



## August 18th 2026 Elections Voter Guide

*The League of Women Voters of the St. Petersburg Area, is a nonpartisan organization that encourages participation in government, works to increase understanding of public policy issues, & influences policy through education & advocacy.*

### Voting In Pinellas County - Facts to Know

#### **You are eligible if you are:**

- a U.S. Citizen, age 18 years or older, and a resident of the county in which you are registering (unless your right to vote has been taken away by a judge/act of law).
- If you are 16 or 17 years old, you can pre-register to vote!
- If you are a Returning Citizen who has questions about your eligibility, here is an information resource that may be helpful: <https://campaignlegal.org/restoreyourvote>

---

#### **To vote in Pinellas County, you can register or check your registration status:**

- Online or by mail at <https://registertovoteflorida.gov/home>
- In-person at Election Offices:
  - 315 Court St, Room 117, Clearwater, FL
  - 13001 Starkey Rd, Starkey Lakes Corporate Center, Largo, FL
  - 501 First Ave N, St. Petersburg, FL
- Department of Motor Vehicle offices, Tax Collector offices or any public library

**The last day you can register to vote is 29 days before the election you want to vote in. So, make sure you register or double-check your registration at least 1 month before Election Day!**

---

#### **Want to Vote-by-Mail? There are 5 ways to request a vote-by-mail ballot:**

- Pinellas County Online: [Fill out the online Mail Ballot Request Form](#)
- Call the Supervisor of Elections Office at 727-464-8683
- Email: [Complete and sign this form](mailto:MailBallot@VotePinellas.gov) and send a scanned copy to [MailBallot@VotePinellas.gov](mailto:MailBallot@VotePinellas.gov)
- Mail: [Complete and sign this form](#) Mail it to Supervisor of Elections, 13001 Starkey Rd., Largo, FL 33773
- In Person at one of the three Supervisor of Elections Offices listed above

---

#### **Voting in Person? Here's a list of acceptable forms of identification:**

- Florida driver license
- Florida identification card issued by the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles
- United States passport
- Debit or credit card
- Military identification
- Student identification
- Retirement center identification
- Neighborhood association identification
- Public assistance identification
- Veteran health identification card issued by the US Department of Veterans Affairs
- License to carry a concealed weapon for firearm issued pursuant to s. 790.06, F.S.
- Employee ID issued by the Federal Government, the state, a county, or a municipality

**If you face any problems voting, you can call the nationwide non-partisan Election Protection hotline at 866-OUR VOTE.**

### [Important Dates to Remember](#)

- **Register to Vote by:** July 20th 2026
- **Request Mail-in-Ballot by:** August 6th at 5:00 pm
- **Early Voting Begins:** Early Voting: August 8th to August 16<sup>th</sup>
- **Election Day:** Tuesday, August 18th, 2026
- **Polls are open from** 7am to 7pm on August 18th
- **Mail-in-Ballot must be received by:** Tuesday, August 18th 7:00pm

[Click Here](#) to Confirm Your Polling Location and View Sample Ballot

---

**Research Your Ballot! Use this Voter Guide OR go to [Vote411.org](https://Vote411.org) to use the interactive Voter Guide!**



---

### **Table of Contents – click Race to view Candidates**

#### **LOCAL RACES:**

[6th Circuit Judge Group 39](#)

[6th Circuit Judge Group 44](#)

[County Judge Group 10](#)

[Pinellas Cty School Board Member Dist 2 At Large](#)

[Pinellas Cty School Board Member Dist 3 At Large](#)

[Pinellas Cty School Board Member Dist 6 Single Member](#)

[Clearwater Council Seat 4](#)

[Clearwater Council Seat 5](#)

[Oldsmar Council Member Seat 3](#)

[St. Petersburg Mayor](#)

[St. Petersburg Council Member District 6](#)

#### **FLORIDA STATE RACES:**

[Governor](#)

[Chief Financial Officer](#)

[Commissioner of Agriculture](#)

[State Senator 16](#)

[State Senator 18](#)

[State Representative 62](#)

#### **US RACES:**

[US Senator](#)

[US Congressional District 13](#)

[US Congressional District 16](#)

## 6th Circuit Judge Group 39

The Florida Circuit Courts are trial courts of general jurisdiction in Florida. The Circuit Court handles cases involving felonies, family law, civil issues, probate issues, juvenile cases, and appeals from County Court. Florida's 6th Judicial Circuit covers Pinellas and Pasco counties. It includes 45 judges at the circuit level. It is one of 20 judicial circuits in Florida and 94 circuits in the United States. To qualify for the post of circuit judge, a candidate must be an elector of a county within the circuit and must have been admitted to the practice of law in Florida for the preceding five years. Judges are selected via nonpartisan election.

**Term:** 6 Years **Salary:** \$200,836/year



### Elizabeth "Liz" Constantine

**Party:** Non Partisan

**Campaign Website:** [www.votelizforjudge.com](http://www.votelizforjudge.com)

**Campaign Email:** [lizconstantineforjudge@gmail.com](mailto:lizconstantineforjudge@gmail.com)

**Campaign Phone:** 727-899-2442

**Campaign Mailing Address:** Committee to Elect Elizabeth "Liz" Constantine P.O. Box 20252 St.

Petersburg FL 33742

**Education:** I graduated from the University of Central Florida Suma Cum Laude in 2010 with Bachelor of Arts Degree in Political Science and Psychology. I then attended Stetson University College of Law obtaining my Juris Doctor in May 2013.

**Professional Experience:** I have been employed as an Assistant State Attorney in the 6th Judicial Circuit for almost 13 years. The last 5 years I have been a special prosecutor in the Gang Unit prosecuting major violent crime. I also work part time as Associate General Counsel for the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office processing Risk Protection Orders.

**Public Service:** My parents were deeply addicted to drugs. After the death of my father, I entered the foster care system at 14. This fostered in me a commitment to public service. I have spent my life volunteering; serving as a Guardian ad Litem, a Junior League member and serving as a board member and chair of the Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater Tampa Bay.

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/VoteLizforJudge/](http://www.facebook.com/VoteLizforJudge/)

**Instagram:** [www.instagram.com/lizforjudge](http://www.instagram.com/lizforjudge)

**Briefly describe your philosophy of the judicial role, the qualities that are most important for the role, and the greatest challenges to the role.**

My judicial philosophy is textualism. The qualities I find most important for the role of judge are integrity, demeanor and knowledge of the law. Often judges find the greatest challenge to the role is maintaining impartiality and public confidence while deciding difficult and often controversial cases. This is not a challenge for me as I will apply the law fairly, regardless of my personal beliefs, public opinion, or political pressure.

**Many criminal defendants are poor, and as a result they find themselves represented by public defenders. Public defenders in turn find themselves with significant caseloads. What can a judge do to ensure that such a situation doesn't lead to inadequate representation?**

A judge can monitor attorney performance and allow sufficient time for preparation. Granting reasonable continuances when necessary so attorneys can adequately investigate and prepare their cases.

**What do you perceive as the greatest obstacles to justice, if any?**

Delay in the judicial process. Justice delayed can effectively become justice denied.

**As an attorney, have you tried cases in front of a judge and jury? If so, how many bench trials and how many jury trials?**

I have tried 78 jury trials and 2 bench trials.

**What, in your opinion, is the most important U. S. Supreme Court Decision?**

Marbury v. Madison because it established judicial review and defined the judiciary's role as a co-equal branch of government.

**What have been the most effective methods for improving court procedures and efficiency over the past five years?**

**What other methods would you suggest?**

The most effect methods are monitoring attorney performance, allowing sufficient time for preparation, ensuring meaningful participation and maintaining courtroom fairness and respect. I would recommend and implement all of these.



### Stefen Diskey

**Party:** Non Partisan

**Campaign Website:** [diskeyforjudge.com/](http://diskeyforjudge.com/)

**Campaign Email:** [diskeyforjudge@gmail.com](mailto:diskeyforjudge@gmail.com)

**Campaign Phone:** 7273513074

**Campaign Mailing Address:** 3152 Little Rd. #133 Trinity FL 34655

**Education:** Juris Doctor - Florida Coastal School of Law. Bachelor of Science, Business Administration - St. Petersburg College.

**Professional Experience:** Assistant State Attorney - Sixth Circuit - Lead Trial Attorney.

**Public Service:**

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61589565695065](https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61589565695065)

**Briefly describe your philosophy of the judicial role, the qualities that are most important for the role, and the greatest challenges to the role.**

My judicial philosophy is simple: apply the law as written, treat every person with dignity, and let the facts and the law, not personal preference, decide the outcome. I believe the words in a statute mean what they say, and it's not the judge's role to make law from the bench. The most important qualities of a judge are a steady demeanor, a strong work ethic, deciding cases on the law and facts alone, and recognizing that people in that courtroom are often facing one of the most important matters of their life. The greatest challenge today is maintaining trust in our judicial system. Trust is earned one case at a time, through judges who show up prepared, treat every matter seriously, and apply the law consistently.

**Many criminal defendants are poor, and as a result they find themselves represented by public defenders. Public defenders in turn find themselves with significant caseloads. What can a judge do to ensure that such a situation doesn't lead to inadequate representation?**

Being a prosecutor in this circuit and working with public defenders on a daily basis, I see firsthand the effects of these significant caseloads. A judge can do a great deal by setting realistic scheduling, managing the docket efficiently to reduce the burden on overloaded public defenders, and most importantly paying attention to what is happening in their cases. Ultimately, a judge sets the tone for the courtroom. When a judge expects preparation and runs an orderly courtroom, it raises the standard for everyone in it.

**What do you perceive as the greatest obstacles to justice, if any?**

In our circuit, high case volume is the greatest obstacle which in turn causes delay and loss of public trust. Delay in cases impacts the community's confidence in our judicial system and often causes further harm to victims, families, defendants, and everyone else who depends on our judicial process. A judge cannot solve every systemic problem but can address the issues every day by running an efficient courtroom and always remembering that behind every case number is a real person waiting on the justice system to work.

**As an attorney, have you tried cases in front of a judge and jury? If so, how many bench trials and how many jury trials?**

Yes. Over the course of my career as a prosecutor in the Sixth Circuit, I have tried 75 jury trials ranging from misdemeanors to capital felony offenses, as well as numerous bench trials.

**What, in your opinion, is the most important U. S. Supreme Court Decision?**

An old one, Marbury v. Madison (1803). It established the principles for judicial review and gave courts the authority to say what the law is. The distinction is that the court's role is to interpret the law, not make it.

**What have been the most effective methods for improving court procedures and efficiency over the past five years?**

**What other methods would you suggest?**

Advances in technology have improved our court system - from digital case management systems and e-filing systems to virtual hearings. Improved docket management and expansion of diversion programs for appropriate cases have also made significant differences. I think improvements in gathering case management data to schedule more realistically and avoid bottlenecks caused by high caseloads we see in this circuit would have a significant impact on court efficiency. Better data would mean better planning, which should lead to fewer delays.

## 6th Circuit Judge Group 44

The Florida Circuit Courts are trial courts of general jurisdiction in Florida. The Circuit Court handles cases involving felonies, family law, civil issues, probate issues, juvenile cases, and appeals from County Court. Florida's 6th Judicial Circuit covers Pinellas and Pasco counties. It includes 45 judges at the circuit level. It is one of 20 judicial circuits in Florida and 94 circuits in the United States. To qualify for the post of circuit judge, a candidate must be an elector of a county within the circuit and must have been admitted to the practice of law in Florida for the preceding five years. Judges are selected via nonpartisan election.

**Term:** 6 Years **Salary:** \$200,836/year



**Elizabeth "Liz" Jack**

**Party:** Non Partisan

**Campaign Website:** [www.keepjudgelizjack.com/](http://www.keepjudgelizjack.com/)

**Campaign Email:** [keepjudgelizjack@gmail.com](mailto:keepjudgelizjack@gmail.com)

**Campaign Phone:** 727-515-5891

**Campaign Mailing Address:** PO Box 20252 St. Petersburg FL 33742

**Education:** JD - University of Chicago; BA - Boston College

**Professional Experience:** FL attorney since 1998; former Federal Law Clerk; Assistant State Attorney in 13th and 6th Circuits; Staff in the Psychology Department at USF St. Petersburg; Sixth Circuit Court Judge

**Public Service:** my entire career, as well as volunteer work and membership in numerous legal organizations

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/KeepJudgeLizJack](https://www.facebook.com/KeepJudgeLizJack)

**Instagram:** [www.instagram.com/keepjudgelizjack/](https://www.instagram.com/keepjudgelizjack/)

**Briefly describe your philosophy of the judicial role, the qualities that are most important for the role, and the greatest challenges to the role.**

For five and a half years, I have been fulfilling my role as a Circuit Judge by following the law, and using good judgment to make factual findings and apply them to the law, as I have been sworn to do. It has been important for me to have discernment in determining credibility, as well as empathy and compassion for those who come before me. I treat everyone in my courtroom with respect, and employ active listening to reach well-reasoned decisions. In explaining all of my decisions, I write lengthy, detailed orders that are available to the public. Many of the attorneys who have appeared before me have written humbling testimonials (as published on my website) about the positive experiences they have had appearing before me.

**Many criminal defendants are poor, and as a result they find themselves represented by public defenders. Public defenders in turn find themselves with significant caseloads. What can a judge do to ensure that such a situation doesn't lead to inadequate representation?**

As a Circuit Judge, I treat all attorneys with significant respect. As a long-time prosecutor, I managed caseloads that felt overwhelming. As a Circuit Judge, I efficiently and effectively manage a very large caseload, using limited resources. In criminal court, I give public defenders and assistant state attorneys deference in their requests for additional time or grace; should I be assigned to a criminal division, I will continue to treat them with patience and understanding. However, even the most stressed and overloaded attorneys perform with professionalism and transparency. While we all make mistakes, when patterns of unprofessional behavior appear, a judge must hold attorneys to a higher standard so the system remains fair to all.

**What do you perceive as the greatest obstacles to justice, if any?**

Since 2021, when I took the bench, threats to the judiciary have increased exponentially, to the point where judicial conferences are presenting on safety and legislative changes. As a family law judge, where conflict and stress are the norm and emotions run high, I often leave one (or both) sides of a case displeased. I have been threatened in court, and an angry father came to my home to confront me about a ruling [he was charged and sentenced to prison]. Deference to judges and the judicial system by attorneys, parties, and the public has decreased. As a result, it is more important than ever that our judges rule based on the law, and are not swayed by political or public pressure; I take pride in successfully fulfilling this commitment.

**As an attorney, have you tried cases in front of a judge and jury? If so, how many bench trials and how many jury trials?**

Yes, I have tried more than 300 bench trials (those before a judge) and more than 50 jury trials (from misdemeanors to murder). This trial experience has been critically important to my success on the bench, as judges must be able to rule real-time on a myriad of complex legal and factual issues that arise during trial. Of course, I have further developed these trial skills in my five and a half years as a Circuit Judge, during which time I have handled hundreds of bench trials, and a murder trial. On an average week, I have one or more multiple day bench trials, and can have up to 40 to 50 hearings of all kinds.

**What, in your opinion, is the most important U. S. Supreme Court Decision?**

Marbury v. Madison (1803), is the foundational case that established the judiciary as a co-equal branch of government to the legislative and executive branches. Following the 1800 election, outgoing Federalist President John Adams made last-minute appointments to pack the courts. Incoming President Thomas Jefferson ordered Secretary of State James Madison to withhold the undelivered commissions. Marbury sued, asking the Supreme Court to issue a writ forcing delivery. The Chief Justice (the brilliant John Marshall) ruled that Marbury was entitled to his commission but the Court lacked jurisdiction to enforce it.

**What have been the most effective methods for improving court procedures and efficiency over the past five years?**

**What other methods would you suggest?**

I took the bench in 2021, just as we were emerging from COVID. I allow Zoom hearings when appropriate to increase efficiency and accessibility to the court system when appropriate. Even during in-person trials, I allow certain witnesses to testify via Zoom for their convenience or to reduce costs for the parties; this includes mental health professionals, teachers, and experts. Also, I enter my orders in an electronic filing system, which serves the orders on the attorneys and parties immediately. My assistant and I strive to make our courtroom easily accessible at the lowest cost possible to our citizens.



**Oxalis Garcia Rodriguez**

**Party:** Non Partisan

**Campaign Website:** [www.oxalisforjudge.com](http://www.oxalisforjudge.com)

**Campaign Email:** [oxalisforjudge@gmail.com](mailto:oxalisforjudge@gmail.com)

**Campaign Phone:** 727-835-6595

**Campaign Mailing Address:** 4500 140th Ave N SUITE 221 Clearwater FL 33762

**Education:** J.D. from the Interamerican University School of Law, Puerto Rico



**Professional Experience:** Been in the legal field for 20 years. Licensed in 3 jurisdictions, Florida, Maryland and Puerto Rico. Handled cases involving Family Law, Contracts, Business Disputes, Construction law, Guardianships, Criminal, Immigration, Probate and International Hague Matters. Established case law through Appeal Case N.B. v. R.V., 353 So.3d 1269 (2023)  
**Public Service:** BOT member for HCA Northside Hospital; BOT member of Non-profit United for the Community  
**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61573316092270#](https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61573316092270#)  
**Instagram:** [www.instagram.com/oxalisforjudge/](https://www.instagram.com/oxalisforjudge/)

**Briefly describe your philosophy of the judicial role, the qualities that are most important for the role, and the greatest challenges to the role.**

The core of this philosophy is Judicial Integrity... to be a neutral arbiter. The power of a judge is strictly limited to adjudicate the case by interpreting the law, along with weighing the admitted evidence. The goal is stability: the law should be a known quantity so that every citizen, regardless of status or background, knows exactly what to expect when they walk into the room. To execute this, a judge must possess more than just legal knowledge; they need intellectual honesty, temperament and decisiveness. The greatest challenge is the noise of personal and implicit bias, plus legislative ambiguity.

**Many criminal defendants are poor, and as a result they find themselves represented by public defenders. Public defenders in turn find themselves with significant caseloads. What can a judge do to ensure that such a situation doesn't lead to inadequate representation?**

The greatest tool a judge possesses is to be flexible when the need arises, such as granting continuances or scheduling specific times for hearings, rather than forcing a public defender to remain in the courtroom hours on end. In addition, the Judge shall ensure all counsels are prepared, and ensure the defendant has had an opportunity to meet and discuss the case with their counsel.

**What do you perceive as the greatest obstacles to justice, if any?**

The biggest obstacle to justice is two fold, one the parties'/defendant's expectations and secondly the access to counsel. In the AI era, many people believe they can self-represent themselves, not knowing they are held to the same standard as an attorney. In many cases, this does more harm than good. Furthermore, justice is very personal. The result of a judicial decision may not align with the individual's perception of what is just.

**As an attorney, have you tried cases in front of a judge and jury? If so, how many bench trials and how many jury trials?**

Bench Trials I have had many, over 20. No jury trials to date

**What, in your opinion, is the most important U. S. Supreme Court Decision?**

There have been many, but in the past 10 years ... Carpenter v. United States (2018). In this case, the Court ruled that the government generally needs a warrant to track your cell phone location data. It rejected the idea that just because you "give" your data to a phone company, the government has a right to see it. It protected and upheld the constitutional right to privacy. The constitution is our supreme law.

**What have been the most effective methods for improving court procedures and efficiency over the past five years?**

**What other methods would you suggest?**

I have found the use of administrative orders and judicial preferences to have greatly improved court efficiency. Both of these create expectations with the parties and provide a road map for self-represented litigants or attorneys. In the current times, with the ever-developing AI, the Court will need to establish and enforce AI use guidelines to ensure competent legal representation.

## County Judge Group 10

Each county has a county court. The number of county judges varies with the population and caseload of the county. Sometimes referred to as "the people's court," a large part of this court's work deals with traffic citations, misdemeanors and civil disputes involving \$30,000 or less. Judges are selected via nonpartisan election.

**Term:** 6 Years **Salary:** \$189,755/year



**Nick Fiorentino**

**Party:** Non Partisan

**Campaign Website:** [NickFiorentino.com](https://www.NickFiorentino.com)

**Campaign Email:** [VoteNickForJudge@gmail.com](mailto:VoteNickForJudge@gmail.com)

**Campaign Phone:** 727-898-8000

**Campaign Mailing Address:** 10225 Ulmerton Rd. #12B Largo FL 33771

**Education:** J.D. Stetson University College of Law 2002; Bachelors University of South Florida St. Petersburg 2000; Associates St. Petersburg Junior College 1999

**Professional Experience:** Managing Partner of Fiorentino Firm, P.A. Previously known as Ciarciaaglino, Gell & Fiorentino, P.A. 2005-Present; Law Office of Nicholas J. Fiorentino 2003-2005; My experience includes family law, civil law, probate and criminal law. Pinellas County Clerk of the Court Mgmt. Intern 1999; Interviewer/Intern, Public Defender's Office 1998;

**Public Service:** I am a member of the Seminole Lake Rotary Club, I have served as secretary of the club for 3 years and on the board for 1 year. I am also on the Rotary District Finance Committee. I am 2nd Vice President of Hero to a Child f/k/a the Guardian Ad Litem Foundation. I have served on the IAC Committee at Madeira Beach Fundamental for over 9 years.

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/FiorentinoForJudge](https://www.facebook.com/FiorentinoForJudge)

**Instagram:** [instagram.com/Fiorentino4judge](https://www.instagram.com/Fiorentino4judge)

**Briefly describe your philosophy of the judicial role, the qualities that are most important for the role, and the greatest challenges to the role.**

The role of the judge is to listen to all parties that appear before them, apply the law consistently and fairly in each case, and make a decision based on the law not their personal beliefs. The most important qualities for a judge are impartiality, good temperament, and humility. Impartiality will lead to fair decisions, good temperament will lead to all parties being heard and treated with respect, and judges cannot know everything about every matter that may come before them, so with humility comes the ability to continue learning so that the correct decisions are made. The greatest challenges facing the role of the judiciary is a shortage of out of court resources and delay in getting parties into the courtroom to be heard timely.

**Many criminal defendants are poor, and as a result they find themselves represented by public defenders. Public defenders in turn find themselves with significant caseloads. What can a judge do to ensure that such a situation doesn't lead to inadequate representation?**

We have some very good public defenders and I think it is very important for judges assigned to the criminal bench to not only run their calendars, but be mindful of the attorneys appearing before them on both the Public Defender and the State Attorney side. Usually these are newer attorneys and they may need guidance and mentoring from the court and other more experienced attorneys. I think it is important for the Judge to be a monitor to make sure everyone is being adequately represented and take the necessary action when there is an issue with representation.

**What do you perceive as the greatest obstacles to justice, if any?**

I believe the greatest obstacle to justice is financial. In all phases of the judicial process, there are costs that arise that not all parties can burden. Some of these costs include attorneys, experts, court reporters, and technology in the courtroom. It is important for the judiciary to be cognizant of these obstacles and also the resources available to assist when necessary.

**As an attorney, have you tried cases in front of a judge and jury? If so, how many bench trials and how many jury trials?**

Yes, I have tried approximately 35 bench trials where I have been the lead attorney and hundreds of hearings. I have tried family, civil, administrative and domestic violence injunctions cases. Because the majority of my practice has been in family law (no jury), we many times need to be involved in temporary relief hearings, these are mini trials but do not count in the above trial count. However, they are just as important as trials as you are calling witnesses, presenting evidence and asking the court to make a decision that the parties must abide by. I have participated in several administrative hearings and three jury trials.

**What, in your opinion, is the most important U. S. Supreme Court Decision?**

I believe there are many important U.S. Supreme Court Decisions. I think one of the most important decisions regarding the role of the judiciary is Marbury v. Madison. This decision established the doctrine of judicial review. It gave the Supreme Court the authority to strike down laws that were unconstitutional recognizing the importance of the separation of powers our government is based on.

**What have been the most effective methods for improving court procedures and efficiency over the past five years?**

**What other methods would you suggest?**

Some of the most effective methods of improving court procedures in recent years is the use of more technology. This includes allowing parties and witnesses to appear via zoom when necessary. This helps save parties time and money. I also believe changes to the civil rules of procedure to move cases forward in a faster manner are important as justice delayed is justice denied. Some other changes that could be implemented include better calendar management to allow hearings to be set in a more timely manner, a better system to publish judicial opinions at the local level so the citizens are aware of what is happening in the courts, and a requirement for judges to spend time on outreach to the citizens to educate them on the process.



**Zachariah Wade**

**Party:** Non Partisan

**Campaign Website:** [wadeforjudge.com/](http://wadeforjudge.com/)

**Campaign Email:** [zwadeforjudge@gmail.com](mailto:zwadeforjudge@gmail.com)

**Campaign Phone:** 727-310-2908

**Campaign Mailing Address:** 9721 Executive Center Dr N Suite #120 St. Petersburg FL 33702

**Education:** Juris Doctor

**Professional Experience:** Assistant State Attorney, Criminal Defense Attorney, Law School Professor, Civil Litigator, Business Owner (Habeas Porcus BBQ), Law Firm Owner

**Public Service:** Mentoring, Community Service, Food giveaways, Speaking engagements,

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/wadeforjudge](https://www.facebook.com/wadeforjudge)

**Instagram:** [www.instagram.com/zachariahwadeesq/](https://www.instagram.com/zachariahwadeesq/)

**Briefly describe your philosophy of the judicial role, the qualities that are most important for the role, and the greatest challenges to the role.**

A judge is a public servant and the person counted on for the orderly resolution of disputes. Life-changing decisions are made within courtrooms and the responsibility of ensuring that the law is applied fairly and consistently rests on the judge's

shoulders. The greatest challenge in this role comes from the balance that must be struck because not everyone will be happy with the outcome of a case. Trust in our court system depends on each person leaving confident that the law was followed. To preside over a courtroom, a judge must have experience practicing within it. To apply the law fairly, a judge must have real-life perspective. To ensure that each party is heard and respected, a judge must be patient, unbiased, and empathetic.

**Many criminal defendants are poor, and as a result they find themselves represented by public defenders. Public defenders in turn find themselves with significant caseloads. What can a judge do to ensure that such a situation doesn't lead to inadequate representation?**

While the Public Defender is responsible for the attorneys under her charge, judges can acknowledge the significant caseloads most Public Defenders carry by organizing courtroom appearances to be as efficient as possible while continuing to respect the rights of the parties. Maximizing efficiency within the courtroom increases the amount of time Public Defenders, and other attorneys, have to work outside of it. This means more time to review discovery, research, draft pleadings, and communicate with opposing counsel and clients. Increased productivity within the courtroom ensures Public Defenders have adequate time to work on their files and move cases to a resolution while also maximizing the use of government resources and time.

**What do you perceive as the greatest obstacles to justice, if any?**

My professional and personal experience have taught me that one the greatest obstacles to justice is socio-economic status. More financial resources can bring more options in a criminal or civil case. Things like hiring experts, accident reconstructionist, or pursuing independent laboratory analysis and depositions can become expensive and because of that are sometimes obstacles that directly impact the outcome of a case.

**As an attorney, have you tried cases in front of a judge and jury? If so, how many bench trials and how many jury trials?**

I have taken over 40 cases to trial, including bench trials and jury trials. My trial experience includes cases involving local ordinance violations, misdemeanors, felonies, and civil litigation. The outcomes have included verdicts and sentences that impact livelihoods, families, employability, and have also resulted in incarceration.

**What, in your opinion, is the most important U. S. Supreme Court Decision?**

Gideon v. Wainwright, 372 U.S. 335 (1963). In this case the Supreme Court handed down an order requiring all individuals charged with a felony to be represented by an attorney. Later cases broadened that precedent to also include misdemeanor criminal cases. This decision leveled the playing field in the criminal justice system and ensured that someone accused of a crime has a skilled advocate working on their behalf. In its opinion the Court focused on the peril of someone who is not guilty facing "the danger of conviction because he does not know how to establish his innocence."

