the area? Fixing the school funding formula and reducing state funding of charter schools would eliminate the wasteful spending at the State level and allow school districts to adequately fund the education of our students.

5. What is your opinion/position on using State funding for universal pre-K?  
I support universal full day Pre-K!

With Governor Abbott's support of State funding for universal Pre-k, you would think there would be bipartisan support of this program. Instead, the legislature eliminated a 118 million dollar grant for districts meeting high pre-k standards. This made it challenging for many districts to provide essential pre-k services, that would allow these students to be kindergarten ready. Currently, the state funds half-day pre-k for those considered high need, including the category of economically disadvantaged. However, there are many families who fall into the gap of not qualifying based on financial need, yet struggle with cost of private programs. Universal Pre-K would close this gap.

6. What do you think about economic development incentives/tools for cities to attract businesses/employees?

I have always believed that one of the great benefits of having local government is that they are well attuned to the needs of their communities. If cities are in an economic position to afford tax breaks to attract new employers, and the population supports the investment, it seems logical to allow cities to use such incentives. It can be challenging to balance the short-term discomfort of bringing in a larger company with the long term growth goals of a community. I hope that all State legislators keep in mind that local politicians have a difficult job and to work with them instead of against them to benefit our citizens.

Your answers will be published on the Chamber's website and communicated directly to members.

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Printed Name of Candidate



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Signature of Candidate

10-05-2018

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Date

Please return to Mary Frazier, HEB Chamber, [maryfrazier@heb.org](mailto:maryfrazier@heb.org) by Friday, October 5, 2018, 5:00 p.m.