**What have been the most effective methods for improving court procedures and efficiency over the past five years?**

**What other methods would you suggest?**

Communication and structure are the most effective methods for improving courtroom efficiency. This happens where the judge informs the lawyers about standards of practice, judicial preferences, and/or changes in daily courtroom operations. This lets the attorneys know what to do and what to expect, which creates a more efficient day in the courtroom. An additional method can be scheduling hearings that require a translator together. This practice is currently implemented in the traffic courts and is effective. Our current judges are efficient and dutiful, but with only a few translators available and many courtrooms for them to appear in each day, hearings can be more efficient if cases needing a translator are scheduled together.

## Pinellas Cty School Board Member Dist 2 At Large

The Pinellas County School Board is responsible for the administration of the county's schools in accordance with state law and the rules put forth by the State Board of Education. The School Board adopts policies and sets priorities for the district. It also adopts and oversees the annual budget, hires and evaluates the superintendent, and manages the collective bargaining process for employees of the district. The School Board consists of seven members: three who are elected at-large (which means they are voted on by all county residents) and four who are elected by the registered voters within each single-member district. All seven Board members will represent the entire district upon their election. The Board appoints a superintendent who serves as chief administrative officer of Pinellas County Schools. The Board also employs the School Board Attorney, who reports directly to the Board.

**Term:** 4 Years **Salary:** \$56,360/year

Click here to view the June 29th, 2026 School Board Candidate forum: [2026 Pinellas County School Board Candidate Forum](#)



**Lisa Cane**

**Party:** Non Partisan

**Campaign Website:** lisacane.com

**Campaign Email:** lisacane2026@gmail.com

**Campaign Phone:** 727-580-6545



**Campaign Mailing Address:** 35209 US Hwy 19 N Palm Harbor FL 34684

**Education:** Eckerd College Bachelors of Arts, St. Petersburg College Associates of Arts

**Professional Experience:** Executive Director, The Tampa Bay Performing Arts Academy

**Public Service:** 2018-Present Pinellas County School Board,

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/votelisa2026](https://www.facebook.com/votelisa2026)

**How do you compare the results of charter schools, private schools and public schools in the county? How will you ensure that public schools remain viable with adequate funding in this age of vouchers?**

Every school option serves different student needs, and success should be measured by student outcomes, not school type. Public schools remain the only schools required to serve every child, regardless of ability, background, or circumstance. My focus is ensuring Pinellas public schools remain the first choice for families by delivering strong academics, safe campuses, and innovative programs. To remain viable in an era of school choice, we must maximize funding, strengthen community partnerships, expand career and technical programs, support our teachers, and demonstrate responsible stewardship of taxpayer dollars while keeping students at the center of every decision.

**What are your top 3 priorities for the district and what specific action will you take to address each of them?**

1. Student Achievement: Ensure every student has the support they need to succeed in reading, math, and core academic subjects through targeted interventions, engaging instruction, and access to high-quality learning resources. 2. Student Engagement: Expand access to arts, athletics, career and technical education, extracurricular activities, and leadership opportunities so students can discover their strengths, build confidence, and stay connected and motivated in school. 3. College and Career Readiness: Ensure every student has clear pathways after graduation by expanding career academies, industry certifications, dual enrollment opportunities, and partnerships with local businesses so students can gain real-world experience.

**Teachers and other staffing shortages are a pervasive problem. What suggestions do you have for improving recruitment and retention of staff?**

Recruiting and retaining excellent employees begins with creating a culture where staff feel valued, respected, and supported. We must remain competitive in compensation, expand mentorship opportunities for new teachers, provide meaningful professional development, and reduce unnecessary administrative burdens. I also support strengthening partnerships with local colleges and universities to create a pipeline of future educators. Retention improves when employees have strong leadership, opportunities for growth, and confidence that their voices are heard in district decision-making.

**As people become more involved in the details of curriculum and material choices in schools, how would you handle competing issues and views (e.g. requests to remove certain books from libraries or lessons from classrooms)?**

Parents, educators, and community members all deserve a voice in the process. I believe curriculum and instructional materials should align with state standards, be age-appropriate, and support student achievement. When concerns arise, established review procedures should be followed with transparency, consistency, and respect for all viewpoints. Decisions should be based on educational value, legal requirements, and district policy—not politics. My goal would be to ensure parents are heard while maintaining a learning environment that supports academic excellence for all students.

**What avenues does the district provide for students to express their views on social and political issues? What specific disciplinary actions do you support?**

Students should be encouraged to think critically, engage respectfully, and participate in constructive dialogue. Schools can provide opportunities through student government, leadership programs, classroom discussions, civic education, and public comment opportunities where appropriate. While students have rights to express their views, schools must also maintain a safe and orderly learning environment. I support fair, consistent discipline focused on accountability, restorative practices when appropriate, and clear consequences for behavior that disrupts learning, threatens safety, or violates district policies.

**What in your professional and personal experience makes you the best candidate for this position?**

My experience combines educational leadership, business operations, and direct service to students and families. As the founder and leader of a successful performing arts organization, I have spent years developing programs, managing budgets, supervising staff, and creating opportunities that help students grow academically, socially, and personally. I understand the importance of accountability, fiscal responsibility, and community engagement. I have worked directly with children and families throughout Pinellas County and understand both the opportunities and challenges they face. I will bring a collaborative, student-focused approach to the School Board, always prioritizing what is best for students, families, and the community.



**Nancy Velardi**

**Party:** Non Partisan

**Campaign Website:** [velardiforschoolboard.com/](https://velardiforschoolboard.com/)

**Campaign Email:** [nvelardi@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:nvelardi@tampabay.rr.com)

**Campaign Phone:** 8122594224

**Campaign Mailing Address:** 941 Leeward Way Palm Harbor FL 34685

**Education:** BA in English (with highest honors) at City University of New York, College of Staten Island.

**Professional Experience:** 25 years as a classroom teacher, 22 of those at Pinellas Park High School.

**Public Service:** President of Pinellas Classroom Teachers Association

**How do you compare the results of charter schools, private schools and public schools in the county? How will you ensure that public schools remain viable with adequate funding in this age of vouchers?**

As someone who spent more than 20 years teaching in Pinellas County public schools, I know firsthand the value of strong public education. Parents should have choices, but we can't honestly compare public, charter, and private schools when they play by different rules. Public schools educate every child and are held to strict standards for academics, finances, testing, transparency, and student services, while many voucher-funded schools are not. If taxpayer dollars are funding a school, taxpayers deserve the same accountability. I'll continue fighting for strong public schools and for consistent standards wherever public education dollars are spent.

**What are your top 3 priorities for the district and what specific action will you take to address each of them?**

My top priority is making sure every student gets the best education we can provide. As a teacher, I always believed our job was to help students think critically, build confidence, and prepare for whatever path they choose after graduation. My second priority is supporting our teachers. We won't attract and keep great educators unless we reduce unnecessary bureaucracy, trust their professional judgment, and treat them with the respect they deserve. Finally, I want to strengthen the partnership between our schools and parents through open communication, transparency, and mutual respect. Every decision I make as a School Board member will come back to one simple question: Is this what's best for our students?

**Teachers and other staffing shortages are a pervasive problem. What suggestions do you have for improving recruitment and retention of staff?**

After more than 20 years in the classroom, I know teachers stay when they feel respected, supported, and trusted. We need to reduce unnecessary paperwork, give educators more time to teach, provide strong mentorship for new teachers, and ensure competitive pay and benefits within the district's resources. School climate also matters. Teachers need administrators and School Board members who listen to their concerns and treat them as professionals. When we create schools where educators want to work, students benefit as well.

**As people become more involved in the details of curriculum and material choices in schools, how would you handle competing issues and views (e.g. requests to remove certain books from libraries or lessons from classrooms)?**

Parents deserve a voice in their children's education, and schools should always be transparent. At the same time, curriculum and library decisions should follow established district policies through a fair, consistent, and professional review process, not politics or pressure campaigns. As an English teacher, I encouraged students to think critically by engaging with age-appropriate literature and diverse perspectives. I trust educators and librarians to make professional recommendations while ensuring families have a clear process to raise concerns respectfully.

**What avenues does the district provide for students to express their views on social and political issues? What specific disciplinary actions do you support?**

Schools should encourage respectful dialogue, civic engagement, and critical thinking while maintaining an environment focused on learning. Students should have appropriate opportunities to express their views through student government, school publications, classroom discussions, and other district-approved activities. Discipline should be fair, consistent, and focused on accountability while keeping students in school whenever possible. Consequences should reflect the seriousness of the behavior, protect the learning environment, and include restorative approaches when appropriate.

**What in your professional and personal experience makes you the best candidate for this position?**

I've spent my career in public education, not observing it from the outside, but living it every day. For more than 20 years, I taught English at Pinellas Park High School, working with students from every background and helping them succeed. Later, as president of the Pinellas Classroom Teachers Association, I advocated for educators, students, and safe schools. I understand the challenges facing our classrooms because I've experienced them firsthand. That perspective, combined with my commitment to students, teachers, and parents, prepares me to serve effectively on the School Board.

## Pinellas Cty School Board Member Dist 3 At Large

The Pinellas County School Board is responsible for the administration of the county's schools in accordance with state law and the rules put forth by the State Board of Education. The School Board adopts policies and sets priorities for the district. It also adopts and oversees the annual budget, hires and evaluates the superintendent, and manages the collective bargaining process for employees of the district. The School Board consists of seven members: three who are elected at-large (which means they are voted on by all county residents) and four who are elected by the registered voters within each single-member district. All seven Board members will represent the entire district upon their election. The Board appoints a superintendent who serves as chief administrative officer of Pinellas County Schools. The Board also employs the School Board Attorney, who reports directly to the Board.

**Term:** 4 Years **Salary:** \$56,360/year

Click here to view the June 29th, 2026 School Board Candidate forum: [2026 Pinellas County School Board Candidate Forum](#)



**Curtis Campogni**

**Party:** Non Partisan

**Campaign Website:** [www.curtis4allpcs.com/](http://www.curtis4allpcs.com/)

**Campaign Email:** info@curtis4allpcs.com

**Campaign Phone:** 407-319-2068

**Campaign Mailing Address:** 3334 Briarwood Cir 3334 Briarwood Cir Safety Harbor, Florida FL 34695

**Education:** Bachelor of Science in Psychology.

**Professional Experience:** Founder of Speak4MC. National speaker, trainer, author, and consultant. More than 15 years of experience serving at-risk youth and families through workforce development, child welfare, juvenile justice, and community-based programs. Former youth care worker, case manager, and program manager.

**Public Service:** Vice Chair, Florida Department of Juvenile Justice Circuit 6 Advisory Board. Florida representative to the Southeastern Employment and Training Association (SETA). Pinellas County Schools mentor. Volunteer speaker and trainer for community organizations. Advocate for youth, families, foster care & workforce development.

**Facebook:** www.facebook.com/Curtis4allpcs/

**Twitter:** x.com/curtis4allpcs

**Instagram:** www.instagram.com/curtis4allpcs/

**How do you compare the results of charter schools, private schools and public schools in the county? How will you ensure that public schools remain viable with adequate funding in this age of vouchers?**

Public, charter, and private schools all serve students, but they operate under different rules and responsibilities, making direct comparisons difficult. My role as a School Board member is not to criticize families for the choices they make, but to ensure Pinellas County Schools remains a system families want to choose. Strong public schools benefit everyone. They support local economies, attract families, strengthen communities, and prepare the future workforce. This issue is personal to me. My children attend public schools, and my mother is a public school teacher. I will be an unapologetic advocate for a strong and well-funded public school system. Voucher programs should have reasonable income limits and include transparency.

**What are your top 3 priorities for the district and what specific action will you take to address each of them?**

My top three priorities are teacher support, enrollment, and community partnerships. First, I will advocate for competitive teacher pay, support referendums that fund compensation, and reduce unnecessary burdens so teachers can focus on teaching. Just as importantly, I will listen to educators and ensure their voices are part of the conversation. Second, I will address declining enrollment by rebuilding trust in public education, expanding outreach, and evaluating school models that better meet families' needs. Third, I will strengthen partnerships between schools, businesses, nonprofits, and community organizations to expand opportunities and connect families with resources beyond what schools can provide alone.

**Teachers and other staffing shortages are a pervasive problem. What suggestions do you have for improving recruitment and retention of staff?**

Teacher and staff shortages will not be solved by recruitment alone. We must focus on both recruitment and retention. My approach is simple: hear them, empower them, and pay them. We must continue advocating for competitive compensation through state funding, local referendums, and responsible budgeting. We also need to ensure educators and staff feel heard, respected, and supported. Too often, teachers are expected to be instructors, administrators, and behavioral specialists all at once. Retention improves when employees feel valued and have the tools to succeed. Recruitment improves when current employees tell others that Pinellas County Schools is a great place to work. That should be our goal.

**As people become more involved in the details of curriculum and material choices in schools, how would you handle competing issues and views (e.g. requests to remove certain books from libraries or lessons from classrooms)?**

I believe most of these issues should be approached the same way: listen, gather facts, hear different perspectives, and make decisions that serve the broader educational mission of our schools. For example, our current book challenge process allows parents to make choices for their own children while ensuring one household does not make decisions for every other family. I generally support that approach. Many of these debates are rooted in distrust, misunderstanding, or a lack of communication. I am not afraid to have difficult conversations or hear viewpoints different from my own. However, I will not be drawn into ideological battles that distract from our primary responsibility: educating students and preparing them for success.

**What avenues does the district provide for students to express their views on social and political issues? What specific disciplinary actions do you support?**

Students have opportunities to express their views through classroom discussions and student-led clubs. Schools should help students learn how to engage respectfully with people who hold different perspectives. Empathy and interpersonal communication skills are essential when discussing social and political issues. I believe discipline should be based on behavior, not viewpoints. Students should not be disciplined for expressing an opinion. However, if expression becomes disruptive, harassing, or interferes with others' right to learn, appropriate consequences may be necessary. My goal is to create schools where students feel comfortable sharing their perspectives while maintaining a safe and productive learning environment.

**What in your professional and personal experience makes you the best candidate for this position?**

As the father of two Pinellas County Schools students, the son of a public school teacher, and a lifelong Pinellas County resident, I bring both personal and professional experience to this role. For more than 15 years, I have worked with youth and families, led state-funded programs, and built community partnerships that help young people succeed. I am not a politician. I am a dad who is deeply invested in the future of our schools. In short, I am the only candidate in this race with two children who will attend our schools for the next 15 years and more than 15 years of experience serving youth and families. That combination provides a perspective grounded in both professional experience and personal investment in Pinellas County.



## Dawn Douglas

**Party:** Non Partisan

**Campaign Website:** [electdawndouglas.com/](http://electdawndouglas.com/)

**Campaign Email:** [dawndouglas2026@gmail.com](mailto:dawndouglas2026@gmail.com)

**Campaign Phone:** 727-437-2691

**Campaign Mailing Address:** 50 8th Avenue SW P.O. Box 384 Largo FL 33779

**Education:** St Petersburg College - Associate of Arts; University of South Florida - Bachelor of Arts in English Literature

**Professional Experience:** Teacher in Pinellas County since 2002

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/dawndouglasHD59/](http://www.facebook.com/dawndouglasHD59/)

**Twitter:** [x.com/DD4SchoolBD](https://twitter.com/DD4SchoolBD)

### **How do you compare the results of charter schools, private schools and public schools in the county? How will you ensure that public schools remain viable with adequate funding in this age of vouchers?**

Comparing charter and public schools use state standardized testing which can be compared, but it is a mixed result as each groups has schools that perform at different levels on the tests. Private schools don't use the same assessments and can't be compared in that regard. Charters and private schools are able to provide smaller class size, but do not have a the range of extracurricular offerings. To ensure adequate funding public schools need to develop parent involvement to retain students and families. Also, public schools should lower the stress of testing driven curriculum and incorporate lessons that are fun and excite students. More students will increase funding.

### **What are your top 3 priorities for the district and what specific action will you take to address each of them?**

1) Lessen time on devices and screens. Students need to work with books, paper and pencil to develop skills and brain development. It's time to put devices back into the hands of teachers to use as needed. 2) Retain quality teachers. Teachers are able to teach without scripted lesson plans being given to them. Give teachers the opportunity to create interesting lessons and more deeply engage students. Also, reevaluate the current method of evaluating teachers. 3) Expand real world opportunities for students to graduate with the ability to earn a living that will support them and their family. Pinellas can grow their trades programs in schools and expand the offerings given at PTEC across the county.

### **Teachers and other staffing shortages are a pervasive problem. What suggestions do you have for improving recruitment and retention of staff?**

The recruitment and retention of staff members is multi-pronged. Many staff members cannot afford to live in Pinellas County, they commute long distances or find jobs in other counties. Pinellas can work to develop community partners to provide affordable housing for staff members. Eliminating highly scripted lesson plans will allow teachers the freedom to create engaging lesson plans. Student behavior has become an issue for many teachers in the classroom. County-wide policies must be developed and supported to create a healthy learning environment in the classroom.

### **As people become more involved in the details of curriculum and material choices in schools, how would you handle competing issues and views (e.g. requests to remove certain books from libraries or lessons from classrooms)?**

Parental involvement is an important part of a student's education. Family requests for students to be excused from reading or studying certain materials has always been respected. Books and lessons should not be removed at the request of a few as it affects everyone. I do not support unmitigated book banning. Upon request to not have their child participate in a particular lesson or book, that student should be provided an alternative to the lesson/book.

### **What avenues does the district provide for students to express their views on social and political issues? What specific disciplinary actions do you support?**

Many schools have newspapers they can utilize to express their ideas and opinions regarding social or school issues. Some students opt to present their issues at school board meetings. Students do have first amendment rights providing they are peaceful, not demeaning to others and don't cause a disruption to the school.

### **What in your professional and personal experience makes you the best candidate for this position?**

My professional experience in the classroom has given me insight to issues that others do not possess. I don't merely listen to or read stories regarding educational experiences, I have been living them since 2002. I also have had the experience of being a representative for the Pinellas Classroom Teacher's Association for over 18 years. This has given me an inside view of problems that others do not have the opportunity to observe. Pinellas County schools have one outcome, to provide for the community a student who can step into the world as a responsible, contributing member of society.



## Dawn Peters

**Party:** Non Partisan

**Campaign Website:** [www.votedawnpeters.com/](http://www.votedawnpeters.com/)

**Campaign Email:** [votedawnpeters@gmail.com](mailto:votedawnpeters@gmail.com)

**Campaign Phone:** 7274100646

**Campaign Mailing Address:** P.O. Box 20252 St. Petersburg FL 33742

**Education:** AA Degree in Geography. Certification as a preschool substitute. Personal Training Certification. Sports Nutritionist certification.

**Professional Experience:** Beginning in 2009, I served as a preschool substitute, I held PTA roles up to president. Certified Mentor. Employed at Thurgood Marshall FMS as Volunteer/Mentor Coordinator.

**Public Service:** Elected to the Pinellas County School Board in 2022

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/dawnforpcs/](https://www.facebook.com/dawnforpcs/)

**How do you compare the results of charter schools, private schools and public schools in the county? How will you ensure that public schools remain viable with adequate funding in this age of vouchers?**

Charter, private, and public schools in Pinellas County show varied results; performance depends more on individual schools than on school type. Public schools serve all students, including those with the greatest needs, while private schools receiving vouchers are not required by FLDOE to meet the same accountability, admissions, or reporting standards. To keep public schools viable, we must ensure stable, predictable funding, protect resources tied to student needs, and require transparency for any school using public dollars. Strong public schools depend on sustained investment

**What are your top 3 priorities for the district and what specific action will you take to address each of them?**

-Continue to support students in the current trajectory of achieving increased academic growth. -Maintain stability in our district during a time of political and financial uncertainty at the state and federal levels. -Increase teacher and staff pay and support, not only through our district budget but also through advocacy at the state level.

**Teachers and other staffing shortages are a pervasive problem. What suggestions do you have for improving recruitment and retention of staff?**

There is currently no teacher shortage in Pinellas County; however, the district is focused on increasing teacher and staff pay to remain competitive and retain high-quality educators. To support this goal, administrative departments are being streamlined to improve efficiency and reduce costs. Schools are also being evaluated for potential consolidation, with an emphasis on cost-effective K–8 models where appropriate. Community meetings this summer are gathering stakeholder input before decisions are made, ensuring transparency. These efforts aim to expand access, maximize resources, and prioritize directing funds toward

**As people become more involved in the details of curriculum and material choices in schools, how would you handle competing issues and views (e.g. requests to remove certain books from libraries or lessons from classrooms)?**

Pinellas County Schools selects and implements curriculum in alignment with Florida State Standards and Statute 1003.42, covering required topics such as U.S. history, civics, and health. The district uses CPALMS to guide standards-based instruction. Curriculum adoption follows PCS Policy 2510, with annual updates in one major subject and opportunities for public input. Policy 2520 ensures transparency by allowing parents to review course materials. Implementation is supported by the Teaching and Learning Services division, which provides resources, training, and approved field trips updated annually. This process has been in place for several years and continues to work well.

**What avenues does the district provide for students to express their views on social and political issues? What specific disciplinary actions do you support?**

Pinellas County Schools supports student voice through a student government council known as Student Rights and Responsibilities. This council serves as a vital link between students and district leadership. Members meet monthly with the School Board, Superintendent, and key administrators to ensure consistent communication. These meetings provide students with the opportunity to share perspectives, contribute ideas, and collaborate on the development and implementation of initiatives and programs that positively impact schools across the district. The district also supports student-led clubs at all Middle and High Schools

**What in your professional and personal experience makes you the best candidate for this position?**

I bring a unique perspective as both a former parent, employee, and current Board Member, with deep engagement in Pinellas County Schools since 2009. My experience, strong relationships, and commitment to public education allow me to continue leadership with insight and confidence. I am prepared to strengthen partnerships, advocate effectively, and make thoughtful decisions, especially in a time of uncertainty. I want to serve all stakeholders for one final term.

## Pinellas Cty School Board Member Dist 6 Single Member

The Pinellas County School Board is responsible for the administration of the county's schools in accordance with state law and the rules put forth by the State Board of Education. The School Board adopts policies and sets priorities for the district. It also adopts and oversees the annual budget, hires and evaluates the superintendent, and manages the collective bargaining process for employees of the district. The School Board consists of seven members: three who are elected at-large (which means they are voted on by all county residents) and four who are elected by the registered voters within each single-member district. All seven Board members will represent the entire district upon their election. The Board appoints a superintendent who serves as chief administrative officer of Pinellas County Schools. The Board also employs the School Board Attorney, who reports directly to the Board.

**Term:** 4 Years **Salary:** \$56,360/year

Click here to view the June 29th, 2026 School Board Candidate forum: [2026 Pinellas County School Board Candidate Forum](#)





## **Nancy Bostock**

**Party:** Non Partisan

**Campaign Website:** [www.nancybostock.com/](http://www.nancybostock.com/)

**Campaign Email:** [nancy@nancybostock.com](mailto:nancy@nancybostock.com)

**Campaign Phone:** 7275315731

**Campaign Mailing Address:** 13285 62nd St N Clearwater FL 33760

**Education:** Clearwater High School, Graduate, University of Florida, BA, History, Phi Beta Kappa, University of South Florida, MA, Education

**Professional Experience:** Pinellas County School Board Member, 1998-2008, Pinellas County Commissioner, 2008-2012, President/CEO, Chemical Standards Laboratory, 2012-present

**Public Service:** Pinellas County School Board, Pinellas County Commissioner

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/BackBostock/](http://www.facebook.com/BackBostock/)

### **How do you compare the results of charter schools, private schools and public schools in the county? How will you ensure that public schools remain viable with adequate funding in this age of vouchers?**

The results of charter schools, private schools and public schools vary considerably and are not always "apple to apple" comparisons. Public schools will remain viable within the system of school choice by offering consistent, high-quality education to all students and by offering choice within the public system. During my first tenure on the Pinellas School Board (1998-2008) I am proud to have played a significant role in helping the district establish a strong system of public school choice (Fundamental & Magnet Schools) on which we have built, and should continue to strengthen, a system of strong public school options. These have a strong record of competing favorably with nonpublic school options & will continue to do so.

### **What are your top 3 priorities for the district and what specific action will you take to address each of them?**

Students: I will always put our students and their success first. I will base every decision on one simple question: Does this help our students succeed? Community: I will stand with our parents, support our teachers, and listen to our community.

Fiscal Responsibility: I will protect our tax dollars by ensuring that each expenditure benefits our students. I have experience balancing 14 complex, annual government budgets ranging from \$1.2 to \$2 billion, including four years during The Great Recession. This will enable me to make sound financial decisions that put students first during the challenging budgets we now face in our school district.

### **Teachers and other staffing shortages are a pervasive problem. What suggestions do you have for improving recruitment and retention of staff?**

The district should support our teachers and staff in every way. The district should continue to support the local optional tax referendum and the supplemental pay it provides both teachers and support staff. The district should improve its system for handling chronically disruptive students and give teachers the support they want in their classrooms. The district should seek input from our front-line personnel on a regular basis and not just during budget challenges.

### **As people become more involved in the details of curriculum and material choices in schools, how would you handle competing issues and views (e.g. requests to remove certain books from libraries or lessons from classrooms)?**

The Pinellas County School Board has a strong policy that defines the process by which the school district reviews all challenges. We assemble a committee of school personnel and community members to review all challenges. The School Board should periodically review, reaffirm, or modify that policy ahead of specific challenges. When a challenge arises, we should stand by our preexisting policy and allow it to work.

### **What avenues does the district provide for students to express their views on social and political issues? What specific disciplinary actions do you support?**

During academic time, we need to protect and promote learning. Putting students and their academic learning time should be our priority. Outside school time, we need to allow for student expression of views. We can use some of the standards we use for allowing student clubs: Is it student initiated? Is it student led? These standards will help us set guardrails against undue outside influence and support our students as they express their views. Using these two factors gives us a way to balance students' need for academic time and their rights to free expression. Any necessary disciplinary action should follow standard District policy and strive to be as consistent as possible with other similar behavior related situations.

### **What in your professional and personal experience makes you the best candidate for this position?**

I am a lifelong Pinellas resident. My Dad taught in our schools for 25+ years. I am a proud graduate of our schools & my children attended our schools. I am committed to our success. I served as a School Board Member and a County Commissioner for 14 years. I helped facilitate the transition to School Choice and managed challenging budgets during The Great Recession. As an experienced CEO in local manufacturing, I bring real world experience to the School Board. The School District will need strong leaders with this experience while we face the challenges of declining enrollment. I am honored to have the endorsement of many of our elected leaders & will work in partnership with them to put our students and their success first.



## Amanda Lord

**Party:** Non Partisan

**Campaign Website:** [amandalordforschoolboard.com/](http://amandalordforschoolboard.com/)

**Campaign Email:** [amanda.z.lord@icloud.com](mailto:amanda.z.lord@icloud.com)

**Campaign Phone:** 7278046763

**Campaign Mailing Address:** 204 37th Ave. N. #224 St. Petersburg FL 33704

**Education:** Eckerd College: Bachelor of Arts with High Honors, 1998-2002, dual major Business Management and Spanish, minor International Business; University of Tampa Master of Business Administration, 2006-2009, concentration in International Business

**Professional Experience:** Sr. Project Manager - Technology and Operations at Franklin Templeton Investments, 24 years, 2002-present; Adjunct Professor at St. Petersburg College (SPC), 11 years, 2010-2021

**Public Service:** First-time candidate

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/people/Amanda-Lord-for-School-Board-District-6/61573411190208/](https://www.facebook.com/people/Amanda-Lord-for-School-Board-District-6/61573411190208/)

**Instagram:** [www.instagram.com/amandalordforschoolboard?utm\\_source=qr](https://www.instagram.com/amandalordforschoolboard?utm_source=qr)

### **How do you compare the results of charter schools, private schools and public schools in the county? How will you ensure that public schools remain viable with adequate funding in this age of vouchers?**

We can compare academic gains in charter schools to public schools because charter schools are generally required to take the same assessments as public schools. Charter schools scores are included in the school's accountability grade, along with public schools. We cannot compare the academic gains to private schools because private schools can use various nationally norm-referenced tests from a state approved list. I believe private schools should be required to take the same state tests if taking public money. We can't cut our way to excellence, and we must demand more guardrails with vouchers. Public schools must take a balanced approach with the budget and continue providing families choices.

### **What are your top 3 priorities for the district and what specific action will you take to address each of them?**

The biggest challenge facing the district is improving achievement while managing declining enrollment and financial pressure. I will take a balanced approach that protects classrooms, retains great teachers, grows enrollment and strengthens community partnerships. I support expanding VPK programs, identifying academic challenges early and providing intensive targeted support. I will also put more emphasis on attendance. Every budget decision I make will answer one question: How does this help students succeed in the classroom. We need to continue offering families choices whether that's fundamental, magnet, or career and technical programs, to meet family's needs and make public school their first choice.

### **Teachers and other staffing shortages are a pervasive problem. What suggestions do you have for improving recruitment and retention of staff?**

Parental and volunteer support for teachers in schools is a way everyone can help create strong school communities and reduce turnover, but it's not enough. I will work to reduce vacancies through retention because teacher turnover is expensive. I will focus professional development on evidence-based instruction, so we have as many highly-effective teachers as possible. I will give more opportunities for staff to strengthen their skills and build a career path through the Teacher Apprenticeship Program. Most importantly I want to see teachers' salaries be above a livable wage and for teaching to be a well-compensated career field. I support the 1 mil property tax referendum, which provides critical compensation for teachers and staff.

### **As people become more involved in the details of curriculum and material choices in schools, how would you handle competing issues and views (e.g. requests to remove certain books from libraries or lessons from classrooms)?**

Parents deserve a clear, transparent process for raising concerns about instructional material. At the same time, decisions should be made through a consistent review process that follows Florida law, considers educational value and age appropriateness and respects the expertise of educators and librarians. My role as a School Board member is to ensure that process is fair, lawful, and transparent for book or curriculum challenges. Pinellas County updated its policies in 2022 to comply with the law. We trained media specialists on the new requirements and implemented the formal reconsideration process for challenged materials. I'm supportive of a transparent process that looks at all perspectives.

### **What avenues does the district provide for students to express their views on social and political issues? What specific disciplinary actions do you support?**

I believe the best way to provide students avenues to express their views on social and political issues is to provide appropriate forums like debate clubs, newspapers and student-led organizations. This gives students the opportunity to learn how to discuss social and political issues respectfully, listen to different perspectives and evaluate evidence. All students should feel safe expressing their views, as long as there is no disruption to the educational environment and the rights of others are upheld. As a School Board member, I commit to remaining neutral on social and political views. If the educational environment is disrupted or becomes unsafe, then the specific disciplinary action depends on the situation and other factors.

### **What in your professional and personal experience makes you the best candidate for this position?**

I'm raising two children in Pinellas County public schools and have been actively involved for the last 8 years in our schools as PTA Treasurer, PTA President, SAC member, Girls on the Run Coach and a registered volunteer. I am endorsed by dozens of current PCS teachers. I spent 11 years as a college adjunct professor at St. Petersburg College, believing in all of my students and understanding what teachers need to do their best work. I am a Sr. Project Manager in Technology and Operations with 24 years of experience at Franklin Templeton Investments. I manage complex global multi-million-dollar projects and budgets and know how to ask hard and hold organizations accountable.

## Clearwater Council Seat 4

The City of Clearwater is governed by a Council/Manager form of government with the City Council serving as the governing body. The City Council is comprised of the Mayor and four Councilmembers, who each serve four-year terms. The City Council is the legislative and policy-making body of the City, responsible for approving the budget and determining the ad valorem tax rate on all real and personal property within the corporate limits of the City. Councilmembers also evaluate the job performance of the City Manager and the City Attorney, attend City Council meetings, special workshops/meetings, and schedule and attend community meetings to address various topics and initiatives.

**Term:** 4 years **Salary:** \$45,000/year

Click here to view the June 1st, 2026 candidate forum: [2026 CNC Clearwater Council Candidate Forum](#)

**For a detailed video explanation** of the role of City Council, click here...<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3LdBHrgaWZo>



**Bianca Latvala**

**Party:** Non Partisan

**Campaign Website:** [www.biancalatvala.com](http://www.biancalatvala.com)

**Campaign Email:** [info@biancalatvala.com](mailto:info@biancalatvala.com)

**Campaign Mailing Address:** 19 N Neptune Ave Clearwater FL 33765-3126

**Education:** BA International Relations, MA Political Science American Politics

**Professional Experience:** I have worked in government relations, nonprofit fundraising and communications, currently I work in digital marketing with a focus on small businesses and nonprofits.

**Public Service:** I have served the community through volunteer leadership, Rotary, and I currently serve as the Chair of the Clearwater Community Resilience and Leisure Services Board

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/biancaforclearwater](http://www.facebook.com/biancaforclearwater)

**Instagram:** [www.instagram.com/biancaforclearwater](http://www.instagram.com/biancaforclearwater)

**Whether or not to reduce property taxes is officially a ballot amendment for this November. What services would have to be cut or how would you make up for revenue losses if this goes through? What, in your view, should be done?**

I am very apprehensive about eliminating property taxes without a clear replacement plan. Property taxes fund essential local services such as public safety, roads, parks, libraries, and stormwater infrastructure. If that revenue disappears, cities would face difficult service cuts or be forced to raise other taxes and fees. I support exploring responsible property tax relief, especially for homeowners struggling with affordability, but any changes must be carefully studied and fiscally sustainable. Before eliminating a major source of local revenue, we need a detailed plan that protects taxpayers while ensuring communities can continue providing the services residents depend on every day.

**Available housing for lower income families is still an issue in our area. How will you expand access to and availability of affordable and workforce housing, for both renters and homeowners?**

Housing affordability is one of the biggest challenges facing Clearwater. We need housing options for teachers, first responders, healthcare workers, young professionals, and seniors who want to remain in our community. I support encouraging workforce and affordable housing through smart planning, public-private partnerships, and redevelopment opportunities where appropriate. We should also look for ways to streamline permitting and reduce unnecessary costs that drive up housing prices. At the same time, we must balance growth with infrastructure, traffic, and neighborhood character. The goal should be creating more attainable housing options while protecting the quality of life that makes Clearwater a great place to live.

**Hurricanes Helene and Milton placed an unprecedented burden on municipalities and residents. What steps would you take to improve city capacity for future storm resilience and response? What can be done to better help residents recover and rebuild, including the issuance of building permits in a timely manner and difficulties stemming from the FEMA 49/50% rule. What changes are needed to improve this process?**

Clearwater stood out during Hurricanes Helene and Milton because the City was prepared, communicated effectively, and led recovery efforts when residents needed it most. We should build on that success by continuing to invest in stormwater infrastructure, flood mitigation projects, emergency preparedness, and resilient public facilities. While Clearwater responded well, there is always room for improvement. The City should continue streamlining permitting, expanding online resources, and ensuring adequate staffing during disaster recovery periods. We should also work closely with state and federal partners to improve guidance and flexibility surrounding FEMA's 49/50% rule, which created significant challenges and confusion for homeowners.

**A number of downtown properties remain vacant, resulting in a quiet downtown. What can be done to spur downtown development?**

Downtown Clearwater's biggest opportunity is the upcoming availability of county-owned properties. This is a once-in-a-generation chance to change the map of downtown Clearwater and create the vibrant, active destination residents have been

asking for. We cannot afford to miss this opportunity. Thoughtful redevelopment of these properties can help create a downtown that serves residents, attracts visitors, and strengthens Clearwater's future for decades to come.

**The cost of some electricity in the county is expected to increase in the next few years. Clearwater and Saint Petersburg are looking into creating a public utility. Do you support this effort? Why or why not?**

Affordability is important, and I understand residents' concerns about rising electric costs. However, I am cautious about creating a public utility. Operating an electric utility is a complex undertaking, and Clearwater does not currently have experience in that area. Before taking on that responsibility, we need a thorough analysis of the costs and risks. My priority is ensuring affordable, dependable service while being responsible stewards of taxpayer dollars.

**Describe the top two priority challenges facing Clearwater in the next 5 years. What specific actions would you propose to address these challenges?**

Clearwater's two biggest challenges over the next five years are infrastructure and downtown redevelopment. We must continue investing in stormwater, flooding mitigation, utilities, and other critical infrastructure to improve resiliency and support future growth. We must also take advantage of the upcoming availability of county-owned properties downtown. This is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to attract investment, support local businesses, and create a vibrant downtown that serves residents and visitors year-round. We cannot afford to miss it.



**Jared Leone**

**Party:** Non Partisan

**Campaign Website:** [jaredforclearwater.com](http://jaredforclearwater.com)

**Campaign Email:** [jaredforclearwater@gmail.com](mailto:jaredforclearwater@gmail.com)

**Campaign Phone:** 727-248-0194

**Campaign Mailing Address:** PO Box 34 Clearwater FL 33757

**Education:** Master of Arts in Journalism and Digital Design (USFSP); Bachelor of Science in Journalism (UF); Associate in Arts (SPC)

**Professional Experience:** Journalist for nearly 20 years covering news for publications including the Tampa Bay Times, the Associated Press, Reuters and The Washington Post.

**Public Service:** Chairman, City of Clearwater Environmental Advisory Board (2016-2025); President, Clearwater Neighborhoods Coalition (2025-Present); President, Spring Branch Neighborhood Association (2018-Present); Vice President, Keep Pinellas Beautiful (2020-Present); Puppy Raiser, Southeastern Guide Dogs (now Dogs, Inc.)

**Facebook:** [facebook.com/jared4clearwater](https://facebook.com/jared4clearwater)

**Whether or not to reduce property taxes is officially a ballot amendment for this November. What services would have to be cut or how would you make up for revenue losses if this goes through? What, in your view, should be done?**

Residents need relief. We need to make Clearwater more affordable, but we can't sacrifice the services we have come to expect. Public safety, parks and rec centers, libraries and solid waste would all be impacted. As city leadership, we need to look for ways to reduce fees and other costs to residents. We also cannot become beholden to Tallahassee to fund our services. That legislation still must pass another hurdle, approval by 60% of voters. If approved, this will lead to millions of dollars in shortfall the first year and more moving forward. It would take an act of the Legislature, but a portion of the Tourist Development Tax could reduce the impact on essential services and other aspects of our city we value.

**Available housing for lower income families is still an issue in our area. How will you expand access to and availability of affordable and workforce housing, for both renters and homeowners?**

The city should continue investing in and incentivizing partnerships with nonprofit housing organizations that have a proven track record of delivering quality affordable and workforce housing, such as the Clearwater Gardens development. Teachers, healthcare workers, first responders, hospitality employees, and young professionals should be able to live in the communities they serve. Making attainable housing available helps businesses recruit and retain employees, reduces traffic, strengthens neighborhoods, and ensures Clearwater remains a place where residents of all income levels can build a future.

**Hurricanes Helene and Milton placed an unprecedented burden on municipalities and residents. What steps would you take to improve city capacity for future storm resilience and response? What can be done to better help residents recover and rebuild, including the issuance of building permits in a timely manner and difficulties stemming from the FEMA 49/50% rule. What changes are needed to improve this process?**

I led the city's Environmental Advisory Board for nearly a decade, advocating for policy, projects and initiatives to make our community more resilient. We need to work with the county to make sure ditches, drains and swale are maintained. We need to look at our stormwater system for bottlenecks and opportunities to increase capacity. The city's updated Adaptation Plan, is the action plan for the city's Vulnerability Assessment and includes ways to make impacted areas more resilient. The city should prioritize improving its Community Rating Score from a 5 to a 2. Improving this number means homeowners pay less for flood insurance. It also means the community has made a number of efforts to improve its resiliency.

**A number of downtown properties remain vacant, resulting in a quiet downtown. What can be done to spur downtown development?**

Downtown Clearwater is at a pivotal moment. With Imagine Clearwater, Coachman Park, City Hall, substantial downtown development and the upcoming availability of 17 county-owned properties, we have tremendous opportunity to shape the future of our downtown. We need to work collaboratively with residents, businesses, property owners, developers, and community organizations to ensure we're creating an active, walkable, vibrant downtown that serves the entire community. As



these county properties become available, leadership must ensure we're getting the best projects and the best outcomes for Clearwater. We need to look at city-owned properties that can be packaged with the other parcels for larger possible development too.

**The cost of some electricity in the county is expected to increase in the next few years. Clearwater and Saint Petersburg are looking into creating a public utility. Do you support this effort? Why or why not?**

Affordability has to be the driving factor in this conversation. As Duke's franchise agreements come up for renewal across Pinellas County, Clearwater should work collaboratively with regional partners to evaluate all available options. We should be looking at costs, reliability, long-term infrastructure investment, and what approach delivers the best value. Just as importantly, I want to see our utility providers being proactive rather than reactive. Every hurricane season we hear about outages and system vulnerabilities. Residents deserve that investments are being made year-round to harden infrastructure, improve resiliency, and reduce disruptions before storms occur, not simply responding after the fact.

**Describe the top two priority challenges facing Clearwater in the next 5 years. What specific actions would you propose to address these challenges?**

The city faces numerous challenges in the coming years. Maintaining, upgrading and increasing capacity to our stormwater, wastewater, and other resiliency infrastructure is paramount. Residents don't always see these projects, but they are critical to public health, environmental protection, flood mitigation, and preparing Clearwater for future storms. Increasing transparency for our community. Whether it's the availability of 17 county owned properties and the future of downtown, or the 70-acres at the Landings, we need to ensure the public is part of the process when it concerns public property. Too often public comment is treated as a box to be checked rather than a part of the process to guide decision making.

## Clearwater Council Seat 5

The City of Clearwater is governed by a Council/Manager form of government with the City Council serving as the governing body. The City Council is comprised of the Mayor and four Councilmembers, who each serve four-year terms. The City Council is the legislative and policy-making body of the City, responsible for approving the budget and determining the ad valorem tax rate on all real and personal property within the corporate limits of the City. Councilmembers also evaluate the job performance of the City Manager and the City Attorney, attend City Council meetings, special workshops/meetings, and schedule and attend community meetings to address various topics and initiatives.

**Term:** 4 years **Salary:** \$45,000/year

Click here to view the June 1st, 2026 candidate forum: [2026 CNC Clearwater Council Candidate Forum](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3LdBHrgaWZo)

**For a detailed video explanation** of the role of City Council, click here...<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3LdBHrgaWZo>



**Mark Bunker**

**Party:** Non Partisan

**Campaign Website:** [www.markbunker.com/](http://www.markbunker.com/)

**Campaign Email:** [markbunker2026@gmail.com](mailto:markbunker2026@gmail.com)

**Campaign Phone:** (727)314-3450

**Campaign Mailing Address:** 1200 S. Missouri Ave. Suite 113 Clearwater FL 33756

**Education:** BS in Radio/TV/Film, University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh

**Professional Experience:** I've worked in front of and behind the cameras for most of my career, starting the morning guy at a mid-west radio station where I also wrote and produced ads for station sponsors and outside ad agencies. I moved to L.A. and worked at Universal, Paramount, and CBS before moving to San Diego to work in TV News.

**Public Service:** I served on the Clearwater City Council from 2020-2024, I sat on the city's Pension Board during those years as well as the Downtown Development Board.

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/MarkBunker2026/](https://www.facebook.com/MarkBunker2026/)

**Twitter:** [x.com/markbunker2026](https://twitter.com/markbunker2026)

**Whether or not to reduce property taxes is officially a ballot amendment for this November. What services would have to be cut or how would you make up for revenue losses if this goes through? What, in your view, should be done?**

I would first protect public safety and essential infrastructure. I would not start by cutting police, fire, emergency response, stormwater protection, or road maintenance. Those are core responsibilities. We should look at delaying lower-priority capital projects, reduce outside consulting fees, pursue state and federal grants aggressively and look for shared-service opportunities with the county and neighboring cities. We need to continue growing the tax base through responsible redevelopment, affordable housing and small business growth. I would not pretend we can keep every service exactly the same. I support real tax relief, but it has to be done responsibly, avoiding panic cuts, keeping residents informed at every step.

**Available housing for lower income families is still an issue in our area. How will you expand access to and availability of affordable and workforce housing, for both renters and homeowners?**



Affordable and workforce housing must remain a top priority. During my time on council, I supported affordable housing projects that moved forward even as costs rose during COVID, and I backed changes allowing ADUs so families have more flexible options. I would continue expanding partnerships with nonprofits, responsible developers, faith groups, and county/state programs to build more rental and ownership opportunities. We should use city-owned land where appropriate, reduce unnecessary barriers, support ADUs and missing-middle housing, and look at creative models like tiny-home communities and first-time homebuyer assistance. People who work in Clearwater should be able to live in Clearwater.

**Hurricanes Helene and Milton placed an unprecedented burden on municipalities and residents. What steps would you take to improve city capacity for future storm resilience and response? What can be done to better help residents recover and rebuild, including the issuance of building permits in a timely manner and difficulties stemming from the FEMA 49/50% rule. What changes are needed to improve this process?**

Helene and Milton showed that storm recovery must be faster, clearer, and more coordinated. I would strengthen stormwater and drainage projects, harden critical infrastructure, improve debris removal planning, and make sure residents get timely, accurate updates before and after storms. For recovery, the city should create a one-stop storm permitting team, expand temporary staffing after disasters, publish clear checklists, and assign case managers for residents dealing with the FEMA 49/50% rule so they are not bounced from office to office. We should also push FEMA and the state for clearer guidance and more flexibility, while helping homeowners rebuild safely, legally, and as quickly as possible.

**A number of downtown properties remain vacant, resulting in a quiet downtown. What can be done to spur downtown development?**

As someone who has been standing up to Scientology for close to 30 years, I urged the city to make sure Scientology came through with their end of any bargain before the city gave them a reward. After years of leaving buildings vacant, Scientology is now promising to give the city a vibrant, thriving downtown. I hope they come through. If they do, the next concern must be Scientology's control of the businesses they allow to operate downtown. They are hand-picking what businesses will operate in their properties. David Miscavige micromanages every aspect of Scientology and is ruthless as a leader. Scientology has long put pressure on businesses downtown. The question now is, "will this Clearwater's downtown or Scientology's?"

**The cost of some electricity in the county is expected to increase in the next few years. Clearwater and Saint Petersburg are looking into creating a public utility. Do you support this effort? Why or why not?**

I support exploring a public utility because residents deserve lower, more stable electric bills and more local accountability. Clearwater's franchise agreement with Duke is ending, and the city's study found this could potentially reduce bills, but this is a major decision involving hundreds of millions of dollars, legal risk, and long-term responsibility. I would not support a blank check or a rushed breakup. I would support a transparent, independent review with St. Petersburg and regional partners to determine the real cost, savings, reliability, storm resilience, and clean-energy options. If public power can save residents money and improve service, we should pursue it. If the numbers do not work, we should not.

**Describe the top two priority challenges facing Clearwater in the next 5 years. What specific actions would you propose to address these challenges?**

Clearwater's top two challenges are affordability and resilience. Too many working families, seniors, and young people are being priced out. I would expand affordable and workforce housing through nonprofit partnerships, responsible redevelopment, ADUs, use of city-owned land where appropriate, and support for small businesses that create good local jobs. Storms, flooding, infrastructure needs, and rising costs are putting more pressure on residents and city services. I would prioritize stormwater and drainage projects, harden critical infrastructure, improve disaster permitting and recovery, and review every major expense to protect core services like police, fire, roads, parks, and libraries while keeping taxes and fees fair.



**Kevin R T Laughlin**

**Party:** Non Partisan

**Campaign Website:** [Kevinforclearwatercouncil.com](http://Kevinforclearwatercouncil.com)

**Campaign Email:** [Kevin@Kevinforclearwatercouncil.com](mailto:Kevin@Kevinforclearwatercouncil.com)

**Campaign Phone:** 727-422-1269

**Campaign Mailing Address:** 1530 McMullin Booth Rd. Suite D-8 PO BOX111 Clearwater FL 33759

**Professional Experience:** Marine management since 1987, Industrial Safety Training 2005-2021

**Public Service:** 45+ Years as a Community Theater actor and volunteer. 10th year Clearwater Marine Advisory Board, 2nd as Chairman.

**Facebook:** [m.facebook.com/groups/918469410998428/?ref=share](https://m.facebook.com/groups/918469410998428/?ref=share)

**Whether or not to reduce property taxes is officially a ballot amendment for this November. What services would have to be cut or how would you make up for revenue losses if this goes through? What, in your view, should be done?**

Passage of Amendment 3 by the voters would cut billions from payments for city services. Largo is talking of outsourcing their Police. Clearwater does not have that option. Increases in fees will drive up renter costs hurting citizens and businesses. It will hurt new home buyers already disadvantaged by SOH. Real estimates put the sales tax as high as 12%. Increases in water and sewer estimates are 10-15%. Otherwise, where do you cut? Police? Flood Mitigation? Fire? Utilities? There is no plan to replace the estimated 38% drop in ad valorem revenues and 14% drop in city revenues. While Dunedin has held two emergency sessions discussing the future. Clearwater has done nothing. Bond servicing in jeopardy and future bond cost soars.

**Available housing for lower income families is still an issue in our area. How will you expand access to and availability of affordable and workforce housing, for both renters and homeowners?**

Lagging use of HCV's is due to the lack of Section 8 Housing. Amendment 3 will complicate it even further. There does not seem to be any real plan to build the housing Clearwater needs, or even in Pinellas.

**Hurricanes Helene and Milton placed an unprecedented burden on municipalities and residents. What steps would you take to improve city capacity for future storm resilience and response? What can be done to better help residents recover and rebuild, including the issuance of building permits in a timely manner and difficulties stemming from the FEMA 49/50% rule. What changes are needed to improve this process?**

Lagging use of HCV's is due to the lack of Section 8 Housing. Amendment 3 will complicate it even further. There does not seem to be any real plan to build the housing Clearwater needs, or even in Pinellas. The opening of Clearwater Gardens will prove a success and a recent tour of The Indigo showed a clean, livable environment close to the city center and there are many more. Yes, it works, but we need more. The HCV waiting list is presently closed. Recruitment of property owners is limited. Workforce housing rises along the US19 corridor. These are not considered affordable, prove quite transitory. Lagging construction of ADUs, on the other hand, is due to rising construction costs. The slim return on investment is slim, at best.

**A number of downtown properties remain vacant, resulting in a quiet downtown. What can be done to spur downtown development?**

It is 17 buildings and 22 County properties. In the presentation to citizens, after issuing a Request For Negotiation, the County Commission stated their intent of 'maximizing profits' on these properties. At the CNC Candidate Forum on June 1st, I stated I trusted County officials to have Downtown Clearwater's best interest at heart as much as I felt a church down the street had. The next day on my FB Kevin For Clearwater page, I was told that was ignorant. When their reaction goes that low, my faith in them goes lower. I repeat! If there has been inclusion of City Council in these decisions, it has not been in the open. A major parking and beach transportation hub at Chestnut and Court Streets and our beach traffic can be saved.

**The cost of some electricity in the county is expected to increase in the next few years. Clearwater and Saint Petersburg are looking into creating a public utility. Do you support this effort? Why or why not?**

The misconception of FL's established MEU's is that they broke away from a power monopoly to successfully manage their own power grid. Actually, they are home-grown, as in, they never let the monopolies in. That is not to say it can't be done. Clearwater is in a unique position to have the population and wealth to overcome most any obstacle, but obstacles are many. Duke's outrageous value of assets and their willingness to sue. Their media reach will be wide and condemning of Clearwater's efforts. Our irregular borders and unincorporated pockets need to be involved. Top of the World, for instance. Next, we would be tied to Duke's technology, as in transformer and line configuration, generation sources and pass-through downstream. Edited.

**Describe the top two priority challenges facing Clearwater in the next 5 years. What specific actions would you propose to address these challenges?**

The pending destruction of The Landings for tax profits and the profiteering of County properties by the Commission without solving the Downtown problem. Look to Jacksonville and the fully autonomous public transportation system. Bridged between the top of Court St and the coming Beach Marina Garage, all weather transportation would be a thing. Connection to the proposed Intra-island beach transit system would reach Rockaway. It all starts on the bluff and the County Commission's plan. 7 County Commissioners will decide the downtown and the beach access future.



**Sam Wilson**

**Party:** Non Partisan

**Campaign Website:** [www.votesamwilson.com/](http://www.votesamwilson.com/)

**Campaign Email:** [Sam@votesamwilson.com](mailto:Sam@votesamwilson.com)

**Campaign Phone:** 7276676655

**Campaign Mailing Address:** P.O. Box 5635 Clearwater FL 33758

**Education:** Bachelors Degree

**Professional Experience:** Congressional Staffer

**Public Service:** Clearwater Housing Authority

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/votesamwilson](http://www.facebook.com/votesamwilson)

**Twitter:** [x.com/votesamwilson](https://twitter.com/votesamwilson)

**Instagram:** [www.instagram.com/votesamwilson/](http://www.instagram.com/votesamwilson/)

**Whether or not to reduce property taxes is officially a ballot amendment for this November. What services would have to be cut or how would you make up for revenue losses if this goes through? What, in your view, should be done?**

Lower property taxes have been at the center of my campaign because too many families, seniors, veterans, and first-time buyers are being squeezed. I welcome real relief, but it must be done responsibly. For too long, the city has refused to roll back the rate. The answer is to make government live within its means, not to gut services. That means no pay raises for politicians, no \$90 million buildings, and a top-to-bottom audit for waste before anything residents rely on is touched. Police, fire, water, roads, and storm readiness come first. We make up revenue by growing our tax base through a revitalized downtown and private investment, not by quietly raising other taxes. Manage money like families do, and we can do both.

**Available housing for lower income families is still an issue in our area. How will you expand access to and availability of affordable and workforce housing, for both renters and homeowners?**

Housing affordability comes down to supply. I serve on the Clearwater Housing Authority and see it up close: when we do not build enough, prices climb, and our teachers, first responders, and service workers get pushed out of the city where they work. My approach is to make it easier to build by cutting red tape and updating outdated zoning along corridors like US-19, while partnering with private builders and employers instead of micromanaging the market. But growth must pay for itself, so I will insist developers cover their own roads, pipes, and schools rather than handing the bill to taxpayers. More supply stabilizes rents, and lower property taxes plus first-time buyer support help young families & seniors put down roots and stay here.

**Hurricanes Helene and Milton placed an unprecedented burden on municipalities and residents. What steps would you take to improve city capacity for future storm resilience and response? What can be done to better help residents recover and rebuild, including the issuance of building permits in a timely manner and difficulties stemming from the FEMA 49/50% rule. What changes are needed to improve this process?**

Clearwater must prepare before storms hit, not scramble afterward. I will invest in storm-hardening our critical infrastructure, pair it with nature-based defenses like living shorelines and dunes, make sure every city worker knows their role, and coordinate closely with state emergency management. I will use my experience in a congressional office to fight for beach renourishment and the federal dollars behind it. On recovery, permitting cannot be what stops a family from rebuilding, so I will set guaranteed review timelines, fast-track storm rebuilds, and add surge staffing. The FEMA 50% rule is crushing families, so I will push for fair appraisals, clear guidance, and common-sense reform to get people home faster.

**A number of downtown properties remain vacant, resulting in a quiet downtown. What can be done to spur downtown development?**

Downtown Clearwater is not for sale. My focus is revitalization and more open-for-business signs. Rather than chase giveaways or backroom deals, I will help activate the vacant properties we already have and recruit the small businesses that bring downtown back to life, with the city and elected officials leading the conversation. It is already working along Cleveland Street, where historic buildings have been refurbished, and private investment is returning, and projects like The Bluffs are adding energy to the waterfront. I will build on that by updating zoning, offering targeted redevelopment incentives, cutting permitting red tape, and putting county-owned buildings to good use, all in the Sunshine.

**The cost of some electricity in the county is expected to increase in the next few years. Clearwater and Saint Petersburg are looking into creating a public utility. Do you support this effort? Why or why not?**

Residents are right to be frustrated. Energy prices are among the highest in the state and keep climbing, which hurts affordability. We also should not let massive data centers strain our grid and push everyone's costs even higher. I am glad the city studied its options, but I am cautious about a government takeover. Why expect government, with no expertise running a power company, to do it cheaper than businesses that do this for a living? Buying the system could cost at least \$572 million, with estimates above a billion, plus the risk of owning storm restoration. I will demand independent verification, protect taxpayers from a billion-dollar gamble, and meanwhile press hard for lower, fairer rates and better reliability.

**Describe the top two priority challenges facing Clearwater in the next 5 years. What specific actions would you propose to address these challenges?**

The two challenges I hear about most are affordability and resilience, and they are why I am running. On affordability, I will roll back the millage rate, bring real spending discipline to City Hall with no politician pay raises and no \$90 million buildings, and expand housing supply while making developers pay for their own infrastructure. On resilience, I will storm-harden critical infrastructure, use nature-based defenses for our beach and neighborhoods, coordinate with emergency management, train every city employee, and fix permitting so families can rebuild fast. I will also push to reform the FEMA 50% rule, restore our pier, and keep renourishing our beaches. Affordable and resilient: that is the goal.

## Oldsmar Council Member Seat 3

The City of Oldsmar has a council-manager form of government. The city council is composed of five members (the mayor and four council members). The city council is the governing body of the city with powers to pass ordinances, adopt resolutions, approve the budget, appropriate funds, and appoint the city manager. The city council is responsible for the proper conduct of all municipal operations. The city manager is responsible for the administration of all city affairs and is accountable to the city council.

**Term:** 3 years **Salary:** \$10,000/year View the June 8th Candidate Forum here:

<https://www.youtube.com/live/BqZLvEX4ZEK?si=Sb5MId3LT7PZk4vP>

**For a detailed video explanation** of the role of City Council, click here...<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3LdBHrgaWZo>



**Amber Stephens**

**Party:** Non Partisan

**Campaign Website:** [www.amberstephensforoldsmar.com/](http://www.amberstephensforoldsmar.com/)

**Campaign Email:** [amber4oldsmar@gmail.com](mailto:amber4oldsmar@gmail.com)

**Campaign Phone:** 7192313373

**Campaign Mailing Address:**

**Education:** University of Hawaii at Manoa (Bachelor's of Science), Arizona State University (Masters of Education)

**Professional Experience:** Background in Behavior Analysis and Speech Therapy

**Public Service:** Parks & Recreation Advisory Board, Former Oldsmar Friends of the Arts Board Director, Former Public Art Review & Selection Committee, Janice Miller Citizen's Academy Graduate, Former Public Art Task Force, Woman's Club of Oldsmar, Canvassing Board (2024 & 2025), Pinellas Citizen's University Graduate, Planning Board Member

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/people/Amber-Stephens-for-Oldsmar-City-Council-Seat-3/61585726441614/](https://www.facebook.com/people/Amber-Stephens-for-Oldsmar-City-Council-Seat-3/61585726441614/)

**What in your professional and personal experience makes you the best candidate for this position?**

Oldsmar is where I live, work, and play. My family has built our life here, and I've spent years serving this community. As a mother of 3 with a background in behavior analysis and speech therapy, I bring a problem-solving mindset rooted in listening and results. For 6 years, I attended meetings and workshops to understand our city government. I serve as Chair of the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board and as a member of the Planning Board. I have also served on the Public Art Task Force, Review & Selection Committee, 2 Canvassing Boards, and completed the Janice Miller Citizens Academy & Pinellas County Citizen University. I will bring accountable leadership, fiscal discipline, and a commitment to keeping Oldsmar safe, strong, and thriving.

**Describe the top two priority challenges facing Clearwater in the next 5 years. What specific actions would you propose to address these challenges?**

Two of Oldsmar's most pressing challenges over the next five years are potential property tax reform and aging infrastructure. If tax reform passes, local revenue could decline, requiring the city to do more with less. We must strengthen financial resiliency, prioritize core services, reduce inefficiencies, expand alternative revenue sources, and protect reserves. In addition, roads, stormwater systems, and utilities require continued investment through a data-driven capital improvement plan and pursuit of state and federal grants. I will work collaboratively with Council to set priorities and provide clear direction to the City Manager, aligning policy goals with staff expertise and implementation capacity.

**Hurricanes Helene and Milton placed an unprecedented burden on municipalities and residents. What steps would you take to improve city capacity for future storm resilience and response? What can be done to better help residents recover and rebuild, including the issuance of building permits in a timely manner and difficulties stemming from the FEMA 49/50% rule. What changes are needed to improve this process?**

Both hurricanes demonstrated that Oldsmar's response and coordination were strong and effective. I would not change the city's core response but would focus on maintaining year-round awareness to strengthen volunteer engagement. The Oldsmar Support Services Alliance was a successful model that should serve as a template for other communities. The city communicated effectively through the Oldsmar Strong website, implemented mobile permitting to help residents begin rebuilding, and held regular meetings so residents understood the recovery process. As a volunteer with Community United Methodist Church of Oldsmar and Operation Jack's Village, both Alliance partners, I support continued growth in volunteerism and community partnerships.

**Whether or not to reduce property taxes is officially a ballot amendment for this November. What services would have to be cut or how would you make up for revenue losses if this goes through? What, in your view, should be done?**

Any reduction in property taxes would reduce local revenue and require the city to do more with less, potentially impacting core services such as public safety, parks and recreation, infrastructure, stormwater management, and long-term capital planning. The responsible approach is to plan ahead by strengthening financial resiliency, protecting reserves, prioritizing core services, eliminating inefficiencies, and expanding diversified revenue sources including grants, impact fees, and responsible growth. The city is conducting focus groups and resident surveys to ensure budget priorities reflect community values. These decisions should be made collectively by the council, grounded in data, community priorities, and accountability.

**How will you expand access to and availability of affordable and workforce housing, for both renters and homeowners?**

Florida's Live Local Act provides an important tool for expanding affordable and workforce housing. As a Planning Board member, I understand how local policy, land development regulations, and our Comprehensive Plan shape growth. I support responsible infill, mixed-use development, and workforce housing that fits Oldsmar's character while ensuring infrastructure keeps pace. I will evaluate every proposal on its merits, ask informed questions, and support projects that benefit our community while protecting local decision-making and maintaining fiscal responsibility. My experience has prepared me to balance growth with preserving the quality of life that makes Oldsmar a great place to live. I am ready to lead with my experience.



**Jessica Villafana**

**Party:** Non Partisan

**Campaign Website:** [www.jessicaforoldsmar.com](http://www.jessicaforoldsmar.com)

**Campaign Email:** [jessicaforoldsmar@gmail.com](mailto:jessicaforoldsmar@gmail.com)

**Campaign Phone:** 727-385-2390

**Campaign Mailing Address:** 407 Tangerine Drive Oldsmar FL 34677

**Education:** Bachelor of Social Work, University of South Florida

**Professional Experience:** Financial Assistance Coordinator at BayCare Health System 35 years

**Public Service:** Serving on two citizen volunteer boards -Code Enforcement and Planning Boards



**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61565231348535](https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61565231348535)

**What in your professional and personal experience makes you the best candidate for this position?**

Oldsmar has been my home for 24 years. I have been Treasurer of the Women's Club of Oldsmar since 2018. I was part of the Citizens Ordinance review committee in 2021, making recommendations to update a portion of our ordinances. I am pragmatic, looking for solutions that best serve the residents and businesses of Oldsmar. I have served since 2024 on City Volunteer boards: Code Enforcement Board and Planning Board. I believe my experiences on those boards have broadened my understanding of city processes and their impact on residents and businesses. My 35-year career in hospital financial assistance lends me stability. The overarching achievement of my career has been my ability to adapt to change. I want to lend a guiding hand for Oldsmar,

**Describe the top two priority challenges facing Clearwater in the next 5 years. What specific actions would you propose to address these challenges?**

The top two facing Oldsmar: 1. Environmental Resiliency: a. City Council was presented Stormwater Master Plan: We need to share project costs via social media, mailers, and Open Houses. b. Community Action: Use projects like Vertical Oyster Gardens to boost engagement. An engaged citizenry has a stake in protecting our environment. c. Conservation: Push critical public messaging to address regional water shortages. 2. Downtown Project Resolution: Bring a final decision to a 20-year development debate. Public Forums: I am planning to attend July sessions to listen directly to community feedback. If elected, I want to help make final decision to either develop downtown or not.

**Hurricanes Helene and Milton placed an unprecedented burden on municipalities and residents. What steps would you take to improve city capacity for future storm resilience and response? What can be done to better help residents recover and rebuild, including the issuance of building permits in a timely manner and difficulties stemming from the FEMA 49/50% rule. What changes are needed to improve this process?**

Oldsmar needs a balanced plan to improve disaster services, fast-track permitting with AI, and educate residents on FEMA's 50% rule: a. Disaster Prep: Partner with local groups for recovery via the Support Alliance and scale up workshops found on the City Calendar. b AI Permitting: Consider the use of AI and if possible, increased or temporary staffing to clear permitting backlogs and cut review times down to days. c. 50% Rule: Teach residents value calculations via the Property Appraiser before storms hit. My overarching goal, if elected, would be to increase education efforts before storms hit. An engaged, educated citizenry are our best resource.

**Whether or not to reduce property taxes is officially a ballot amendment for this November. What services would have to be cut or how would you make up for revenue losses if this goes through? What, in your view, should be done?**

That is a tough question. No one wants to see any services cut. At a recent city council meeting, the city manager presented several options. Recommendations were made to hold public forums to seek input from the residents of Oldsmar. Public forums started earlier in June, with more scheduled. I appreciate that the city is seeking public input before making any final decisions. Also suggested were increases in fees, which could also help make up some of the potential loss of revenue. Again, there are no easy answers here, but being transparent, seeking input from the public is the best starting place. If elected, I would seek to review the public input and make budget cut recommendations as needed from the input received.

**How will you expand access to and availability of affordable and workforce housing, for both renters and homeowners?**

Affordable housing is needed across Pinellas County. However, I am not sure of the role that the city has to expand access and/or make housing available. The city can certainly advocate for access and availability. There are several programs already available, but I do think that education is needed to help people understand what is available. Section 8 housing programs through the Pinellas County Housing Authority is available, Hometown Heroes Support is another program that assists costs toward home ownership for community service workers Another program is State Housing Initiatives Partnership, part of the Live Local Act. There are no easy answers here, but communication is key.



**Fraser Young**

**Party:** Non Partisan

**Campaign Website:** [fraser4oldsmar.com/](https://fraser4oldsmar.com/)

**Campaign Email:** [fraser4oldsmar@gmail.com](mailto:fraser4oldsmar@gmail.com)

**Campaign Phone:** 7275044213

**Campaign Mailing Address:** 307 Bay Arbor Blvd Oldsmar FL 34677

**Education:** Bachelor's Degrees in Economics and Finance

**Professional Experience:** Corporate risk manager; former bank auditor; 10 years in financial services

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/oldsmarfraser/](https://www.facebook.com/oldsmarfraser/)

**What in your professional and personal experience makes you the best candidate for this position?**

I am a corporate risk manager and former bank auditor with degrees in Economics and Finance and a decade in financial services. My profession is reading budgets and contracts, questioning assumptions, and catching bad deals before they become losses. That is the skill this council needs now. My wife and I chose Oldsmar to raise our two toddlers because of the safety, the city facilities, and the green space, and we plan to be here for decades. As a resident I have spoken at City Council against oversized development and pushed for open, accountable government. My campaign has taken no money

from former mayors, from anyone tied to the current council, from the chamber of commerce, or from local businesses. I answer to residents alone.

**Describe the top two priority challenges facing Clearwater in the next 5 years. What specific actions would you propose to address these challenges?**

I am a candidate in Oldsmar and will answer for Oldsmar. The top two challenges are fiscal pressure and development pressure. First, the property tax amendment on the November ballot could cut city revenue while costs keep rising. I will put an auditor's review on every budget line and contract, protect core services, and take on no new debt. Second, development. I am the only candidate in this race who opposes new apartment development. Oldsmar's character and infrastructure capacity come first. I will scrutinize every proposal before council, demand real public benefit, and vote no on projects our roads and utilities cannot carry. Pedestrian-friendly improvements, local businesses, and quality retail are how downtown should grow.

**Hurricanes Helene and Milton placed an unprecedented burden on municipalities and residents. What steps would you take to improve city capacity for future storm resilience and response? What can be done to better help residents recover and rebuild, including the issuance of building permits in a timely manner and difficulties stemming from the FEMA 49/50% rule. What changes are needed to improve this process?**

Oldsmar sits at the top of Old Tampa Bay. Our exposure is not news, and Helene and Milton showed its cost. I am running for council, which sets policy and budgets, not operations. The policy I would set: prioritize projects by flood risk, fund stormwater and shoreline work through the Capital Improvement Plan rather than emergency spending, and harden the water and wastewater systems. On recovery, council should fund surge permitting capacity before storms, set service standards with published timelines, and require consistent, transparent substantial damage determinations under the FEMA 50 percent rule, with written guidance on options like independent appraisals where the code allows. Residents rebuilding should not fight City Hall too.

**Whether or not to reduce property taxes is officially a ballot amendment for this November. What services would have to be cut or how would you make up for revenue losses if this goes through? What, in your view, should be done?**

The amendment raises the homestead exemption to \$150,000 in 2027 and \$250,000 in 2028 for non-school levies. Voters will decide it. Council's job is to be ready either way, and budgets under pressure are my training. If revenue falls, services get funded in the order residents depend on them: police, fire, water, and stormwater first. Savings come from everything else. Consultants, studies, subsidies, and memberships get a line-by-line audit. Through public records requests I have documented more than \$200,000 in City of Oldsmar payments to the Upper Tampa Bay Chamber of Commerce since October 2020, a chamber that primarily serves Hillsborough communities. Review starts there, not with first responders. No new debt to paper over the gap.

**How will you expand access to and availability of affordable and workforce housing, for both renters and homeowners?**

I will be honest instead of promising what a city of Oldsmar's size cannot deliver. Our real affordable housing is the stock we already have: mobile home and senior communities, older single-family homes, and modest condos. I will protect those neighborhoods from redevelopment pressure. I am skeptical of projects marketed as affordable under the state's Live Local Act, which lets developers bypass local zoning with rents priced up to 120 percent of area median income. Working families do not call that affordable. The levers a city controls are cost levers: hold the line on property taxes and fees, run efficient utilities, and streamline permitting so repairs and improvements cost less. Affordability is the test I apply to every vote.

## St. Petersburg Mayor

The city of St. Petersburg operates under a strong mayor and city council system. The Mayor is the chief administrative official of the city and not a member of the City Council. The Mayor is responsible for the administration of all city affairs, city departments and personnel, as well as the preparation and submission of an annual budget to the City Council. The Mayor appoints the City Administrator, city officers, boards and commissions, with City Council approval. The race for Mayor is non-partisan and the top two candidates who receive the most votes in the primary election advance to the general election. If a candidate for Mayor receives more than 50% of the votes in the primary, then that candidate is elected without proceeding to the general election.

**Term:** 4 years **Salary:** \$240,000/year

Click here to view the June 18th St Petersburg Mayoral Candidate Forum: [https://youtu.be/DI7NCZIs20E?si=-Sd\\_uSQRSwMF8xw0](https://youtu.be/DI7NCZIs20E?si=-Sd_uSQRSwMF8xw0)

**For a detailed video explanation** of the role of Mayor, click here... <https://youtu.be/5zi5IY40xRA>



**Kevin Batdorf**

**Party:** Non Partisan

**Campaign Website:** [www.batdorf4mayor.com](http://www.batdorf4mayor.com)

**Campaign Email:** [kevin@batdorf4mayor.com](mailto:kevin@batdorf4mayor.com)

**Campaign Phone:** 7275607373

**Campaign Mailing Address:** 1801 Nevada Ave NE Saint Petersburg FL 33703

**Professional Experience:** Entrepreneur, Real Estate Broker

**Public Service:** Advocate and Champion for Neighborhoods, Congressional and Local Award Recipient

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/share/g/1GdZS5DMC9/?mibextid=wwXlfr](https://www.facebook.com/share/g/1GdZS5DMC9/?mibextid=wwXlfr)

**Whether or not to reduce property taxes is officially a ballot amendment for this November. What services would have to be cut or how would you make up for revenue losses if this goes through? What, in your view, should be done?**

Over the past 6 years, revenue to the City of St. Petersburg has increased by roughly 48%. This far outpaces population growth and inflation. Cuts to the excessive spending will start with creating efficiencies within the bloated staff, starting at the top. The city has wasted millions on useless studies. The focus will be on needs vs wants. When the current mayor uses scare tactics to oppose the homestead exemption measure, ask where he "discovered" tens of millions of dollars to fix Tropicana Field after drastically reducing insurance coverage for stadium!

**Hurricanes Helene and Milton placed an unprecedented burden on municipalities and residents. What steps would you take to improve city capacity for future storm resilience and response? What can be done to better help residents recover and rebuild, including the issuance of building permits in a timely manner and difficulties stemming from the FEMA 49/50% rule. What changes are needed to improve this process?**

The city's response to storms has been reactive and poorly managed by the mayor and his senior staff. I would overhaul the entire process with an emphasis on preparation for before, during and after a disaster. A couple of my ideas were implemented - 3 high rise rescue and fire vehicles to fight fires in flooded areas and rescue stranded folks and 4 new crews to clear the drainage system. I would create partnerships with other municipalities to provide resources, including personnel. Placing mobile permitting stations in the hardest hit areas will expedite the process. Debris pickup will be managed locally by the sanitation department. We'll recruit haulers with professional equipment and dumpsters. FEMA rules will not be used as an excuse!

**The Historic Gas Plant District represents 86 acres of land. Should the City sell the property as a single block to one developer, or should it retain ownership subdividing the land to maximize long-term public return? If you support a sale, do you believe the price should be set by a current fair-market appraisal?**

Ultimately, the market will dictate the price. The property was recently appraised (2026) for \$390 million. I believe if we allow the market to dictate what is developed, it could generate nearly \$1.2 billion. The location warrants downtown style construction, not low price come housing. The development should be leveraged to offset the cost of infrastructure repairs citywide. Well paying jobs is top priority. Projects should be designed and shovel ready - no speculation. My Smart Development" plan will be in place, which means projects will be required to pay an impact fee that matches the actual impact a project has on the infrastructure.

**The Governor and State Legislature recently banned local governments from participating in or promoting initiatives considered DEI. How will you ensure that all residents, regardless of race, gender or sexual orientation, feel welcomed, celebrated and their voices heard?**

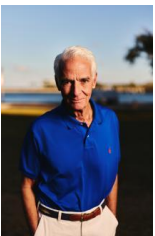
The welcoming culture in each of the unique and interesting communities throughout St. Pete is strong enough to withstand nonsense.

**Approximately \$440 million in Tax Increment Financing (TIF) had been earmarked for a new stadium and related infrastructure. TIF expenditures currently do not require a referendum. Should voters have the opportunity to approve or reject that spending via a ballot referendum?**

If the CRA (or TIF) agreement allows funds to be used for that purpose, then a referendum is not required. Voters have a say by electing a mayor and city council. We should probably look at the downtown and south side CRAs to determine the actual benefits.

**The cost of some electricity in the county is expected to increase in the next few years. Clearwater and Saint Petersburg are looking into creating a public utility. Do you support this effort? Why or why not?**

No! But the city has already approved (wasted) \$590,000 for a study. Based on how the water utility is operating, I have no confidence that the city could properly manage a power utility. The city should negotiate a short term (3-5 years) extension to Duke's contract. Then start a competitive bid process.



**Charlie Crist**

**Party:** Non Partisan

**Campaign Website:** [charliecrist.com](http://charliecrist.com)

**Campaign Email:** [charlie@charliecrist.com](mailto:charlie@charliecrist.com)

**Campaign Mailing Address:** 204 37th Ave N #181 St Petersburg FL 33704

**Education:** Florida State University, B.S., 1978. Cumberland School of Law, Samford University, J.D., 1981.

Attended Wake Forest University before transferring.

**Professional Experience:** General Counsel, Minor League Baseball (Baseball Commissioner's Office); St. Petersburg Attorney, private practice; Attorney, Wood and Crist law firm; Attorney, Morgan & Morgan, Tampa; Distinguished Professorial Lecturer, Stetson University College of Law; Author, The Party's Over

**Public Service:** Former state legislator, Education Commissioner, Attorney General, Governor and U.S. Representative.

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/charliecristfl/](https://www.facebook.com/charliecristfl/)

**Twitter:** [x.com/CharlieCrist](https://twitter.com/CharlieCrist)

**Whether or not to reduce property taxes is officially a ballot amendment for this November. What services would have to be cut or how would you make up for revenue losses if this goes through? What, in your view, should be done?**

St. Petersburg families feel the squeeze, and relief is worth fighting for. But this amendment cuts local revenue with no plan to replace it. Here, property taxes help fund police, fire rescue, and the storm resilience our neighborhoods count on after back-to-back hurricanes. As mayor, I will not cut public safety or storm recovery to cover Tallahassee's decision. I will protect core services, demand efficiency in every department, and press the state to fund the relief it promised instead of shifting the burden onto working families through new fees. Relief should not come at the cost of safe streets and a city ready to recover.

**Hurricanes Helene and Milton placed an unprecedented burden on municipalities and residents. What steps would you take to improve city capacity for future storm resilience and response? What can be done to better help residents recover and rebuild, including the issuance of building permits in a timely manner and difficulties stemming from the FEMA 49/50% rule. What changes are needed to improve this process?**

Resilience starts before the storm. I will harden our stormwater and wastewater systems, expand elevation and floodproofing grants, and strengthen emergency operations so response is faster and debris clears sooner. I'll have contracts for storm recovery signed before a storm hits. Recovery has to move at the speed of people's lives. I will staff up a dedicated storm-recovery permit team, restore fee waivers, and give every homeowner a real point of contact instead of a runaround. On the 49% rule, I will fight for fair pre-storm valuations, a clear appeals path, and mitigation dollars so families can rebuild safely. I will press Tallahassee and FEMA to add flexibility while protecting the flood insurance discount every resident depends on.

**The Historic Gas Plant District represents 86 acres of land. Should the City sell the property as a single block to one developer, or should it retain ownership subdividing the land to maximize long-term public return? If you support a sale, do you believe the price should be set by a current fair-market appraisal?**

When the Rays deal collapsed, it immediately delayed development needed to fulfill promises to residents and businesses displaced when the Trop was first built. And it created a rush to fill the void. Rushing is a mistake. The current City Council was right to demand a site study, and as Mayor I would ensure a people-first approach to determine how to best meet the needs of all residents, not just a select few. At a minimum, the site should provide opportunities for new affordable housing; living- and high-wage jobs, like the ones Moffitt would've brought; public amenities; and cultural attractions. We can accomplish all this and more by carefully weighing options and ensuring taxpayers aren't on the hook for pet projects.

**The Governor and State Legislature recently banned local governments from participating in or promoting initiatives considered DEI. How will you ensure that all residents, regardless of race, gender or sexual orientation, feel welcomed, celebrated and their voices heard?**

No state law can stop a mayor from leading with respect. Welcoming every resident is not a program. It is the job. I will make sure every neighborhood gets the same quality of city services, the same access to storm recovery, and the same voice at City Hall, no matter who lives there. I will keep government open. That means real listening sessions across every community, language and disability access, and a City Hall that answers to all of us. St. Petersburg is stronger because we are diverse. I will celebrate that openly and protect every resident's civil rights under the law. In this city, everyone belongs, and everyone will be heard.

**Approximately \$440 million in Tax Increment Financing (TIF) had been earmarked for a new stadium and related infrastructure. TIF expenditures currently do not require a referendum. Should voters have the opportunity to approve or reject that spending via a ballot referendum?**

Tax increment financing is a legitimate tool, and it should lift up our neighborhoods, not just marquee projects. For routine redevelopment, the answer is transparency and real public input, not a new hurdle on every dollar. City Hall was ready to steer roughly \$440 million toward a stadium district with no property tax increase. Now the same City Hall wants to raise your property taxes for the basic infrastructure our neighborhoods needed all along. For commitments that large, residents deserve a genuine voice. The deeper problem is priorities. I will put neighborhoods first, tell you where every dollar goes, and answer to you for it.

**The cost of some electricity in the county is expected to increase in the next few years. Clearwater and Saint Petersburg are looking into creating a public utility. Do you support this effort? Why or why not?**

As our state's Attorney General, I was Florida's top consumer advocate, working tirelessly to block rate hikes from Duke's predecessor, Florida Power & Light, and the Public Service Commission. At times, I did so in direct defiance of my own party, because it was the right thing to do. As Mayor, I will consider the results of the prescribed feasibility study and apply a lens that asks the only question that needs to be asked: What's best for St. Pete consumers? I hear more about out of control water bills than I do about electric bills, and I will work to address that issue as Mayor.



**Brandi Gabbard**

**Party:** Non Partisan

**Campaign Website:** [brandi4stpete.com](https://brandi4stpete.com)

**Campaign Email:** [info@Brandi4StPete.com](mailto:info@Brandi4StPete.com)

**Campaign Phone:** 727-200-2076

**Campaign Mailing Address:** PO Box 55071 St Petersburg FL 33732



**Education:** Connersville High School, Connersville, Indiana / Graduated 1994 -Attended Indiana State University, Terre Haute, Indiana / 1994-1996, 1998-1999, Major / Musical Theater, Minor/ Humanities (Japanese)- Bob Hogue School of Real Estate - 2005 / 2009

**Professional Experience:** Managing Broker, Suncoast Realty Solutions, LLC

**Public Service:** Saint Petersburg City Councilmember, District 2

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/Brandi4Mayor](https://www.facebook.com/Brandi4Mayor)

**Instagram:** [www.instagram.com/BRANDI4STPETE](https://www.instagram.com/BRANDI4STPETE)

**Whether or not to reduce property taxes is officially a ballot amendment for this November. What services would have to be cut or how would you make up for revenue losses if this goes through? What, in your view, should be done?**

As a real estate broker, I favor tax relief, but this measure is the wrong way to drive affordability. It forces a revenue cliff that threatens public safety & quality of life. Drawing on my experience over nine budget cycles, I will work with the city council and staff to navigate these painful trade-offs. Having a trusted source of fiscal knowledge in the mayor's seat will be essential. We will focus on internal operational efficiency and on finding alternative revenue streams to avoid having to choose between neighborhood safety and vital community programs. If state leaders truly want to help, they must fix the property insurance crisis, better regulate utilities, and invest in education that prepares our workforce for high-paying jobs.

**Hurricanes Helene and Milton placed an unprecedented burden on municipalities and residents. What steps would you take to improve city capacity for future storm resilience and response? What can be done to better help residents recover and rebuild, including the issuance of building permits in a timely manner and difficulties stemming from the FEMA 49/50% rule. What changes are needed to improve this process?**

Since the 2024 storms, my office has worked to help residents navigate the costly rebuilding process. As Mayor, I will begin working on day one to create a fast-tracked permitting process that eliminates red tape while maintaining safety, so our neighbors can build back stronger and faster. We will prioritize upgrading aging infrastructure citywide, focusing on projects that protect homes and businesses from flooding. Finally, we will coordinate a resident-led neighborhood coalition to map crisis response resources year-round, ensuring that vetted community support and municipal aid reach every home the moment a storm passes. Resiliency is my priority; I will bring my proven expertise so that together, we can build a truly resilient city.

**The Historic Gas Plant District represents 86 acres of land. Should the City sell the property as a single block to one developer, or should it retain ownership subdividing the land to maximize long-term public return? If you support a sale, do you believe the price should be set by a current fair-market appraisal?**

The Historic Gas Plant site is our most valuable public asset; we must slow down and get it right. I oppose an outright sale to a single master developer until a community-led planning exercise is completed. This will answer whether we should sell the land or maintain city control to maximize community benefit. Selling without these answers risks our long-term fiscal health. True stewardship means exploring alternative models, like long-term ground leases or dividing the site into manageable parcels under a city-directed master plan. Retaining ownership ensures St. Petersburg dictates the terms and uses fair-market appraisals in all decisions. To realize true economic opportunity, we must place our residents in the driver's seat.

**The Governor and State Legislature recently banned local governments from participating in or promoting initiatives considered DEI. How will you ensure that all residents, regardless of race, gender or sexual orientation, feel welcomed, celebrated and their voices heard?**

While we will always comply with state law, I am unafraid to push back against Tallahassee's overreach and use every legal avenue possible to fight this blatant imposition on home rule. True advocacy is not about acronyms; it is about standing with our neighbors to craft concrete policies ensuring every resident feels safe, valued, and heard. Programs labeled as "DEI" by the state have real economic and community impacts on our residents. As Mayor, my focus will be on delivering practical results that protect our quality of life through accessible housing, strong neighborhood partnerships, and direct collaboration with nonprofits, building a city where everyone feels seen and protected.

**Approximately \$440 million in Tax Increment Financing (TIF) had been earmarked for a new stadium and related infrastructure. TIF expenditures currently do not require a referendum. Should voters have the opportunity to approve or reject that spending via a ballot referendum?**

With the stadium no longer part of the potential Gas Plant redevelopment, this expenditure will no longer be earmarked. City Council continues to discuss how TIF funding should be utilized for this site, including rolling back the TIF extension to its original sunset date. I support ending the extension to ensure future development benefits more than just downtown, especially when other revenues are in jeopardy. Per state statute, voters do not approve the creation of TIF districts or their expenditures; they elect representatives to make those complex budget decisions. These dollars fund many projects throughout the district. If voters are unhappy with how funds are spent, the best recourse is through the election of their representatives.

**The cost of some electricity in the county is expected to increase in the next few years. Clearwater and Saint Petersburg are looking into creating a public utility. Do you support this effort? Why or why not?**

As the "Dump Duke" certified candidate, I support exploring every alternative to Duke Energy. Our 30-year franchise agreement expires this summer, giving us a historic opportunity to look at a municipal utility to lower costs and protect residents from rising state-approved rate hikes. I voted to authorize a feasibility study because knowledge is power; we must negotiate from facts to understand the exact costs, infrastructure needs, and grid reliability. While transitioning to a public utility requires deep financial analysis, exploring energy independence is vital. We must do the hard work now to ensure our energy future prioritizes affordability, transparency, and public accountability over corporate profit.



## Jim Large

**Party:** Non Partisan

**Campaign Website:** Jimlargeformayor.com

**Campaign Email:** Chief@jimlargeformayor.com

**Campaign Phone:** 7274208904

**Campaign Mailing Address:** 1004 Monticello Blvd No St Pete FL 33703

**Education:** As, BA, and a MBA

**Professional Experience:** 18 years executive level leadership position in City of St Petersburg administration

**Public Service:** Entire career in Public Service. 50 years

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/share/1881CcN4XL/?mibextid=wwXlfr](https://www.facebook.com/share/1881CcN4XL/?mibextid=wwXlfr)

**Instagram:** [www.instagram.com/jimlarge4stpete?igsh=MXQ0eWlrdXdkZzQ3dA%3D%3D&utm\\_source=qr](https://www.instagram.com/jimlarge4stpete?igsh=MXQ0eWlrdXdkZzQ3dA%3D%3D&utm_source=qr)

**Whether or not to reduce property taxes is officially a ballot amendment for this November. What services would have to be cut or how would you make up for revenue losses if this goes through? What, in your view, should be done?**

The city budget needs a thorough review to find and eliminate the unnecessary spending as there is wasteful spending. With a tax cut the city cannot continue to fund nice to do's, special interests or political agendas. It would be premature to speculate on cuts without calculating the true impact of cuts against the possible savings. There is a bit of political speech around this issue that is creating fear and speculation. I believe that core services could be maintained.

**Hurricanes Helene and Milton placed an unprecedented burden on municipalities and residents. What steps would you take to improve city capacity for future storm resilience and response? What can be done to better help residents recover and rebuild, including the issuance of building permits in a timely manner and difficulties stemming from the FEMA 49/50% rule. What changes are needed to improve this process?**

Proper prioritization and utilization of resources. Daily communication and status updates. Removal of all Helene damaged and sewage-soaked debris before starting on Milton debris. Work with Florida's major cities to create a mutual aid plan for resources including permitting staff. Permitting Department needs an immediate overhaul. Leadership and accountability are needed.

**The Historic Gas Plant District represents 86 acres of land. Should the City sell the property as a single block to one developer, or should it retain ownership subdividing the land to maximize long-term public return? If you support a sale, do you believe the price should be set by a current fair-market appraisal?**

This is an extremely valuable and desirable 86 acres. The city, in theory, should retain ownership and capitalize on the long-term value. The installation of basic infrastructure would change the per acre appraisal. That said, the city does not have the expertise to oversee such a long-term development plan. Add to the issue is the fact that the door is not totally closed on the Rays. A patient, smart and well Informed approach is called for. This needs to benefit the city as a whole while addressing the historic significance.

**The Governor and State Legislature recently banned local governments from participating in or promoting initiatives considered DEI. How will you ensure that all residents, regardless of race, gender or sexual orientation, feel welcomed, celebrated and their voices heard?**

The city is here to provide basic core services equally to all residents. The city should not engage in any political causes or movements. For example the streets we drive on do not care if you are a D or an R, gay or straight, black or white. All city services should be provided fairly and consistently to all citizens. I have always had and will maintain an open door policy for all community voices. I will comply with the laws while ensuring local government neutrality.

**Approximately \$440 million in Tax Increment Financing (TIF) had been earmarked for a new stadium and related infrastructure. TIF expenditures currently do not require a referendum. Should voters have the opportunity to approve or reject that spending via a ballot referendum?**

I do feel that there needs to be a hard review of the TIF as well as the CRA. If the city was going to invest in a new stadium the citizens need to have a say. I have no problem with a referendum. We must look at the successes and failures in the TIF. Has the original intent been met? How much money is on hand? What projects are already earmarked.? Answers and transparency are needed.

**The cost of some electricity in the county is expected to increase in the next few years. Clearwater and Saint Petersburg are looking into creating a public utility. Do you support this effort? Why or why not?**

At this time, I do not. With the proposed reduction in property tax revenues, a budget shortfall, and a poor history running the water utility I think it's a poor decision to spend almost 600k on a study. The acquisition costs, regulatory compliance and most importantly storm recovery capabilities raise real concerns for me. Duke has one job and they do it well. My water bill is more than my electric bill. Is that who we want running our electric. I am in favor of smaller government and not expanding it.



## Maria Scruggs

**Party:** Non Partisan

**Campaign Website:** Mariaformayor.com

**Campaign Email:** mariascruggs\_weston@yahoo.com

**Campaign Phone:** 727-798-5361

**Campaign Mailing Address:** 980 Melrose Avenue South St Petersburg FL 33705

**Education:** Bachelor of Science Degree in Criminology-FSU; Master's Degree in Public Administration-Grand Canyon University; Certified Public Manager--FSU

**Professional Experience:** 40+ years in the public sector: Currently jail administrator at Orange County Corrections. Previously certified in 3 law enforcement academies: Basic Police Recruit, Florida Beverage Agent, Florida Department of Law Enforcement Special Agent: Former Director Hope VI (Supportive Services). Former Director Childs Park Youth Initiative Council.

**Public Service:** Founder & CEO Phyllis Wheatley Rise to Read Campaign; Former President St. Petersburg Branch NAACP, Chairperson Happy Worker's Learning Center Board,

**Whether or not to reduce property taxes is officially a ballot amendment for this November. What services would have to be cut or how would you make up for revenue losses if this goes through? What, in your view, should be done?**

St. Petersburg will face significant revenue losses that directly affect police, fire, parks, sanitation, and infrastructure. I will not allow essential services to be cut. Instead, the city must immediately reassess spending, pause non-essential capital projects, and evaluate our resilience and redevelopment plans to eliminate duplication and waste. I also don't believe elected officials should be insulated from the economic realities facing residents. With or without the referendum, I will conduct a full review of the mayor's cabinet to ensure job functions align with actual areas of responsibility. Lastly, I will also request Council engage an independent vendor to benchmark and assess the mayor's and cabinet's salaries.

**Hurricanes Helene and Milton placed an unprecedented burden on municipalities and residents. What steps would you take to improve city capacity for future storm resilience and response? What can be done to better help residents recover and rebuild, including the issuance of building permits in a timely manner and difficulties stemming from the FEMA 49/50% rule. What changes are needed to improve this process?**

Hurricanes Helene and Milton exposed gaps in St. Petersburg's storm response capacity. I will strengthen our resilience by upgrading drainage and power infrastructure, improving emergency coordination, and ensuring faster debris removal. To help residents recover, the City must streamline permitting, expand staffing during disaster periods, and create a clear, public process for navigating FEMA's 49/50% rule. I will launch neighborhood-based recovery centers and require a full review of our current resilience and permitting systems to eliminate delays, duplication, and inequities.

**The Historic Gas Plant District represents 86 acres of land. Should the City sell the property as a single block to one developer, or should it retain ownership subdividing the land to maximize long-term public return? If you support a sale, do you believe the price should be set by a current fair-market appraisal?**

The success of the Historic Gas Plant is personal to me. My family's roots are there. Second Bethel Baptist Church—where my uncle, the late Reverend Enoch Davis, pastored and where my family worshipped for more than 50 years—was a cornerstone of that community. He became the patriarch of our family after my grandfather died at an early age. If elected mayor, I would reboot the redevelopment process and launch a comprehensive public planning effort that creates opportunities for multiple developers to participate. Relying on a single developer reduces the City's leverage, limits adaptability, concentrates risk, and makes it less likely that the full promise of this historic site will be realized.

**The Governor and State Legislature recently banned local governments from participating in or promoting initiatives considered DEI. How will you ensure that all residents, regardless of race, gender or sexual orientation, feel welcomed, celebrated and their voices heard?**

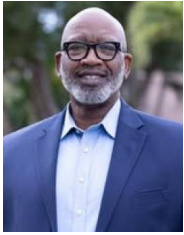
SB 1134 prohibits municipalities from violating federal or state law, and I will fully comply. The Equal Protection Clause of the 14th Amendment requires the city to treat every resident fairly. St. Petersburg already recognizes cultural holidays such as Christmas, Thanksgiving, and the Fourth of July. Under SB 1134, the city cannot lawfully elevate one cultural event above another. My commitment is to ensure all residents feel respected through transparent engagement, equal access to City services, and policies that uphold the dignity of every community.

**Approximately \$440 million in Tax Increment Financing (TIF) had been earmarked for a new stadium and related infrastructure. TIF expenditures currently do not require a referendum. Should voters have the opportunity to approve or reject that spending via a ballot referendum?**

I believe voters should have a meaningful opportunity to shape the design and future of a stadium through community design charrettes that explore multiple options. Voters should then be able to decide whether they support a stadium at all. However, the technical funding mechanisms should remain the responsibility of elected officials. In a representative form of government, voters choose leaders to evaluate complex financing decisions. Most residents do not have the time or specialized expertise to assess bond structures, tax increment financing, or long-term revenue models. But they are fully capable of deciding whether they want public dollars used to support a stadium.

**The cost of some electricity in the county is expected to increase in the next few years. Clearwater and Saint Petersburg are looking into creating a public utility. Do you support this effort? Why or why not?**

With electricity costs expected to rise, I support exploring a public utility, but only through a transparent, data driven process that protects residents. A municipal utility could give St. Petersburg more control over rates, reliability, and storm hardening investments, but it also carries significant financial and operational responsibilities. Before moving forward, the City must conduct a full feasibility study, compare long term costs to remaining with private providers, and engage residents in every step. My priority is ensuring affordable, reliable power—not rushing into a decision without facts.



## Ken Welch

**Party:** Non Partisan

**Campaign Website:** [kenwelch.com/](http://kenwelch.com/)

**Campaign Email:** [media@kenwelch.com](mailto:media@kenwelch.com)

**Campaign Phone:** 239-404-1214

**Campaign Mailing Address:** 200 2nd Ave South P.O Box 405 St. Petersburg FL 33701

**Education:** He graduated from Lakewood High School. He earned a Bachelor of Arts in Accounting from University of South Florida. He later earned a Master of Business Administration (MBA) from Florida A&M University.

**Professional Experience:** Accountant, Florida Power Corporation/ Technology Manager, Family Accounting Firm

**Public Service:** Pinellas County Commissioner (2002–2022)/ Mayor of St. Petersburg (2022–present)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/KeepKenWelch](http://www.facebook.com/KeepKenWelch)

**Twitter:** [www.x.com/MayorKenWelch](http://www.x.com/MayorKenWelch)

**Instagram:** [www.instagram.com/kenwelchstpete](http://www.instagram.com/kenwelchstpete)

**Whether or not to reduce property taxes is officially a ballot amendment for this November. What services would have to be cut or how would you make up for revenue losses if this goes through? What, in your view, should be done?**

Property taxes fund essential services residents rely on daily, including police, fire, parks, sanitation, and storm recovery. In St. Petersburg, these revenues support a \$1.2 billion budget delivering critical services to residents and businesses.

Eliminating or reducing property taxes without a replacement revenue source would force difficult choices impacting public safety, neighborhood services, and resilience investments. We should pursue targeted relief for homeowners, particularly seniors and working families, while ensuring local governments keep providing essential services. changes should include sustainable revenue replacement and preserve local decision-making so cities keep delivering what residents deserve.

**Hurricanes Helene and Milton placed an unprecedented burden on municipalities and residents. What steps would you take to improve city capacity for future storm resilience and response? What can be done to better help residents recover and rebuild, including the issuance of building permits in a timely manner and difficulties stemming from the FEMA 49/50% rule. What changes are needed to improve this process?**

Since taking office in 2022, we began overhauling permitting before Hurricanes Helene and Milton, improvements that proved critical during recovery. After the storms, we issued more than 14,500 permits and waived nearly \$2.9 million in fees. We're modernizing permitting through the Tyler platform, installing digital water meters citywide, and advancing my St. Pete Agile Resilience (SPAR) initiative and GO Bond proposal to accelerate infrastructure improvements. Our \$159.8 million Sunrise St. Pete award is helping residents and businesses recover, and I've advocated for FEMA 50% Rule reforms through the U.S. Conference of Mayors FEMA Task Force.

**The Historic Gas Plant District represents 86 acres of land. Should the City sell the property as a single block to one developer, or should it retain ownership subdividing the land to maximize long-term public return? If you support a sale, do you believe the price should be set by a current fair-market appraisal?**

I recently selected The Burg Bid, led by hometown developer Thompson Whitney Blake, for 58 acres of the Historic Gas Plant District, alongside the Pinellas County Housing Authority for affordable senior housing on the Western 3rd Ave South parcel, with priority for Gas Plant descendants to return home. This was guided by our JHOP framework — Jobs, Housing, Economic Opportunity, Honoring the Promises made when this land was acquired. As a Gas Plant descendant, this began for me in high school, 45 years ago. The promise was never to sell at the highest price, but to build jobs, housing and opportunity for all — that's the balance I've sought. We now negotiate binding terms before ground breaks, turning this land into progress for our city.

**The Governor and State Legislature recently banned local governments from participating in or promoting initiatives considered DEI. How will you ensure that all residents, regardless of race, gender or sexual orientation, feel welcomed, celebrated and their voices heard?**

St. Petersburg's strength has always been our diversity, and every resident deserves to feel welcomed, respected, and heard. Regardless of changes in state law, my administration will continue focusing on equitable access to city services, neighborhood investment, workforce opportunities, and public engagement. We have invested in affordable housing, expanded youth programs, launched initiatives like the Future Ready Academy, and supported neighborhood programs citywide. We will continue celebrating our history and culture, supporting community events, and ensuring every resident has a voice in local government. Inclusion is not about political labels; it is about making sure every resident knows they belong in St. Petersburg.

**Approximately \$440 million in Tax Increment Financing (TIF) had been earmarked for a new stadium and related infrastructure. TIF expenditures currently do not require a referendum. Should voters have the opportunity to approve or reject that spending via a ballot referendum?**

The previously approved TIF funding allocated in 2024 for stadium infrastructure is being reallocated to other infrastructure needs. I have met with the County Commissioners (with the exception of one Commissioner) and county administration regarding this reallocation, and the process should be completed by the fall. While Florida law does not currently require a referendum for TIF expenditures, robust public engagement, clear reporting on CRA redevelopment plans and public discussion are integral to the process.

**The cost of some electricity in the county is expected to increase in the next few years. Clearwater and Saint Petersburg are looking into creating a public utility. Do you support this effort? Why or why not?**



I support the rigorous, data-driven work needed to determine whether municipalization serves St. Pete ratepayers — which is why I submitted, and Council approved, a feasibility study on municipal electric utility (MEU) operation. Residents deserve reliable, independent data on costs and benefits before any decision is made, not speculation. My immediate infrastructure priorities remain the stormwater work our city urgently needs — advancing the St. Pete Agile Resilience (SPAR) program and our GO Bond initiatives to protect neighborhoods from flooding and strengthen infrastructure for the storms ahead. I will continue evaluating the MEU question on the merits of the data, with affordability and reliability front and center.

## St. Petersburg Council Member District 6

The city of St. Petersburg operates under a strong mayor and city council system. The St. Petersburg City Council is the non-partisan governing body of the City. The Council is responsible for legislating ordinances and resolutions, approving the city budget, appointing the charter review commission, and establishing a code of ethics for the city government and city employees. The Council consists of eight Council Members, elected from each of the eight districts of the City. Elections for the City Council are held in even-numbered years, usually with each election including four of the eight districts. In the general election, all eligible city voters vote "at large" for the candidates running in all of the Districts that are on the ballot.

**Term:** 4 years **Salary:** \$67,275/year

Click here to view the June 2nd, 2026 candidate forum: [https://youtu.be/yFuvyHAZkXc?si=NIO8cP\\_8oxpPsKQQ](https://youtu.be/yFuvyHAZkXc?si=NIO8cP_8oxpPsKQQ)

For a detailed video explanation of the role of City Council, click here...<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3LdBHrgaWZo>



**Terri Balliet**

**Party:** Non Partisan

**Campaign Website:** [www.terriforstpete.com/](http://www.terriforstpete.com/)

**Campaign Email:** [terri@terriforstpete.com](mailto:terri@terriforstpete.com)

**Campaign Mailing Address:** 201 4th St. S Unit 814 St. Petersburg FL 33701

**Education:** Graduate of Pinellas Park High School, Bachelor's Degree in Criminology from the

University of South Florida, Master's Degree in Counseling

**Professional Experience:** Chief Executive Officer, Children's Network of Hillsborough County, Chief Operating Officer, Gulf Coast Jewish Family and Community Services, Co-Creator, St. Petersburg CALL (Community Assistance and Life Liaison) Program

**Public Service:** Former Chair of the Florida Coalition for Children. Recognized as a Tampa Bay Lightning Foundation Community Hero and named a Business Woman of the Year by the Tampa Bay Business Journal.

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/terriforstpete](http://www.facebook.com/terriforstpete)

**Twitter:** [x.com/terriforstpete](https://twitter.com/terriforstpete)

**Instagram:** [www.instagram.com/terriballietforstpete](https://www.instagram.com/terriballietforstpete)

**Whether or not to reduce property taxes is officially a ballot amendment for this November. What services would have to be cut or how would you make up for revenue losses if this goes through? What, in your view, should be done?**

Property tax relief is an important conversation, but we need to be honest about the trade-offs. In St. Petersburg, property taxes help fund public safety, parks, libraries, stormwater infrastructure, affordable housing, homelessness services, and programs for seniors and youth. City leaders have warned that significant cuts to property tax revenue could mean reduced services, higher user fees, and fewer investments in our neighborhoods. Before making major changes, we need a clear plan to protect the services residents depend on while ensuring taxpayers receive value for every dollar.

**Hurricanes Helene and Milton placed an unprecedented burden on municipalities and residents. What steps would you take to improve city capacity for future storm resilience and response? What can be done to better help residents recover and rebuild, including the issuance of building permits in a timely manner and difficulties stemming from the FEMA 49/50% rule. What changes are needed to improve this process?**

Hurricanes Helene and Milton demonstrated the need for a stronger, faster, and more coordinated response. We must invest in stormwater infrastructure, flood mitigation, emergency communications, and neighborhood resilience planning. The permitting process should be streamlined through additional staffing, technology improvements, and temporary surge capacity following major disasters. Residents navigating FEMA's 49/50% rule need clear guidance, case management support, and stronger advocacy from local government. Our goal should be to help residents rebuild safely and efficiently, with as little bureaucracy as possible, while ensuring long-term resilience against future storms.

**The Historic Gas Plant District represents 86 acres of land. Should the City sell the property as a single block to one developer, or should it retain ownership subdividing the land to maximize long-term public return? If you support a sale, do you believe the price should be set by a current fair-market appraisal?**

The Historic Gas Plant District is one of the most significant redevelopment opportunities in our city's history. Any decision should maximize public benefit, economic opportunity, housing, job creation, and long-term community value. Whether through a single master developer or a phased approach with multiple partners, transparency and accountability must guide the process. If public land is sold, the sale should be based on a current, independent fair-market appraisal and include clear

public-benefit requirements. The focus should remain on creating a project that honors the site's history, delivers lasting community benefits, and protects taxpayers' interests.

**The Governor and State Legislature recently banned local governments from participating in or promoting initiatives considered DEI. How will you ensure that all residents, regardless of race, gender or sexual orientation, feel welcomed, celebrated and their voices heard?**

Every resident deserves to feel respected, valued, and heard. While local governments must comply with state law, we can continue engaging residents through open public meetings, neighborhood outreach, community partnerships, and transparent decision-making. My focus is on ensuring every voice has a seat at the table and that city services are accessible to all residents. Strong communities are built when people feel connected, welcomed, and included in shaping their neighborhoods' future. We can achieve that by listening, engaging, and treating every resident with dignity and respect.

**Approximately \$440 million in Tax Increment Financing (TIF) had been earmarked for a new stadium and related infrastructure. TIF expenditures currently do not require a referendum. Should voters have the opportunity to approve or reject that spending via a ballot referendum?**

The use of significant public funds should always be accompanied by transparency and public engagement. Although TIF expenditures are legally authorized through existing processes, residents deserve clear information on how funds are used and the expected benefits. I support exploring opportunities for greater public input on major expenditures and long-term commitments. Regardless of whether a referendum is required, elected officials have a responsibility to ensure that taxpayers understand the costs, benefits, and risks before major financial decisions are made.

**The cost of some electricity in the county is expected to increase in the next few years. Clearwater and Saint Petersburg are looking into creating a public utility. Do you support this effort? Why or why not?**

I am open to exploring a municipally owned public utility if it can deliver long-term reliability, affordability, resilience, and local control. Given the challenges residents faced during recent hurricanes and severe weather, we should evaluate all options to strengthen our energy infrastructure. However, this decision requires thorough financial and operational analysis. Residents deserve clear answers on costs, rates, infrastructure, governance, and long-term risks. My priority is protecting residents and businesses from unnecessary financial burdens while balancing any impact on essential services, including youth programs, public safety, and neighborhood services.



**Linsey Grove**

**Party:** Non Partisan

**Campaign Website:** [www.groveforstpete.com/](http://www.groveforstpete.com/)

**Campaign Email:** [vote@groveforstpete.com](mailto:vote@groveforstpete.com)

**Campaign Phone:** 7274341559

**Campaign Mailing Address:** PO Box 466 St. Petersburg FL 33731

**Education:** I received my Bachelor of Science in Public Health and Health Education from Central Michigan University in 2010. I earned my Master of Public Health in 2013 and Doctorate in Public Health in 2018 from the University of South Florida.

**Professional Experience:** Dr. Linsey Grove is a certified public health practitioner, civic leader, and CEO of The Hypatia Collaborative. She has over 10 years of experience in nonprofit capacity building, management, and community development, and has worked with federal, state, and local governments, as well as nonprofit agencies. She also taught at USFSP.

**Public Service:** She has served as president of the League of Women Voters of the St. Petersburg Area, vice chair of the Pinellas County Charter Review Commission, and was appointed to the Pinellas County Council for Persons with Disabilities by Commissioner Charlie Justice.

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61578190140982](https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61578190140982)

**Instagram:** [www.instagram.com/groveforstpete](https://www.instagram.com/groveforstpete)

**Whether or not to reduce property taxes is officially a ballot amendment for this November. What services would have to be cut or how would you make up for revenue losses if this goes through? What, in your view, should be done?**

The financial pain Floridians are feeling is very real. However, if we wanted to provide financial relief for Floridians, our state legislature would work on reforming property insurance, investing in and expanding affordable housing, and expanding healthcare. If this referendum passes, I will work to ensure that we do not cut any services. There are limited ways for local governments to raise revenue via taxes; therefore, we may have to increase user fees for services to make up for the revenue losses. It is unlikely we could acquire federal and state grant funding and appropriations, given current budget cuts. Residents would likely see an increase in sales tax to raise revenue, which would disproportionately harm lower-income households.

**Hurricanes Helene and Milton placed an unprecedented burden on municipalities and residents. What steps would you take to improve city capacity for future storm resilience and response? What can be done to better help residents recover and rebuild, including the issuance of building permits in a timely manner and difficulties stemming from the FEMA 49/50% rule. What changes are needed to improve this process?**

I believe that we need to continue to accelerate upgrades to stormwater infrastructure to reduce flooding, protect residents and property, and mitigate rising sea levels. With a comprehensive resilience plan, we can identify ways residents can help increase our city's resilience. For instance, the city could better coordinate with neighborhood associations to disseminate

information and resources. More can be done to help residents post-storm: educating them about federal, state, and local property damage programs, their criteria (ie. FEMA 49/50% rule), and ways they can prepare ahead of hurricane season (ex., having a proper property appraisal for potential assessments) and making it easier to navigate permits.

**The Historic Gas Plant District represents 86 acres of land. Should the City sell the property as a single block to one developer, or should it retain ownership subdividing the land to maximize long-term public return? If you support a sale, do you believe the price should be set by a current fair-market appraisal?**

Like our waterfront parks, we only get one chance to do this right. After many conversations with residents, some of whom are Gas Plant descendants, we need to ensure there is ample, diverse community input to drive the redevelopment process. Selling the 86 acres to one developer could restrict our ability to have a community-driven development process, maximize long-term public return, and meet the changing needs of our city. I believe other mechanisms can allow for city ownership, benefit residents, and ensure that the needs of our city (current and future) are met. I would like to see more Community Benefits Advisory Board oversight to ensure that this development has specific community benefits with accountability measures included.

**The Governor and State Legislature recently banned local governments from participating in or promoting initiatives considered DEI. How will you ensure that all residents, regardless of race, gender or sexual orientation, feel welcomed, celebrated and their voices heard?**

We can ensure that all residents feel welcomed, celebrated, and that their voices are heard by including language around gender and sexual orientation in our anti-discrimination language in our city charter. I also think that there will be instances where litigation will be needed to fully exercise our ability to protect and empower residents from different minority groups. I believe that through training, intentional culture, community partnerships, and creative marketing, we can ensure that our city makes everyone feel like they belong, are heard, and that their identities are celebrated.

**Approximately \$440 million in Tax Increment Financing (TIF) had been earmarked for a new stadium and related infrastructure. TIF expenditures currently do not require a referendum. Should voters have the opportunity to approve or reject that spending via a ballot referendum?**

TIF dollars are tied to mechanisms like Community Redevelopment Areas—examples include the Intown and South St. Petersburg CRAs. The South St. Petersburg CRA has a citizen advisory committee made up of community members, appointed by the city and county, to determine how each year's budget is spent. I believe that the creation of a citizen advisory committee sets a precedent for other CRAs like Intown. Residents could advocate for an amendment to the Intown CRA that creates this kind of committee to create a community power-sharing mechanism for the long-term rather than only voting on one issue like the stadium via referendum.

**The cost of some electricity in the county is expected to increase in the next few years. Clearwater and Saint Petersburg are looking into creating a public utility. Do you support this effort? Why or why not?**

I support the effort to study public power in St. Petersburg. We have some of the highest electricity rates in the state, and this may be one of many ways to increase affordability for residents. Thirty-three cities across Florida have created a public utility for their electricity to bring rates down, increase responses to outages, and invest in electrical infrastructure and renewable energy. I believe our residents deserve to have a choice in a service that we all use and need – especially when the contract is coming up for renewal.



**Doug Homeyer**

**Party:** Non Partisan

**Campaign Website:** [www.doug4burgers.com/](http://www.doug4burgers.com/)

**Campaign Email:** [Dougforburgers@gmail.com](mailto:Dougforburgers@gmail.com)

**Campaign Phone:** 727-342-0067

**Campaign Mailing Address:** 200 Central Ave 4th Fl St Petersburg FL 33701

**Education:** University of Arkansas At Little Rock. BBA Finance , The American College.. CLU, ChFC

**Professional Experience:** Financial Planner

**Public Service:** Numerous boards and volunteer organizations

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/Doug4Burgers](http://www.facebook.com/Doug4Burgers)

**Whether or not to reduce property taxes is officially a ballot amendment for this November. What services would have to be cut or how would you make up for revenue losses if this goes through? What, in your view, should be done?**

I understand why people want property tax relief. Homeowners are being hit hard by insurance, utilities, and everyday costs. But if this amendment passes without a real replacement plan, St. Petersburg could be forced to cut basic services like police, fire, stormwater, roads, parks, libraries, housing, and youth programs. I would protect essential services first, review the budget line by line, go after state and federal funding, and push Tallahassee to provide a fair replacement before taking away local revenue.

**Hurricanes Helene and Milton placed an unprecedented burden on municipalities and residents. What steps would you take to improve city capacity for future storm resilience and response? What can be done to better help residents recover and rebuild, including the issuance of building permits in a timely manner and difficulties stemming from the FEMA 49/50% rule. What changes are needed to improve this process?**

Helene and Milton showed that storm recovery cannot be treated as business as usual. On the City Council, I would push for stronger stormwater systems, pumps, debris planning, backup power, and better neighborhood communication before storms

hit. After a storm, residents need one clear recovery center, faster inspections, temporary permit staffing, online permit tracking, and help for seniors and families who are overwhelmed. We cannot ignore FEMA rules, but we can make the city process faster, clearer, and more compassionate.

**The Historic Gas Plant District represents 86 acres of land. Should the City sell the property as a single block to one developer, or should it retain ownership subdividing the land to maximize long-term public return? If you support a sale, do you believe the price should be set by a current fair-market appraisal?**

I would not support selling all 86 acres as one block without clear proof it gives residents the best long-term return. This land is too important, and its history is too painful, to rush. I favor keeping public control where possible, using leases or phased/subdivided parcels to protect affordable housing, local jobs, green space, small business opportunities, and real benefits for the Gas Plant community. If any land is sold, the price must be based on a current independent fair-market appraisal before City Council votes, with the full terms made public.

**The Governor and State Legislature recently banned local governments from participating in or promoting initiatives considered DEI. How will you ensure that all residents, regardless of race, gender or sexual orientation, feel welcomed, celebrated and their voices heard?**

Even with the new state restrictions, every resident deserves to feel respected, welcomed, and heard. As a City Council member, I would focus on equal access to city services, open public meetings, strong neighborhood outreach, fair hiring and contracting practices that follow the law, and clear protections against discrimination. St. Petersburg is stronger when seniors, young people, LGBTQ residents, people of color, immigrants, veterans, small business owners, and families all have a voice. I will follow the law, but I will never stop listening to and serving every part of our city.

**Approximately \$440 million in Tax Increment Financing (TIF) had been earmarked for a new stadium and related infrastructure. TIF expenditures currently do not require a referendum. Should voters have the opportunity to approve or reject that spending via a ballot referendum?**

Yes. When public financing reaches this scale, voters should have a direct voice. TIF can be a useful redevelopment tool, but hundreds of millions of dollars for a stadium and related infrastructure should not move forward without clear public understanding and consent. I would support requiring a referendum for major TIF commitments above a set threshold, especially when tied to private development. At minimum, residents deserve full disclosure of costs, risks, benefits, bond terms, and alternatives before any final vote. Public land and public dollars require public trust.

**The cost of some electricity in the county is expected to increase in the next few years. Clearwater and Saint Petersburg are looking into creating a public utility. Do you support this effort? Why or why not?**

Yes, I support fully studying a public utility because residents deserve lower bills, better reliability, and more local accountability. But I would not support moving forward blindly. Before any major decision, the City Council needs an independent financial analysis, clear startup and acquisition costs, projected rates, debt risks, storm response plans, and public input. If a city-owned utility can save residents money and improve service, we should pursue it. If the numbers do not work, we should use the study to negotiate a better deal for St. Petersburg.



**Trevor Mallory**

**Party:** Non Partisan

**Campaign Website:** [www.malloryforcouncil.com/](http://www.malloryforcouncil.com/)

**Campaign Email:** [trevor@malloryforcouncil.com](mailto:trevor@malloryforcouncil.com)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/TrevorMalloryforCityCouncil](https://www.facebook.com/TrevorMalloryforCityCouncil)

**Whether or not to reduce property taxes is officially a ballot amendment for this November. What services would have to be cut or how would you make up for revenue losses if this goes through? What, in your view, should be done?**

My focus is making city government efficient, spending taxpayer dollars responsibly, and ensuring any tax changes don't come at the expense of public safety, infrastructure, or neighborhood quality of life. I will vote against the property tax proposal but, if it passes, I will evaluate our city's next steps based on these values.

**Hurricanes Helene and Milton placed an unprecedented burden on municipalities and residents. What steps would you take to improve city capacity for future storm resilience and response? What can be done to better help residents recover and rebuild, including the issuance of building permits in a timely manner and difficulties stemming from the FEMA 49/50% rule. What changes are needed to improve this process?**

The storms showed us that resilience has to be a year-round priority. We need to invest in infrastructure, improve communication with residents, and make rebuilding easier through permitting reforms and helping families navigate recovery. I've heard from homeowners frustrated by the FEMA 49/50% rule because a single contractor's estimate can dramatically affect the future of their home. Residents should be encouraged to get second opinions and multiple quotes, and the city should do everything possible to make the process fair, transparent, and easy to understand.

**The Historic Gas Plant District represents 86 acres of land. Should the City sell the property as a single block to one developer, or should it retain ownership subdividing the land to maximize long-term public return? If you support a sale, do you believe the price should be set by a current fair-market appraisal?**

This site is one of the most important public assets in our city, and any decision should maximize long-term benefits while listening to the residents in the development process. My priority is ensuring redevelopment creates opportunity, honors the history of the community, and delivers lasting value for St. Petersburg rather than focusing solely on a short-term transaction. Proposed plans have to be evaluated case-by-case on that basis.



**The Governor and State Legislature recently banned local governments from participating in or promoting initiatives considered DEI. How will you ensure that all residents, regardless of race, gender or sexual orientation, feel welcomed, celebrated and their voices heard?**

Every resident deserves to feel respected and heard. While state law may change how programs are structured, it does not change my commitment to listening to all communities, ensuring broad representation in decision-making, and making City Hall accessible to everyone. Tallahassee can ban certain programs, but they can't ban good values.

**Approximately \$440 million in Tax Increment Financing (TIF) had been earmarked for a new stadium and related infrastructure. TIF expenditures currently do not require a referendum. Should voters have the opportunity to approve or reject that spending via a ballot referendum?**

Major public investments require transparency and public trust. Residents deserve a meaningful voice in decisions that will shape our city's future, and I support strong public engagement and accountability whenever significant taxpayer resources are involved.

**The cost of some electricity in the county is expected to increase in the next few years. Clearwater and Saint Petersburg are looking into creating a public utility. Do you support this effort? Why or why not?**

Residents and small businesses deserve affordable, reliable energy. I support studying all available options and choosing the approach that provides the best long-term value, reliability, and accountability for the people of St. Petersburg. A public utility in St Petersburg is a promising idea for lowering costs – we need to gather the necessary data to determine if that idea will bear fruit.



## **Jameka Williams**

**Party:** Non Partisan

**Campaign Website:** [www.jamekaforsaintpete.com](http://www.jamekaforsaintpete.com)

**Campaign Email:** [jamekaforsix@gmail.com](mailto:jamekaforsix@gmail.com)

**Campaign Phone:** 5712177164

**Campaign Mailing Address:** 1010 Crescent Lake Dr #4 St. Petersburg FL 33701

**Education:** Longwood University - B.A. in Mass Communication Studies

**Professional Experience:** Marketing & Community Engagement

**Public Service:** Faith in Florida, League of Women Voters (St. Pete), Democratic Socialist of America (Pinellas), Historic Uptown Neighborhood Association

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61585861418798](https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61585861418798)

**Instagram:** [www.instagram.com/ja\\_hazel/](https://www.instagram.com/ja_hazel/)

**Whether or not to reduce property taxes is officially a ballot amendment for this November. What services would have to be cut or how would you make up for revenue losses if this goes through? What, in your view, should be done?**

First, I hope this does not go through. Property taxes are essential to funding our public goods, schools, and emergency services and to drastically reduce that income without having an alternate solution is reckless. In the event that it does I would first look at closing tax loopholes for corporations, reassessing developer incentives, and ensure any large scale and "luxury" developers are taxed accordingly. Further, I would aggressively lobby for state and federal dollars and work to ensure our vulnerable residents are not the ones burdened by shortfalls.

**Hurricanes Helene and Milton placed an unprecedented burden on municipalities and residents. What steps would you take to improve city capacity for future storm resilience and response? What can be done to better help residents recover and rebuild, including the issuance of building permits in a timely manner and difficulties stemming from the FEMA 49/50% rule. What changes are needed to improve this process?**

I support a proactive approach to resilience and recovery which means investing in modernizing our stormwater infrastructure, upgrading sewer systems, expanding flood mitigation projects, and restoring natural barriers (i.e. native plants, mangroves, and wetlands). I also believe that funding hubs throughout the city that are equipped with backup power, cooling systems, and other essential supplies are non-negotiable. When it comes to rebuilding, I would champion a faster, clearer, and more transparent permitting process and create a streamlined process that helps residents rebuild without delay and extra costs. I would also include resources for personal mitigation, elevation, and resiliency grants.

**The Historic Gas Plant District represents 86 acres of land. Should the City sell the property as a single block to one developer, or should it retain ownership subdividing the land to maximize long-term public return? If you support a sale, do you believe the price should be set by a current fair-market appraisal?**

I do not believe the city alone can handle the lift and gravity of the redevelopment of the Historic Gas Plant. However, I do think the city should retain some of the land for green space, housing, and other public goods. Further, I would like to see a joint effort take place. Truthfully, I would leave Ark Ellison out altogether and focus on the merits of the others to deliver true restorative justice. We need Foundation's public land retention model to stop corporate consolidation, Blake's community wealth-building fund, and a direct partnership with the Housing Authority to execute housing phases under a legally binding "right to return" policy with permanent deed restrictions.

**The Governor and State Legislature recently banned local governments from participating in or promoting initiatives considered DEI. How will you ensure that all residents, regardless of race, gender or sexual orientation, feel welcomed, celebrated and their voices heard?**

As a black, queer, working-class woman I am running to ensure all residents feel seen and heard in an increasingly oppressive and hostile environment. I will do this by supporting permits and public safety at community events., invest in affordable housing, address mental health gaps, supports arts initiatives, rollout inclusive and affirming messaging, and partner with nonprofits that address systemic issues that overwhelmingly affect youth, our unhoused, minority, and lgbtq communities.

**Approximately \$440 million in Tax Increment Financing (TIF) had been earmarked for a new stadium and related infrastructure. TIF expenditures currently do not require a referendum. Should voters have the opportunity to approve or reject that spending via a ballot referendum?**

As a person that vehemently opposed the Heinz-Rays deal, I absolutely think voters should have a say on what those funds should go to.

**The cost of some electricity in the county is expected to increase in the next few years. Clearwater and Saint Petersburg are looking into creating a public utility. Do you support this effort? Why or why not?**

I support the Dump Duke campaign because it is of my opinion that no utility with wealthy shareholders should be able to raise our rates to make-up for losses during natural disasters. Second, the power lines in certain neighborhoods are hazardous. Third, places like Winter Green and Lakeland have much lower utility rates, and where power lines are buried only 2% of residents lost power. Finally, I think Duke and Florida Power in general have a lot of monied interests in our politics and it needs to end.

## Governor

The Governor is an elected constitutional officer and the highest state officer in Florida. A governor serves as the chief executive officer of a state. Everyday job duties include oversight of the state's executive leaders, policy review, as well as big picture budget management. Serves 4-year term with a limit of 2 consecutive terms. The Governor's 2026 salary was \$141,400.



### Evelyn Castillo-Bach

**Party:** Democratic

**Education:** M.S. Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism

**Hometown:** Pembroke Pines

**County:** Broward

**Campaign Website:** [evelynforgovernor.org/](http://evelynforgovernor.org/)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/evelynforgovernor](https://www.facebook.com/evelynforgovernor)

**Campaign Mailing Address:** 18459 Pines Blvd #255 Pembroke Pines FL 33029

**Why are you running for this elected position? What are the two most compelling issues on which, if elected, you feel you can make a difference? ¿Por qué se postula para este cargo electo? ¿Cuáles son los dos temas más importantes en los que, si es electo/a, cree que puede hacer una diferencia para nuestro estado?**

I have been an independent voter for most of my adult life. I am running as a Democrat to bring that independence to work for the people of this state. I believe every Floridian deserves to live without fear of losing their home, fear of not being able to feed their children, fear of going bankrupt because they got sick.

**What actions can be taken to protect Florida's environment, water quality and coastlines from pollution, overdevelopment and climate change? ¿Qué acciones pueden tomarse para proteger el medio ambiente de Florida, la calidad del agua y las costas frente a la contaminación, el desarrollo excesivo y el cambio climático?**

Florida has excellent environmental advocacy groups and devoted citizens committed to advocating for and protecting our environment. We do not need to reinvent the wheel. My administration will bring these citizens and experts together and empower them to drive the mission of protecting our Everglades, water, land, coastlines, and natural habitats from pollution, overdevelopment, and climate change. Hyperscale data centers threaten our environment on multiple levels: water, noise, and disrupting natural habitats. My administration will also empower environmental advocacy groups to protect our state from these threats.

**Equitable and affordable access to healthcare is declining, in part due to the decrease of federal insurance subsidies. At the same time, more Medicaid costs are being pushed onto the states. How should the state address these issues? El acceso equitativo y asequible a la atención médica está disminuyendo, en parte debido a la reducción de los subsidios federales de seguros. Al mismo tiempo, más costos de Medicaid se están trasladando a los estados. ¿Cómo debería el estado abordar estos problemas?**

Florida's uninsured rate is 10.9%, well above the national average. Medical debt is the leading cause of bankruptcy in America. I support Medicare for All, but until that happens at the federal level, I will act as governor to protect Floridians now. My administration will ban all medical debt, ban reporting of medical debt to credit bureaus, and create Florida Direct Care. This system will pay doctors directly for people with no insurance, bypassing insurance companies. Florida has rejected at

least \$11 billion in federal funds in recent years, including Medicaid expansion. That stops under my administration. No Floridian should go bankrupt because they or someone they love got sick.

**The Florida Cabinet, acting as the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund, manages over 12 million acres of public lands. What is your philosophy on conservation, acquisition, and protection of natural resources, including Florida Forever projects, state parks, and coastal areas? El Gabinete de Florida, actuando como Junta de Fideicomisarios del Internal Improvement Trust Fund, administra más de 12 millones de acres de tierras públicas. ¿Cuál es su filosofía sobre la conservación, adquisición y protección de los recursos naturales, incluyendo proyectos de Florida Forever, parques estatales y zonas costeras?**

Public lands belong to the people of Florida, not to corporations or political donors. My philosophy is simple: protect what we have, acquire what we need, and stop selling off Florida's heritage to the highest bidder. Florida Forever projects, state parks, and coastal areas must be preserved for future generations, not developed for short-term profit. My administration will prioritize conservation over exploitation, ensure transparent decision-making on land use, and empower environmental advocacy groups to hold government accountable. The Everglades, our springs, wetlands, and coastlines are irreplaceable. Once they are gone, they are gone forever.

**Insufficient housing is hurting Florida families and limiting Florida's economy. What state measures do you support to address affordable housing and reduce homelessness? La falta de vivienda está afectando a las familias de Florida y limitando la economía del estado. ¿Qué medidas estatales apoya para abordar la vivienda asequible y reducir la falta de hogar?**

Florida families are crushed by property insurance and rent. A 2022 report found insurers' affiliates made nearly \$14 billion while executives paid themselves \$680 million in dividends. My administration will eliminate the middlemen who are the affiliates. For renters, rents are up 39% since 2019. Over 900,000 renters pay more than 40% of their income for housing. My administration will create a Florida State Rental Voucher Program and fund affordable housing via mandatory fees on hyperscale data centers, large companies, luxury vessels over \$10 million, and luxury real estate over \$20 million.

**What is your long-term plan for public education, specifically concerning teacher retention, curriculum changes, and the role of parental rights laws? ¿Cuál es su plan a largo plazo para la educación pública, específicamente en relación con la retención de maestros, cambios en el currículo y el papel de las leyes de derechos de los padres?**

Teachers must be paid competitively so they can afford to live in Florida. Curriculum should focus on reading, writing, math, and critical thinking. I believe in public education that serves all children without political interference.

**Polls indicate the public is more concerned about the cost of property insurance than property taxes. What is your view and why? Las encuestas indican que el público está más preocupado por el costo del seguro de propiedad que por los impuestos a la propiedad. ¿Cuál es su opinión y por qué?**

The major threat is property insurance, not property taxes. Too many in Tallahassee avoid facing insurance companies by pushing property tax cuts instead. The Miami Herald and Tampa Bay Times exposed the affiliate scheme where excessive profits are made on the backs of homeowners while rates soar. I will eliminate the middlemen who are the affiliates. I will tackle taxes by eliminating inefficiency and potential fraud. Property taxes pay for essential services we all benefit from. Those services should not be compromised.



**Jay Collins**

**Party:** Republican

**Age:** 50

**Campaign Website:** [www.jayforflorida.com/](http://www.jayforflorida.com/)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/JayCollinsFL](https://www.facebook.com/JayCollinsFL)

**Why are you running for this elected position? What are the two most compelling issues on which, if elected, you feel you can make a difference? ¿Por qué se postula para este cargo electo? ¿Cuáles son los dos temas más importantes en los que, si es electo/a, cree que puede hacer una diferencia para nuestro estado?**

- candidate declined to respond -

**What actions can be taken to protect Florida's environment, water quality and coastlines from pollution, overdevelopment and climate change? ¿Qué acciones pueden tomarse para proteger el medio ambiente de Florida, la calidad del agua y las costas frente a la contaminación, el desarrollo excesivo y el cambio climático?**

- candidate declined to respond -

**Equitable and affordable access to healthcare is declining, in part due to the decrease of federal insurance subsidies. At the same time, more Medicaid costs are being pushed onto the states. How should the state address these issues? El acceso equitativo y asequible a la atención médica está disminuyendo, en parte debido a la reducción de los subsidios federales de seguros. Al mismo tiempo, más costos de Medicaid se están trasladando a los estados. ¿Cómo debería el estado abordar estos problemas?**

- candidate declined to respond -

**The Florida Cabinet, acting as the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund, manages over 12 million acres of public lands. What is your philosophy on conservation, acquisition, and protection of natural resources, including Florida Forever projects, state parks, and coastal areas? El Gabinete de Florida, actuando como Junta de Fideicomisarios del Internal Improvement Trust Fund, administra más de 12 millones de acres de tierras públicas. ¿Cuál es su filosofía sobre la conservación, adquisición y protección de los recursos naturales, incluyendo proyectos de Florida Forever, parques estatales y zonas costeras?**

- candidate declined to respond -

**Insufficient housing is hurting Florida families and limiting Florida's economy. What state measures do you support to address affordable housing and reduce homelessness? La falta de vivienda está afectando a las familias de Florida y limitando la economía del estado. ¿Qué medidas estatales apoya para abordar la vivienda asequible y reducir la falta de hogar?**

- candidate declined to respond -

**What is your long-term plan for public education, specifically concerning teacher retention, curriculum changes, and the role of parental rights laws? ¿Cuál es su plan a largo plazo para la educación pública, específicamente en relación con la retención de maestros, cambios en el currículo y el papel de las leyes de derechos de los padres?**

- candidate declined to respond -

**Polls indicate the public is more concerned about the cost of property insurance than property taxes. What is your view and why? Las encuestas indican que el público está más preocupado por el costo del seguro de propiedad que por los impuestos a la propiedad. ¿Cuál es su opinión y por qué?**

- candidate declined to respond -



## Byron Donalds

**Party:** Republican

**Campaign Website:** [byrondonalds.com/](http://byrondonalds.com/)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/byrondonalds](https://www.facebook.com/byrondonalds)

**Why are you running for this elected position? What are the two most compelling issues on which, if elected, you feel you can make a difference? ¿Por qué se postula para este cargo electo? ¿Cuáles son los dos temas más importantes en los que, si es electo/a, cree que puede hacer una diferencia para nuestro estado?**

- candidate declined to respond -

**What actions can be taken to protect Florida's environment, water quality and coastlines from pollution, overdevelopment and climate change? ¿Qué acciones pueden tomarse para proteger el medio ambiente de Florida, la calidad del agua y las costas frente a la contaminación, el desarrollo excesivo y el cambio climático?**

- candidate declined to respond -

**Equitable and affordable access to healthcare is declining, in part due to the decrease of federal insurance subsidies. At the same time, more Medicaid costs are being pushed onto the states. How should the state address these issues? El acceso equitativo y asequible a la atención médica está disminuyendo, en parte debido a la reducción de los subsidios federales de seguros. Al mismo tiempo, más costos de Medicaid se están trasladando a los estados. ¿Cómo debería el estado abordar estos problemas?**

- candidate declined to respond -

**The Florida Cabinet, acting as the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund, manages over 12 million acres of public lands. What is your philosophy on conservation, acquisition, and protection of natural resources, including Florida Forever projects, state parks, and coastal areas? El Gabinete de Florida, actuando como Junta de Fideicomisarios del Internal Improvement Trust Fund, administra más de 12 millones de acres de tierras públicas. ¿Cuál es su filosofía sobre la conservación, adquisición y protección de los recursos naturales, incluyendo proyectos de Florida Forever, parques estatales y zonas costeras?**

- candidate declined to respond -

**Insufficient housing is hurting Florida families and limiting Florida's economy. What state measures do you support to address affordable housing and reduce homelessness? La falta de vivienda está afectando a las familias de Florida y limitando la economía del estado. ¿Qué medidas estatales apoya para abordar la vivienda asequible y reducir la falta de hogar?**

- candidate declined to respond -

**What is your long-term plan for public education, specifically concerning teacher retention, curriculum changes, and the role of parental rights laws? ¿Cuál es su plan a largo plazo para la educación pública, específicamente en relación con la retención de maestros, cambios en el currículo y el papel de las leyes de derechos de los padres?**

- candidate declined to respond -

**Polls indicate the public is more concerned about the cost of property insurance than property taxes. What is your view and why? Las encuestas indican que el público está más preocupado por el costo del seguro de propiedad que por los impuestos a la propiedad. ¿Cuál es su opinión y por qué?**

- candidate declined to respond -



## Thomas E. Fernandez

**Party:** Democratic

**Age:** 49

**Education:** Miami Dade College; Weber State University; Rutgers School of Health

**Hometown:** HOMESTEAD

**County:** Miami-Dade



**Campaign Website:** [qrco.de/novaforflorida](http://qrco.de/novaforflorida)  
**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/NovaForFlorida/](http://www.facebook.com/NovaForFlorida/)  
**Instagram:** @novaforflorida  
**Campaign Phone:** 7865291461  
**Campaign Mailing Address:** 267 NE 32ND TER HOMESTEAD FL 33033

**Why are you running for this elected position? What are the two most compelling issues on which, if elected, you feel you can make a difference? ¿Por qué se postula para este cargo electo? ¿Cuáles son los dos temas más importantes en los que, si es electo/a, cree que puede hacer una diferencia para nuestro estado?**

I am running for Governor because I believe Florida should work for the people who call it home. As a veteran, healthcare professional, husband, father, and community advocate, I have spent my life serving others and helping families navigate challenges. The two issues where I believe I can make the greatest difference are affordability and healthcare. Across Florida, families are struggling with rising housing costs, insurance premiums, and everyday expenses. Too many hardworking people are falling behind. We need practical solutions that help families achieve stability and build a better future. I am also passionate about affordable healthcare. My experience in healthcare has shown me how important quality care is to every family. No Floridian should have to choose between getting the care they need and paying their bills. I want to help build a Florida where every family has the opportunity to succeed.

**What actions can be taken to protect Florida's environment, water quality and coastlines from pollution, overdevelopment and climate change? ¿Qué acciones pueden tomarse para proteger el medio ambiente de Florida, la calidad del agua y las costas frente a la contaminación, el desarrollo excesivo y el cambio climático?**

Florida is one of the most beautiful states in the country. Protecting our environment, water quality, and coastlines is not just about preserving natural resources—it is about protecting our health, economy, homes, and way of life. Through my work in communities across Florida, I have seen how environmental issues affect everyday people. Clean drinking water, safe neighborhoods, healthy ecosystems, and resilient infrastructure are essential to strong communities. We must continue investing in Everglades restoration, protecting our waterways, reducing pollution, and improving stormwater infrastructure. As Florida grows, we must balance development with responsible planning so growth does not come at the expense of our environment or quality of life. We must also prepare for flooding, stronger storms, and other environmental challenges that impact our communities. By focusing on practical solutions, we can protect Florida's natural beauty for future generations.

**Equitable and affordable access to healthcare is declining, in part due to the decrease of federal insurance subsidies. At the same time, more Medicaid costs are being pushed onto the states. How should the state address these issues? El acceso equitativo y asequible a la atención médica está disminuyendo, en parte debido a la reducción de los subsidios federales de seguros. Al mismo tiempo, más costos de Medicaid se están trasladando a los estados. ¿Cómo debería el estado abordar estos problemas?**

As a healthcare professional, I have seen firsthand how important affordable, accessible healthcare is to families, seniors, veterans, and people with disabilities. Healthcare should not be a privilege available only to those who can afford it. Florida must work to increase access to quality care while controlling costs for patients and taxpayers. That includes strengthening preventive care, supporting community health centers, expanding healthcare workforce development, and reducing barriers that prevent people from receiving timely treatment. We must also ensure that Medicaid resources are managed responsibly and efficiently so that vulnerable populations continue to receive the services they need. Investing in preventive care and early intervention can improve health outcomes while reducing long-term costs. I believe healthcare decisions should focus on people, not politics. Every Floridian deserves access to quality, affordable healthcare.

**The Florida Cabinet, acting as the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund, manages over 12 million acres of public lands. What is your philosophy on conservation, acquisition, and protection of natural resources, including Florida Forever projects, state parks, and coastal areas? El Gabinete de Florida, actuando como Junta de Fideicomisarios del Internal Improvement Trust Fund, administra más de 12 millones de acres de tierras públicas. ¿Cuál es su filosofía sobre la conservación, adquisición y protección de los recursos naturales, incluyendo proyectos de Florida Forever, parques estatales y zonas costeras?**

Florida's public lands are one of our state's greatest assets. They protect our water supply, support wildlife, strengthen our economy, and provide places for families to enjoy the outdoors. Conservation is not just about protecting land—it is about protecting our quality of life. I support continued investment in programs such as Florida Forever, Everglades restoration, state parks, and coastal conservation efforts. As Florida continues to grow, we must make thoughtful decisions that balance development with the preservation of natural resources. Public lands should be managed responsibly, protected for future generations, and accessible to the people they serve. I believe we should prioritize protecting environmentally sensitive areas, preserving wildlife habitats, and safeguarding the natural resources that make Florida unique. By taking a practical, long-term approach, we can protect Florida's natural heritage while supporting strong communities and a healthy economy.

**Insufficient housing is hurting Florida families and limiting Florida's economy. What state measures do you support to address affordable housing and reduce homelessness? La falta de vivienda está afectando a las familias de Florida y limitando la economía del estado. ¿Qué medidas estatales apoya para abordar la vivienda asequible y reducir la falta de hogar?**

Housing affordability is a major challenge facing Florida families today. Too many working families, seniors, veterans, and young adults are struggling to find housing they can afford, while homelessness continues to grow in many communities. I support increasing affordable and workforce housing opportunities, expanding pathways to homeownership, and encouraging innovative housing solutions that meet the needs of Florida's growing population. We should work with local governments, nonprofits, and private partners to increase housing availability while preserving community character and quality of life. Addressing homelessness requires more than temporary shelter. We must connect individuals and families to housing,

healthcare, mental health services, employment opportunities, and other support systems that help people achieve long-term stability. Every Floridian deserves the opportunity to live in a safe, stable, and affordable home. Together, we can build a more secure future.

**What is your long-term plan for public education, specifically concerning teacher retention, curriculum changes, and the role of parental rights laws? ¿Cuál es su plan a largo plazo para la educación pública, específicamente en relación con la retención de maestros, cambios en el currículo y el papel de las leyes de derechos de los padres?**

A strong public education system is essential to Florida's future. My long-term goal is to ensure every student has access to a quality education while supporting the teachers, parents, and communities that make student success possible. Teacher retention begins with respect, support, and competitive compensation. We must create an environment where educators are valued, have access to professional development, and can focus on teaching and student achievement. I believe parents should be active partners in their children's education and should have a meaningful voice in decisions that affect their families. At the same time, our schools should remain focused on academic excellence, critical thinking, and preparing students for success after graduation. I also support expanding financial literacy, civics education, career and technical training, and practical life skills. Every student should graduate prepared for college, military service, a career, or entrepreneurship.

**Polls indicate the public is more concerned about the cost of property insurance than property taxes. What is your view and why? Las encuestas indican que el público está más preocupado por el costo del seguro de propiedad que por los impuestos a la propiedad. ¿Cuál es su opinión y por qué?**

Property insurance has become one of the biggest financial burdens facing Florida families. For many homeowners, insurance costs have increased far faster than wages, making it difficult to remain in their homes and plan for the future. I believe the state must take a balanced approach that protects consumers while maintaining a stable insurance market. We need greater transparency, stronger oversight, and accountability to ensure rates are fair and justified. We must also invest in mitigation efforts that reduce risk and lower costs over time. Strengthening homes against storms, improving infrastructure, and supporting community resilience can help reduce losses and stabilize premiums. Property taxes are important, but when families see insurance bills doubling or tripling, affordability becomes a serious concern. Florida families deserve practical solutions that make homeownership more affordable and sustainable. My focus is helping Floridians protect their homes.



## James Fishback

**Party:** Republican

**Campaign Website:** [fishback2026.com/](http://fishback2026.com/)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/fshbck/](https://www.facebook.com/fshbck/)

**Why are you running for this elected position? What are the two most compelling issues on which, if elected, you feel you can make a difference? ¿Por qué se postula para este cargo electo? ¿Cuáles son los dos temas más importantes en los que, si es electo/a, cree que puede hacer una diferencia para nuestro estado?**

- candidate declined to respond -

**What actions can be taken to protect Florida's environment, water quality and coastlines from pollution, overdevelopment and climate change? ¿Qué acciones pueden tomarse para proteger el medio ambiente de Florida, la calidad del agua y las costas frente a la contaminación, el desarrollo excesivo y el cambio climático?**

- candidate declined to respond -

**Equitable and affordable access to healthcare is declining, in part due to the decrease of federal insurance subsidies. At the same time, more Medicaid costs are being pushed onto the states. How should the state address these issues? El acceso equitativo y asequible a la atención médica está disminuyendo, en parte debido a la reducción de los subsidios federales de seguros. Al mismo tiempo, más costos de Medicaid se están trasladando a los estados. ¿Cómo debería el estado abordar estos problemas?**

- candidate declined to respond -

**The Florida Cabinet, acting as the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund, manages over 12 million acres of public lands. What is your philosophy on conservation, acquisition, and protection of natural resources, including Florida Forever projects, state parks, and coastal areas? El Gabinete de Florida, actuando como Junta de Fideicomisarios del Internal Improvement Trust Fund, administra más de 12 millones de acres de tierras públicas. ¿Cuál es su filosofía sobre la conservación, adquisición y protección de los recursos naturales, incluyendo proyectos de Florida Forever, parques estatales y zonas costeras?**

- candidate declined to respond -

**Insufficient housing is hurting Florida families and limiting Florida's economy. What state measures do you support to address affordable housing and reduce homelessness? La falta de vivienda está afectando a las familias de Florida y limitando la economía del estado. ¿Qué medidas estatales apoya para abordar la vivienda asequible y reducir la falta de hogar?**

- candidate declined to respond -

**What is your long-term plan for public education, specifically concerning teacher retention, curriculum changes, and the role of parental rights laws? ¿Cuál es su plan a largo plazo para la educación pública, específicamente en relación con la retención de maestros, cambios en el currículo y el papel de las leyes de derechos de los padres?**

- candidate declined to respond -

**Polls indicate the public is more concerned about the cost of property insurance than property taxes. What is your view and why? Las encuestas indican que el público está más preocupado por el costo del seguro de propiedad que por los impuestos a la propiedad. ¿Cuál es su opinión y por qué?**

- candidate declined to respond -



## **Dayna Marie Foster**

**Party:** Democratic

**Age:** 32

**Education:** B.S. Finance, M.S. Science in Finance, M.S. Science in Information

**Hometown:** Fort Lauderdale

**County:** Boward

**Campaign Website:** [www.fosterforflorida.com/](http://www.fosterforflorida.com/)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61579978912863](https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61579978912863)

**Campaign Twitter Handle:** @Foster4Florida

**Instagram:** FosterforFlorida

**LinkedIn:** Foster for Florida

**Campaign Phone:** 954-900-7277

**Campaign Mailing Address:** P.O. Box 14813 Fort Lauderdale FL 33302

**Why are you running for this elected position? What are the two most compelling issues on which, if elected, you feel you can make a difference? ¿Por qué se postula para este cargo electo? ¿Cuáles son los dos temas más importantes en los que, si es electo/a, cree que puede hacer una diferencia para nuestro estado?**

I'm running because Florida deserves leaders who actually listen. I was a math teacher from Fort Lauderdale and the daughter of a single mother who worked hard so I could have opportunities she never had. I've seen how decisions made in Tallahassee show up in real life at the kitchen table, at the doctor's office, at the gas pump and too many of our leaders have stopped serving the people they represent. I earned multiple degrees while teaching full time because I believe understanding government is the first step to making it work for everyday Floridians. I'm not waiting for the right leader to show up; I'm becoming the leader I once needed. The two issues where I know I can make the greatest impact are fixing and fully funding public education and making housing affordable.

**What actions can be taken to protect Florida's environment, water quality and coastlines from pollution, overdevelopment and climate change? ¿Qué acciones pueden tomarse para proteger el medio ambiente de Florida, la calidad del agua y las costas frente a la contaminación, el desarrollo excesivo y el cambio climático?**

Florida's environment continues to face serious threats from corporations that prioritize short-term profit over long-term sustainability. As governor, I will halt state data-center construction projects, which have been shown to damage groundwater, worsen air quality, and increase asthma-related deaths. Our natural waterways must be restored and protected to ensure safe drinking water for Floridians and for the regions beyond our borders that rely on our water systems. The state can create public dashboards to track water quality and carbon emissions, expand cost-share programs that help farms reduce chemical runoff, and establish a Florida Sustainable Agriculture Transition Fund to support small farmers shifting to sustainable practices. Overdevelopment and urban encroachment also threaten our ecosystems, which is why all affordable housing projects must be designed with climate resilience in mind.

**Equitable and affordable access to healthcare is declining, in part due to the decrease of federal insurance subsidies. At the same time, more Medicaid costs are being pushed onto the states. How should the state address these issues? El acceso equitativo y asequible a la atención médica está disminuyendo, en parte debido a la reducción de los subsidios federales de seguros. Al mismo tiempo, más costos de Medicaid se están trasladando a los estados. ¿Cómo debería el estado abordar estos problemas?**

As governor, I will immediately adopt expanded Medicaid. This program has already been implemented in most states and will instantly allow an additional 800,000 to 1.4 million Floridians to get government assistance. Access to healthcare is important, which is why the government should invest in both rural health and better transportation to medical facilities. As governor, I will expand federally qualified health centers, expand transportation services for people seeking prenatal and postpartum care, and advocate for legislation that finally brings telehealth reimbursement parity and expanded rural connectivity to our state.

**The Florida Cabinet, acting as the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund, manages over 12 million acres of public lands. What is your philosophy on conservation, acquisition, and protection of natural resources, including Florida Forever projects, state parks, and coastal areas? El Gabinete de Florida, actuando como Junta de Fideicomisarios del Internal Improvement Trust Fund, administra más de 12 millones de acres de tierras públicas. ¿Cuál es su filosofía sobre la conservación, adquisición y protección de los recursos naturales, incluyendo proyectos de Florida Forever, parques estatales y zonas costeras?**

Our natural resources are the backbone of our state. The state government should protect the environment from hasty and dangerous data center projects, inhumane federal detention centers, and urban overdevelopment. New development projects should be undertaken with care and caution, and with the consent of all parties involved.

**Insufficient housing is hurting Florida families and limiting Florida's economy. What state measures do you support to address affordable housing and reduce homelessness? La falta de vivienda está afectando a las familias de**

**Florida y limitando la economía del estado. ¿Qué medidas estatales apoya para abordar la vivienda asequible y reducir la falta de hogar?**

Affordable housing is fundamentally a supply and stability challenge, and I'd start by fully funding the Sadowski Affordable Housing Trust Fund and protecting it from legislative sweeps. I'd pair that with zoning and land use reform, including a accessory dwelling unit framework and the elimination of parking minimums near transit to lower development costs. I'd also develop publicly owned land through long-term ground leases paired with community land trusts that remove land cost from the equation and keep homes permanently affordable. Siting this development on already-developed infill near transit lowers families' combined housing and transportation costs and avoids sprawl onto sensitive lands. Funded through existing federal infrastructure dollars and a luxury non-resident property surcharge rather than new taxes on working residents, this approach puts affordable housing within reach of everyday Floridians.

**What is your long-term plan for public education, specifically concerning teacher retention, curriculum changes, and the role of parental rights laws? ¿Cuál es su plan a largo plazo para la educación pública, específicamente en relación con la retención de maestros, cambios en el currículo y el papel de las leyes de derechos de los padres?**

My long-term plan for public education is to rebuild a system that supports students, respects educators, and reflects the needs of our communities. Teacher retention starts with competitive pay, stable contracts, and restoring respect for the profession so educators can build long term careers in Florida. I will work to depoliticize curriculum decisions and return to evidence-based standards that prepare students for the real world, not political agendas. My goal is to create a balanced, transparent system where families, educators, and students are partners in learning.

**Polls indicate the public is more concerned about the cost of property insurance than property taxes. What is your view and why? Las encuestas indican que el público está más preocupado por el costo del seguro de propiedad que por los impuestos a la propiedad. ¿Cuál es su opinión y por qué?**

I share the public's concern about property insurance, because it has become one of the fastest rising and least predictable threats to affordable homeownership. Property taxes, while a real burden, are relatively stable and capped for homesteaded residents under Save Our Homes, whereas insurance premiums have climbed steeply and erratically, driven by hurricane exposure, climate risk, and a distressed insurance market that has pushed carriers out of Florida entirely. For working families, retirees on fixed incomes, and first-time buyers, an unpredictable premium spike can be the difference between keeping a home and losing it and rising insurance costs quietly inflate rents and the price of building the affordable housing our state desperately needs. That is why my housing agenda treats resilience as central to affordability, embedding disaster-resilient construction standards into state-financed housing to lower long-term risk and repair costs.



**Jim Holcomb**

**Party:** Republican

**Age:** 74

**Education:** BA Political Science U of Central Florida 1974, Master Education, National Louis. U. 2010

**Hometown:** Clermont, Florida

**County:** Lake

**Campaign Website:** jimholcomb4governor.com/

**Campaign Mailing Address:** PO Box 12 Astatula FL 34705

**Why are you running for this elected position? What are the two most compelling issues on which, if elected, you feel you can make a difference? ¿Por qué se postula para este cargo electo? ¿Cuáles son los dos temas más importantes en los que, si es electo/a, cree que puede hacer una diferencia para nuestro estado?**

- candidate declined to respond -

**What actions can be taken to protect Florida's environment, water quality and coastlines from pollution, overdevelopment and climate change? ¿Qué acciones pueden tomarse para proteger el medio ambiente de Florida, la calidad del agua y las costas frente a la contaminación, el desarrollo excesivo y el cambio climático?**

- candidate declined to respond -

**Equitable and affordable access to healthcare is declining, in part due to the decrease of federal insurance subsidies. At the same time, more Medicaid costs are being pushed onto the states. How should the state address these issues? El acceso equitativo y asequible a la atención médica está disminuyendo, en parte debido a la reducción de los subsidios federales de seguros. Al mismo tiempo, más costos de Medicaid se están trasladando a los estados. ¿Cómo debería el estado abordar estos problemas?**

- candidate declined to respond -

**The Florida Cabinet, acting as the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund, manages over 12 million acres of public lands. What is your philosophy on conservation, acquisition, and protection of natural resources, including Florida Forever projects, state parks, and coastal areas? El Gabinete de Florida, actuando como Junta de Fideicomisarios del Internal Improvement Trust Fund, administra más de 12 millones de acres de tierras públicas. ¿Cuál es su filosofía sobre la conservación, adquisición y protección de los recursos naturales, incluyendo proyectos de Florida Forever, parques estatales y zonas costeras?**

- candidate declined to respond -

**Insufficient housing is hurting Florida families and limiting Florida's economy. What state measures do you support to address affordable housing and reduce homelessness? La falta de vivienda está afectando a las familias de**



**Florida y limitando la economía del estado. ¿Qué medidas estatales apoya para abordar la vivienda asequible y reducir la falta de hogar?**

- candidate declined to respond -

**What is your long-term plan for public education, specifically concerning teacher retention, curriculum changes, and the role of parental rights laws? ¿Cuál es su plan a largo plazo para la educación pública, específicamente en relación con la retención de maestros, cambios en el currículo y el papel de las leyes de derechos de los padres?**

- candidate declined to respond -

**Polls indicate the public is more concerned about the cost of property insurance than property taxes. What is your view and why? Las encuestas indican que el público está más preocupado por el costo del seguro de propiedad que por los impuestos a la propiedad. ¿Cuál es su opinión y por qué?**

- candidate declined to respond -



**David Jolly**

**Party:** Democratic

**Education:** Juris Doctor (J.D.) cum laude from the George Mason University School of Law; Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) in History from Emory University

**Hometown:** Dunedin, Florida

**County:** Hillsborough

**Campaign Website:** davidjolly.com/

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/davidjollyflorida](https://www.facebook.com/davidjollyflorida)

**Campaign Twitter Handle:** <https://x.com/davidjollyfl?lang=en>

**Instagram:** <https://www.instagram.com/davidjollyfl/>

**Campaign Phone:** 727-386-9204

**Campaign Mailing Address:** P.O. Box 266 Indian Rocks Beach FL 33785

**Why are you running for this elected position? What are the two most compelling issues on which, if elected, you feel you can make a difference? ¿Por qué se postula para este cargo electo? ¿Cuáles son los dos temas más importantes en los que, si es electo/a, cree que puede hacer una diferencia para nuestro estado?**

I am running for Governor to build a Florida that is more affordable, more accountable, and more focused on the future. I believe government should improve people's lives, the economy should work for everyone, and every Floridian deserves dignity and equal opportunity. The first issue where I can make the greatest difference is affordability. Rising costs for housing, insurance, healthcare, childcare, and groceries have made it harder for working families to get ahead. I will support policies that strengthen workers' rights, raise wages, and create pathways to good-paying jobs. The second issue is education. Florida needs a renaissance in public education. I will fully fund neighborhood public schools, raise teacher pay, reduce overcrowding, expand student support services, and protect the independence and excellence of our colleges and universities. By making Florida more affordable and investing in education, we can create opportunity and security for every Floridian.

**What actions can be taken to protect Florida's environment, water quality and coastlines from pollution, overdevelopment and climate change? ¿Qué acciones pueden tomarse para proteger el medio ambiente de Florida, la calidad del agua y las costas frente a la contaminación, el desarrollo excesivo y el cambio climático?**

Florida's environment is one of our greatest assets. Our beaches, springs, wetlands, rivers, and coastlines support tourism, recreation, agriculture, and local communities. Protecting them requires stronger stewardship and long-term planning. Florida must accept the science of climate change and invest in resilience against sea level rise, stronger storms, flooding, and saltwater intrusion. Building resilient infrastructure today will protect communities and save taxpayers money in the future. I support stronger enforcement against polluters, investments in wastewater and stormwater infrastructure, and accelerated restoration of the Everglades, springs, rivers, and estuaries. We must reduce harmful algal blooms and ensure clean water for future generations. We also need smart growth policies that protect wetlands, beaches, state parks, and environmentally sensitive lands from overdevelopment.

**Equitable and affordable access to healthcare is declining, in part due to the decrease of federal insurance subsidies. At the same time, more Medicaid costs are being pushed onto the states. How should the state address these issues? El acceso equitativo y asequible a la atención médica está disminuyendo, en parte debido a la reducción de los subsidios federales de seguros. Al mismo tiempo, más costos de Medicaid se están trasladando a los estados. ¿Cómo debería el estado abordar estos problemas?**

Equitable, affordable healthcare is declining as federal subsidies shrink and states shoulder more Medicaid costs. Florida should expand Medicaid and bring home billions in taxpayer dollars now funding care elsewhere. Expansion would help hundreds of thousands access affordable coverage and reduce uncompensated care that drives up premiums. As costs shift to states, we must also improve how care is delivered by investing in preventive services, behavioral health, maternal health, chronic disease management, and care coordination to reduce avoidable ER visits. Stronger fraud prevention, transparency, and efficient administration are essential. Rural communities face provider shortages and hospital closures, so Medicaid dollars should stabilize local hospitals, expand telehealth, and support community-based networks. Healthcare shouldn't depend on income or geography. By expanding Medicaid and modernizing care delivery, Florida can improve outcomes and strengthen rural communities.

**The Florida Cabinet, acting as the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund, manages over 12 million acres of public lands. What is your philosophy on conservation, acquisition, and protection of natural resources, including Florida Forever projects, state parks, and coastal areas? El Gabinete de Florida, actuando como Junta de Fideicomisarios del Internal Improvement Trust Fund, administra más de 12 millones de acres de tierras públicas. ¿Cuál es su filosofía sobre la conservación, adquisición y protección de los recursos naturales, incluyendo proyectos de Florida Forever, parques estatales y zonas costeras?**

Florida's public lands are part of our shared heritage, and conservation is essential to our long-term prosperity. As Governor and a member of the Board of Trustees, I would prioritize responsible stewardship, public access, and protecting natural resources for future generations—not short-term interests. I support fully funding and expanding Florida Forever to preserve wildlife corridors, wetlands, springsheds, and working lands that safeguard water quality and reduce flooding. State parks should remain focused on conservation and recreation, not commercial development. I also support coastal resiliency, beach restoration, seagrass protection, and science-based planning to address sea level rise. Strategic land acquisition and partnerships with local governments and conservation groups are key to protecting habitats and preventing costly environmental damage. Florida's environment is the foundation of our economy and quality of life, and we must protect it for those who come after us.

**Insufficient housing is hurting Florida families and limiting Florida's economy. What state measures do you support to address affordable housing and reduce homelessness? La falta de vivienda está afectando a las familias de Florida y limitando la economía del estado. ¿Qué medidas estatales apoya para abordar la vivienda asequible y reducir la falta de hogar?**

Florida's housing crisis is pushing homeownership and stable rentals out of reach for working families, seniors, veterans, and young people. As Governor, I would focus on lowering costs by fully funding the Sadowski Housing Trust Fund and ensuring those dollars build affordable and workforce housing as intended. I support smart-growth infrastructure, mixed-income development, and removing unnecessary local barriers that restrict supply. Stabilizing the property insurance market is also essential, as rising premiums are driving the affordability crisis. To reduce homelessness, I support a Housing First approach that pairs permanent housing with mental health care, addiction treatment, job training, and healthcare. We must prioritize veterans, seniors, youth aging out of foster care, and families at risk of eviction. Housing is essential infrastructure, and every Floridian deserves safe, stable, affordable homes.

**What is your long-term plan for public education, specifically concerning teacher retention, curriculum changes, and the role of parental rights laws? ¿Cuál es su plan a largo plazo para la educación pública, específicamente en relación con la retención de maestros, cambios en el currículo y el papel de las leyes de derechos de los padres?**

Florida needs a ten-year renaissance in public education; a long-term plan to strengthen public education by supporting teachers, improving curriculum, and keeping parents engaged as partners. The teacher shortage stems from years of low pay, rising living costs, burnout, and policies that have left educators feeling undervalued. I would prioritize higher salaries, housing assistance, loan forgiveness, and stronger mentorship and professional development to improve recruitment and retention. We must also improve school climate by reducing unnecessary bureaucracy and expanding mental health and behavioral supports. Curriculum should be high-quality, evidence-based, and focused on literacy, math, science, civics, financial literacy, CTE, and media literacy, free from partisan interference. Parents deserve transparency and meaningful involvement, and parental rights laws should encourage collaboration rather than conflict. We must value educators and support Florida families.

**Polls indicate the public is more concerned about the cost of property insurance than property taxes. What is your view and why? Las encuestas indican que el público está más preocupado por el costo del seguro de propiedad que por los impuestos a la propiedad. ¿Cuál es su opinión y por qué?**

Floridians are right to be more concerned about property insurance than property taxes because insurance costs have become one of the biggest threats to housing affordability. Premiums—not taxes—are now the primary driver of rising housing costs, affecting renters, homeowners, retirees, and condo owners. Stabilizing the insurance market must be a top priority. I support exploring a state catastrophic fund to remove natural-disaster risk from the private market, lower premiums, and create long-term price stability, while ensuring the system is actuarially sound and transparent. I also support no-interest state-backed loans to help condo owners cover required structural repairs that many—especially seniors—cannot afford. Florida must invest in resilience programs, strengthen homes against storms, and increase industry accountability so rate hikes are justified. Insurance affordability and housing affordability are inseparable, and restoring stability must be a core priority.



**Dotie Joseph**

**Party:** Democratic

**Education:** Yale University (Connecticut), Georgetown University Law Center (Washington, DC), Institute for International Mediation and Conflict Resolution (The Netherlands)

**Hometown:** Miami

**County:** Miami-Dade

**Campaign Website:** [dotiejoseph.com](http://dotiejoseph.com)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/DotieJoseph](https://www.facebook.com/DotieJoseph)

**Instagram:** @DotieJoseph

**Campaign Phone:** 3108631818

**Campaign Mailing Address:** 18117 Biscayne Blvd Suite 1227 Miami FL 33160

**Why are you running for this elected position? What are the two most compelling issues on which, if elected, you feel you can make a difference? ¿Por qué se postula para este cargo electo? ¿Cuáles son los dos temas más importantes en los que, si es electo/a, cree que puede hacer una diferencia para nuestro estado?**

I'm running for the people. We are tired. We're working hard and still not able to make ends meet. Across the state, some are deciding between paying for healthcare, food, or housing. We're tired of the culture wars at home and foreign wars abroad. It's time to focus on us—our real needs right here in Florida. My top 2 issues are making Florida affordable (reduce costs for housing, healthcare, medicine, gas, and groceries) and protecting our rights & what's left of our democracy. As a civil rights and government attorney, I have devoted my career to helping people. I see where government works, and where it does not. It's time we make government work for, rather than against, people. I want to keep us all healthy, prosperous, and safe. As a State Representative, I've worked with both parties to deliver real results. We need leadership that understands immigrants are not the enemy, seniors are not a "burden," climate change is real, and our democracy is worth preserving.

**What actions can be taken to protect Florida's environment, water quality and coastlines from pollution, overdevelopment and climate change? ¿Qué acciones pueden tomarse para proteger el medio ambiente de Florida, la calidad del agua y las costas frente a la contaminación, el desarrollo excesivo y el cambio climático?**

Florida's future is inextricably tied to our natural resources, and I've championed these issues in the Legislature (PFAS monitoring, data center transparency, renewable energy goals, water management system evaluation to improve flood protection and long-term resiliency, carbon farming tax credit). Our beaches, springs, and waterways power tourism, fishing, agriculture, and property values. We can enforce clean water standards and hold polluters accountable for the nutrient runoff feeding toxic blue-green algae and red tide; continue Everglades and springs restoration; disincentivize overdevelopment of wetlands and aquifer recharge areas that absorb floodwaters; and invest in climate-resilient infrastructure (which along with clean energy, lowers utility bills—e.g. studies show every dollar invested in mitigation saves roughly six in disaster recovery, and resilient communities pay lower insurance premiums). In addition, I'd partner with Native tribes on environmental stewardship.

**Equitable and affordable access to healthcare is declining, in part due to the decrease of federal insurance subsidies. At the same time, more Medicaid costs are being pushed onto the states. How should the state address these issues? El acceso equitativo y asequible a la atención médica está disminuyendo, en parte debido a la reducción de los subsidios federales de seguros. Al mismo tiempo, más costos de Medicaid se están trasladando a los estados. ¿Cómo debería el estado abordar estos problemas?**

Florida is one of 10 states refusing to expand Medicaid. Expansion would cover approximately 1 million uninsured Floridians, bring in \$14.3 billion in federal funds over 5 years, and reduce \$2.6 billion in annual uncompensated care driving up everyone's premiums. With federal subsidy cuts projected to leave 1.5 million Floridians uninsured, and the fallout from the Big Beautiful Bill contributing to rural hospital closures, expansion is fiscally urgent. I've repeatedly filed legislation to expand Medicaid, and also filed the Healthy Florida Act to provide universal coverage for all. I successfully fought to lower insulin costs, expand postpartum Medicaid coverage from 30 days to one year, and allocate millions to address healthcare disparities. As Governor, I'll pair coverage expansion with cost reform, drug price transparency, community health centers, and tackling provider shortages, so care is affordable and accessible in all 67 counties.

**The Florida Cabinet, acting as the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund, manages over 12 million acres of public lands. What is your philosophy on conservation, acquisition, and protection of natural resources, including Florida Forever projects, state parks, and coastal areas? El Gabinete de Florida, actuando como Junta de Fideicomisarios del Internal Improvement Trust Fund, administra más de 12 millones de acres de tierras públicas. ¿Cuál es su filosofía sobre la conservación, adquisición y protección de los recursos naturales, incluyendo proyectos de Florida Forever, parques estatales y zonas costeras?**

My philosophy on conservation is a mutually beneficial symbiosis between human economic activity and the natural environment—maintaining biodiversity and ensuring natural resources are managed sustainably. Public lands are a public trust—not a real estate portfolio to be auctioned off to the highest campaign donor. In 2024, a scheme to build golf courses and hotels inside our award-winning state parks had to be abandoned after bipartisan outrage. As Governor, I'd propose a budget that fully and consistently funds Florida Forever; completes the Florida Wildlife Corridor; and prioritizes acquiring springs, coastal buffers, and aquifer recharge lands. I'll scrutinize land swaps and "surplus" proposals that quietly hand conservation land to developers. Our coasts deserve special protection, they are hurricane buffers, tourism engines, and home to the fisheries and reefs our economy depends on. We must plant and protect trees under whose shade we know we may never sit.

**Insufficient housing is hurting Florida families and limiting Florida's economy. What state measures do you support to address affordable housing and reduce homelessness? La falta de vivienda está afectando a las familias de Florida y limitando la economía del estado. ¿Qué medidas estatales apoya para abordar la vivienda asequible y reducir la falta de hogar?**

First, I'd implement the Real Affordable Housing Relief Act HB 1493, which I filed to limit corporate ownership of single-family homes, authorize community land banks to convert distressed properties to long-term affordable housing, prohibit algorithm-driven rent pricing, enable challenges to excessive insurance rate increases, and repay any diverted housing trust funds. Second, restore local flexibility, cut permitting delays, and help low-income seniors and families with down payments and property taxes. Third, I'd veto raids on the Sadowski affordable housing trust funds. The Florida Housing Coalition estimates the over \$2 billion swept over the years has cost 94,000 affordable homes. On homelessness, I'd request a study on best practices in other jurisdictions that help people transition, provide mental health and substance-use treatment, and I'd veto laws that criminalize poverty. We need to find ways to make and keep Florida affordable for all.

**What is your long-term plan for public education, specifically concerning teacher retention, curriculum changes, and the role of parental rights laws? ¿Cuál es su plan a largo plazo para la educación pública, específicamente en relación con la retención de maestros, cambios en el currículo y el papel de las leyes de derechos de los padres?**

As a proud product of Miami-Dade public schools, and student of the Civil Rights movement with cases like Brown v. Board, I am keenly aware of the challenges to traditional public schools. My long-term plan starts with solving the retention crisis. Florida's average teacher pay ranks near the bottom nationally and thousands of classrooms lack a permanent teacher. I'll fight for competitive pay that reaches veteran educators (not just starting salaries), restore planning time, offer loan forgiveness, and end political attacks driving professionals out. Second, curriculum, teach honest, accurate history and get politicians out of classrooms; book bans don't educate a single child. Third, parents have always had the right to be informed, involved, and heard, and I'll protect that; but those laws shouldn't let one parent censor what every child learns. And with billions in tax dollars now flowing to vouchers, I'll demand the same accountability from every school receiving public money. **Polls indicate the public is more concerned about the cost of property insurance than property taxes. What is your view and why? Las encuestas indican que el público está más preocupado por el costo del seguro de propiedad que por los impuestos a la propiedad. ¿Cuál es su opinión y por qué?**

The public is right, and I've been fighting this fight for years. Our property insurance premiums are the highest in the nation, roughly triple the national average, and recent rate cuts haven't reached most families. Those costs go to insurance company profits and CEO bonuses. On the other hand, property taxes fund essential services like schools, police, fire, trash collection, and other local programs. We have some good insurance companies in Florida, and some bad actors that deny valid claims and shift profits to affiliates while claiming losses. As Governor, I will hold insurers accountable to pay legitimate claims, require real rate and profit transparency, and invest in resilience that reduces the underlying risk. On property taxes, I'm open to targeted relief for homesteaded, low-income owners like seniors, veterans, and young people.



**Arthur Joseph McCaffrey**

**Party:** Republican

**Age:** 59

**Education:** Architectural Engineering

**Hometown:** Venice, FL

**County:** Sarasota County

**Campaign Website:** [www.do-not-have-a-website.com](http://www.do-not-have-a-website.com)

**Facebook:** [www.do-not-have-a-website.com](http://www.do-not-have-a-website.com)

**Instagram:** Do not have an Instagram yet

**LinkedIn:** Do not have a LinkedIn yet

**Campaign Phone:** 9416500064

**Campaign Mailing Address:** 713 GROVELAND AVE VENICE FL 34285

**Why are you running for this elected position? What are the two most compelling issues on which, if elected, you feel you can make a difference? ¿Por qué se postula para este cargo electo? ¿Cuáles son los dos temas más importantes en los que, si es electo/a, cree que puede hacer una diferencia para nuestro estado?**

My initial reason for running for GOVERNOR, was to redefine what PROBABLE CAUSE means. So many people have struggled, when they did absolutely nothing wrong at all (I struggled with it too). So, I will redefine it to REQUIRE at least ONE PHYSICAL piece of EVIDENCE. If it is just words out of someone's mouth, but no Evidence, then that person CANNOT be arrested (until evidence is finally found). My 2nd reason for running for GOVERNOR, was to redefine PROPERTY TAX. I will reduce Property Taxes a little, but I will begin what is called a REPAIR FUND... which will help non-rich people to be able to repair their homes for free (from that REPAIR FUND). And that will make the whole State of Florida, look better in almost every neighborhood. A 3rd, and very important other reason, why I am running for GOVERNOR... is that EVERY SINGLE FAMILY has the TOTAL RIGHT, to raise their families in any way they want. And I will make that happen. I have over 100 other items on my list for running.

**What actions can be taken to protect Florida's environment, water quality and coastlines from pollution, overdevelopment and climate change? ¿Qué acciones pueden tomarse para proteger el medio ambiente de Florida, la calidad del agua y las costas frente a la contaminación, el desarrollo excesivo y el cambio climático?**

One of the main reasons, there are environmental issues along the coast, is that certain coast areas need SEA WALLS built. About Water quality... Florida has very good "Natural Water" from underground. Zephyrhills should be active over the Entire State. We have no way to avoid Climate Changes. All we can do, is prepare ourselves, to be protected from them. 90% of the State of Florida, does not have any major pollution issues. So, let's just pickup some trash, that someone else dropped, and throw it in the trashcan. But we will fix the 10% that has too much pollution. Overdevelopment is not really an issue. But development itself, just will end up having to comply with whatever requirements we will make for Florida.

**Equitable and affordable access to healthcare is declining, in part due to the decrease of federal insurance subsidies. At the same time, more Medicaid costs are being pushed onto the states. How should the state address these issues? El acceso equitativo y asequible a la atención médica está disminuyendo, en parte debido a la reducción de los subsidios federales de seguros. Al mismo tiempo, más costos de Medicaid se están trasladando a los estados. ¿Cómo debería el estado abordar estos problemas?**



Any kind of EMERGENCY health issues, should be 100% FREE. Just Doctor Visits, and minor health issues, shall cost an amount. This State should start a HEALTHCARE FUND, where Citizens can DONATE to that FUND, and we will see how many people care enough, to help others...Let's See.

**The Florida Cabinet, acting as the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund, manages over 12 million acres of public lands. What is your philosophy on conservation, acquisition, and protection of natural resources, including Florida Forever projects, state parks, and coastal areas? El Gabinete de Florida, actuando como Junta de Fideicomisarios del Internal Improvement Trust Fund, administra más de 12 millones de acres de tierras públicas. ¿Cuál es su filosofía sobre la conservación, adquisición y protección de los recursos naturales, incluyendo proyectos de Florida Forever, parques estatales y zonas costeras?**

Natural Lands... are just NATURAL. If they want to build a Park, etc., then that Land now will have issues to deal with. This is not any huge issue. It only becomes an issue, when they turn all of them into Parks, etc. So... how about we just let those State Lands... just be Lands. Next question...

**Insufficient housing is hurting Florida families and limiting Florida's economy. What state measures do you support to address affordable housing and reduce homelessness? La falta de vivienda está afectando a las familias de Florida y limitando la economía del estado. ¿Qué medidas estatales apoya para abordar la vivienda asequible y reducir la falta de hogar?**

First of all... most Homeless People are not normal people. And even if it was easy for them to get a place to stay... they WON'T... because they enjoy being Homeless (I have helped Homeless People for over 7 months, and I have learned A LOT about their lifestyles... some ok, some not ok). One of my BIGGEST intentions, is to fix the Economy, and have housing much less than their prices are now. Me, and the Cabinet, and State Senators and State House Representatives, will work on the ECONOMY, and also FIGURE OUT how and what to do with Homeless People.

**What is your long-term plan for public education, specifically concerning teacher retention, curriculum changes, and the role of parental rights laws? ¿Cuál es su plan a largo plazo para la educación pública, específicamente en relación con la retención de maestros, cambios en el currículo y el papel de las leyes de derechos de los padres?**

First I'll say, that if a parent is able to, and is available to do... HOMESCHOOLING... then that is the BEST schooling OPTION possible. But if they cannot, then of course, a normal "School" is the next best option. It is up to the School, to interview, and choose who will become a Teacher at their School. If the School chose the wrong Teacher, then that is the School's FAULT. And if that keeps happening, then the State should get involved. I will speak to the State Officials, about how it can become, how it used to be, many years ago.

**Polls indicate the public is more concerned about the cost of property insurance than property taxes. What is your view and why? Las encuestas indican que el público está más preocupado por el costo del seguro de propiedad que por los impuestos a la propiedad. ¿Cuál es su opinión y por qué?**

The economy will help that, as soon as it gets to be a lower economy. However, just to let you know... MINIMUM WAGE, is a PRIME factor, about the ECONOMY. Cancelling MINIMUM WAGE, will start CREATING a MUCH different ECONOMY... which may take only a YEAR or Two, for it to get where it will end up. And from that point forward, the ECONOMY will be MUCH BETTER.



**Daniel Nokovich**

**Party:** Republican

**Age:** 65

**Education:** 4 years of college, Vocational Tech School,

**Hometown:** Pensacola Florida

**County:** Escambia

**Campaign Website:** [www.nokovichforgovernor.com/](http://www.nokovichforgovernor.com/)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61589336152954](https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61589336152954)

**Instagram:** nokovichforgoverno

**Campaign Phone:** 8507047074

**Campaign Mailing Address:** P.O. Box 10736 Pensacola, FL FL 32524

**Why are you running for this elected position? What are the two most compelling issues on which, if elected, you feel you can make a difference? ¿Por qué se postula para este cargo electo? ¿Cuáles son los dos temas más importantes en los que, si es electo/a, cree que puede hacer una diferencia para nuestro estado?**

I am running for office because of a dream I had. I feel that Florida can lead our nation to a spiritual awakening. I feel that Governor DeSantis has done an exceptional job, Abraham Lincoln said; "It is the duty of nations, as well as of men, to own their dependence upon the overruling power of God, to confess their sins and transgressions in humble sorrow, yet with assured hope that genuine repentance will lead to mercy and pardon; and to recognize the sublime truth, announced in the Holy Scriptures and proven by all history, that those nations only are blessed whose God is the Lord." (1863 Prayer Proclamation) Two of the more important policies 1) Decentralize Electricity- Individual power plants, and Power company alternatives. 2) Criminalize distribution of chemicalized and poisoning of food and water supply.

**What actions can be taken to protect Florida's environment, water quality and coastlines from pollution, overdevelopment and climate change? ¿Qué acciones pueden tomarse para proteger el medio ambiente de Florida, la calidad del agua y las costas frente a la contaminación, el desarrollo excesivo y el cambio climático?**

Floridians have a history of disrupting billion dollar projects that seem like good ideas until someone starts to calculate the real environmental damage impact. The Cross Florida Barge Canal is a perfect example of this (FloridaHistoryBlog.com). As long as there are altruistic motives ruling the billion dollar monetary schemes, we have a good chance that stupid projects will not be permitted. As Governor, there is a delicate balance between, nature and demands. If nature is incapable of sustaining demographic and industrial development, then as Governor, I would have to insist on a more sophisticated workable solution. As for coastline pollution, much of Florida's pollution can be attributed to storm water run off, septic waste, and Ag fertilizers. As for overdevelopment, revitalizing existing slum areas is probably #1 solution for developers. Climate Change has evolved from the "Ice age" to "Global Warming" and now back to Seasonal climate Change. I think we're at a good Place.

**Equitable and affordable access to healthcare is declining, in part due to the decrease of federal insurance subsidies. At the same time, more Medicaid costs are being pushed onto the states. How should the state address these issues? El acceso equitativo y asequible a la atención médica está disminuyendo, en parte debido a la reducción de los subsidios federales de seguros. Al mismo tiempo, más costos de Medicaid se están trasladando a los estados. ¿Cómo debería el estado abordar estos problemas?**

I do have a great affordable Healthcare solution. First, Give an affordable option that excludes Corporate ownership of the medical industry. Secondly, dismiss the insurance industry from being the only game in town. Thirdly, eliminate big Pharma's strangle hold on every doctor and medical administration. Institute a public held, led, and supervised medical services that include all disciplines of health. Health begins in the heart, mind, soul and spirit. These affect physical health. Offering counsel to people is practical for mental, emotional, psychological, and spiritual sickness. Stress can be caused by financial lack, marital issues, financial, educational, hygienic ignorance and broken family relationships. Driving down costs while treating causes and not medicating symptoms is a very good start.

**The Florida Cabinet, acting as the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund, manages over 12 million acres of public lands. What is your philosophy on conservation, acquisition, and protection of natural resources, including Florida Forever projects, state parks, and coastal areas? El Gabinete de Florida, actuando como Junta de Fideicomisarios del Internal Improvement Trust Fund, administra más de 12 millones de acres de tierras públicas. ¿Cuál es su filosofía sobre la conservación, adquisición y protección de los recursos naturales, incluyendo proyectos de Florida Forever, parques estatales y zonas costeras?**

First of all, I don't believe that conserving land to the detriment of Florida's population is compassionate. It may seem like keeping people away from land is a good thing, until you realize that some people thrive in wide open spaces. People is Florida's greatest value and most precious resource. What we could do for this state is immeasurable, but too many people that want to manage the land, want it only for viewing because they already have million dollar vistas. What if Florida began to help it's poor by educating them and truly supporting the full health of the Floridian? None would be left behind to fend for themselves? Sometimes people need extra encouragement, it wouldn't hurt us to be a little patient with the dysfunctional amongst us. Some folks are just slower than others. I think we have to rethink conservation to prioritize the well-being of We The People of Florida.

**Insufficient housing is hurting Florida families and limiting Florida's economy. What state measures do you support to address affordable housing and reduce homelessness? La falta de vivienda está afectando a las familias de Florida y limitando la economía del estado. ¿Qué medidas estatales apoya para abordar la vivienda asequible y reducir la falta de hogar?**

Homelessness is not just a financial challenge situation. I've worked with many homeless people and have discovered that many homeless people come from broken families and destroyed relationships. I think churches could make a huge impact, but unfortunately, many are confused as to what their duty is to mankind. And so, the poor suffer from lack of interaction with people in general. Many are treated like a social blight in need of social bleach. Homeless people need attention. With a little goodness and charity, some might find their way back to a joyful functionality. I am also aware that some individuals, (and I have been burned by several) live with no sense of responsibility, in effect, sabotage their own well-being for temporary self-gratification, leaving the right path for a choice littered with destruction. A choice they are free to make, never-the-less, a heartbreaking choice.

**What is your long-term plan for public education, specifically concerning teacher retention, curriculum changes, and the role of parental rights laws? ¿Cuál es su plan a largo plazo para la educación pública, específicamente en relación con la retención de maestros, cambios en el currículo y el papel de las leyes de derechos de los padres?**

Public education needs evaluation and scientific efficacy. Evaluation because of societal impact. Scientific efficacy because what elevates humanity to dignity should be implemented, not degradation. Teachers have a very tough job to do. Most are employed in the unmitigated issues of discipline. Parents should be required to attend training courses focused on basics of family order and responsibility. Teacher retention is a problem, if we fix the problem of discipline we can eliminate 90% of teacher loss. God told Adam and Eve not to eat from the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. It is my belief that curriculum that introduces societal destructive knowledge, is a degradation of humanity and underdeveloped children are incapable of discerning poisonous knowledge from constructive, nutritious information. Parental rights laws are essential to the foundations of any sane and stable society which must be honored and retained.

**Polls indicate the public is more concerned about the cost of property insurance than property taxes. What is your view and why? Las encuestas indican que el público está más preocupado por el costo del seguro de propiedad que por los impuestos a la propiedad. ¿Cuál es su opinión y por qué?**

Most property insurance is required when a home is owned by the bank. Property taxes are historically lower than insurance premiums. Therefore, it comes down to the bottom line of budgetary fiscal prudence. But if the residents of Florida could form their own insurance companies, all of the money would stay in Florida and there would be an equalization of insurance assurance. If properties could be categorized into several associations based upon property values then, each group could lend as well as invest like a corporation and grow their insurance money until the lump sum can withstand any insurance

need. Property can increase just because of savings on insurance. The same can be done for property taxes. The People would have the control and not surrogates.



## **Kenneth Stephann Norman**

**Party:** Democratic

**Age:** 31

**Education:** AIU Online Bachelor's Degree Magna Cum Laude

**Hometown:** Tampa

**County:** Hillsborough

**Campaign Website:** [www.sn4flgovernor.org/](http://www.sn4flgovernor.org/)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61589848297280](https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61589848297280)

**Campaign Twitter Handle:** [x.com/Stephann4Gov](https://twitter.com/Stephann4Gov)

**Instagram:** <https://www.instagram.com/stephann4governor26>

**Campaign Phone:** 8132202215

**Campaign Mailing Address:** 2541 N Dale Mabry Hwy Suite #190 Tampa FL 33607

**Why are you running for this elected position? What are the two most compelling issues on which, if elected, you feel you can make a difference? ¿Por qué se postula para este cargo electo? ¿Cuáles son los dos temas más importantes en los que, si es electo/a, cree que puede hacer una diferencia para nuestro estado?**

I am running for Governor because after prayer of how to impact Florida positively and looking for someone else to believe in and vote for, God spoke to me and said "Look in the mirror, YOU can be the CHANGE YOU want to see in Florida and in life". One of the most important issues that I know I will make a positive impact on is a rent reduction. The second important issue is to expand Florida healthcare, along with revitalizing education.

**What actions can be taken to protect Florida's environment, water quality and coastlines from pollution, overdevelopment and climate change? ¿Qué acciones pueden tomarse para proteger el medio ambiente de Florida, la calidad del agua y las costas frente a la contaminación, el desarrollo excesivo y el cambio climático?**

First and foremost, we have to get rid of the Republican stronghold in Florida. The Republicans in Florida moving in lockstep with the Trump Administration have decimated Florida's environment. One idea to protect Florida's environment is to address climate change at its source, greedy corporations. We can then start to clean up the environment and allow the environment time to recover by replenishing it and cease overdevelopment.

**Equitable and affordable access to healthcare is declining, in part due to the decrease of federal insurance subsidies. At the same time, more Medicaid costs are being pushed onto the states. How should the state address these issues? El acceso equitativo y asequible a la atención médica está disminuyendo, en parte debido a la reducción de los subsidios federales de seguros. Al mismo tiempo, más costos de Medicaid se están trasladando a los estados. ¿Cómo debería el estado abordar estos problemas?**

Given the fact that Donald Trump and the Republicans have been constantly challenging the Affordable Care Act, the citizens of America seem to be the victims of a selfish attempt at trying to get rid of a cornerstone in the American healthcare system while offering no replacement. To address these concerns, Florida will have to become self-sufficient and prioritize its citizens to ensure the State picks up where the Federal insurance drops off. This certainly includes an expansion of Florida Medicaid for everyone including children, seniors, and veterans.

**The Florida Cabinet, acting as the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund, manages over 12 million acres of public lands. What is your philosophy on conservation, acquisition, and protection of natural resources, including Florida Forever projects, state parks, and coastal areas? El Gabinete de Florida, actuando como Junta de Fideicomisarios del Internal Improvement Trust Fund, administra más de 12 millones de acres de tierras públicas. ¿Cuál es su filosofía sobre la conservación, adquisición y protección de los recursos naturales, incluyendo proyectos de Florida Forever, parques estatales y zonas costeras?**

My philosophy is to keep it simple: protect the environment and ecosystem of Florida by reversing current DeSantis lawlessness and providing an open dialogue for communities to communicate their specific need within their specific region. I will also make sure that environmental projects have the funding necessary and give the municipalities the power to protect and preserve their own lands. I will also replace all the Boards of Governors as they have been willing participants in the destruction of Florida's environment.

**Insufficient housing is hurting Florida families and limiting Florida's economy. What state measures do you support to address affordable housing and reduce homelessness? La falta de vivienda está afectando a las familias de Florida y limitando la economía del estado. ¿Qué medidas estatales apoya para abordar la vivienda asequible y reducir la falta de hogar?**

First and foremost, reduce the rent in Florida. Florida has become one of the worst states to rent in the nation because of the DeSantis administration allowing corporations to price gouge their tenants and allowing rent prices to skyrocket, via the passing of the Live Local Act (Senate Bill 102). Reducing homelessness starts with lowering the rent so housing can be attainable to everyday hard-working Floridians and not just the wealthy.

**What is your long-term plan for public education, specifically concerning teacher retention, curriculum changes, and the role of parental rights laws? ¿Cuál es su plan a largo plazo para la educación pública, específicamente en relación con la retención de maestros, cambios en el currículo y el papel de las leyes de derechos de los padres?**

First things first, Florida needs to significantly raise the pay of our educators and honor the sacrifice that they willingly give in order to supply our future generation with quality education. Education is a gateway to opportunity, and a window to imagination. Our children deserve the truth when it comes to their education and the history of this country including the struggles of Black people in this country. Curriculum changes are necessary. Parents have always had a say in their child's education, as education starts at home.

**Polls indicate the public is more concerned about the cost of property insurance than property taxes. What is your view and why? Las encuestas indican que el público está más preocupado por el costo del seguro de propiedad que por los impuestos a la propiedad. ¿Cuál es su opinión y por qué?**

I believe both are equally important. Property insurance concerns the maintenance of a home, while property taxes supports the outside of the home, the neighborhood schools, parks, libraries, the neighborhood itself. It should not go unnoticed that instead of trying to solve the property insurance crisis in Florida, DeSantis CHOSE to haphazardly address property taxes. Therefore, by placing the measure on the ballot allowing for Floridians to essentially bring destruction to their very doorstep through deception. The property insurance issue is plagued by insurance companies hiking rates/prices for the sake of "competition" then if God forbids something happens, allowing them to not cover the insured's claims. These things will change under the Norman Administration.



## Paul Renner

**Party:** Republican

**Campaign Website:** [voterenner.com/](http://voterenner.com/)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/RepPaulRenner](https://www.facebook.com/RepPaulRenner)

**Why are you running for this elected position? What are the two most compelling issues on which, if elected, you feel you can make a difference? ¿Por qué se postula para este cargo electo? ¿Cuáles son los dos temas más importantes en los que, si es electo/a, cree que puede hacer una diferencia para nuestro estado?**

- candidate declined to respond -

**What actions can be taken to protect Florida's environment, water quality and coastlines from pollution, overdevelopment and climate change? ¿Qué acciones pueden tomarse para proteger el medio ambiente de Florida, la calidad del agua y las costas frente a la contaminación, el desarrollo excesivo y el cambio climático?**

- candidate declined to respond -

**Equitable and affordable access to healthcare is declining, in part due to the decrease of federal insurance subsidies. At the same time, more Medicaid costs are being pushed onto the states. How should the state address these issues? El acceso equitativo y asequible a la atención médica está disminuyendo, en parte debido a la reducción de los subsidios federales de seguros. Al mismo tiempo, más costos de Medicaid se están trasladando a los estados. ¿Cómo debería el estado abordar estos problemas?**

- candidate declined to respond -

**The Florida Cabinet, acting as the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund, manages over 12 million acres of public lands. What is your philosophy on conservation, acquisition, and protection of natural resources, including Florida Forever projects, state parks, and coastal areas? El Gabinete de Florida, actuando como Junta de Fideicomisarios del Internal Improvement Trust Fund, administra más de 12 millones de acres de tierras públicas. ¿Cuál es su filosofía sobre la conservación, adquisición y protección de los recursos naturales, incluyendo proyectos de Florida Forever, parques estatales y zonas costeras?**

- candidate declined to respond -

**Insufficient housing is hurting Florida families and limiting Florida's economy. What state measures do you support to address affordable housing and reduce homelessness? La falta de vivienda está afectando a las familias de Florida y limitando la economía del estado. ¿Qué medidas estatales apoya para abordar la vivienda asequible y reducir la falta de hogar?**

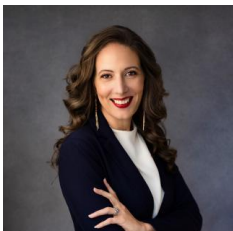
- candidate declined to respond -

**What is your long-term plan for public education, specifically concerning teacher retention, curriculum changes, and the role of parental rights laws? ¿Cuál es su plan a largo plazo para la educación pública, específicamente en relación con la retención de maestros, cambios en el currículo y el papel de las leyes de derechos de los padres?**

- candidate declined to respond -

**Polls indicate the public is more concerned about the cost of property insurance than property taxes. What is your view and why? Las encuestas indican que el público está más preocupado por el costo del seguro de propiedad que por los impuestos a la propiedad. ¿Cuál es su opinión y por qué?**

- candidate declined to respond -



## Rachel Rodriguez

**Party:** Republican

**Age:** 46

**Education:** Juris Doctor - Rutgers U, Camden; B.A. Wheaton College

**Hometown:** Tucker, GA



**County:** West Palm Beach, FL

**Campaign Website:** rachelforgov.com/

**Facebook:** www.facebook.com/rachelforgov/

**Campaign Twitter Handle:** rachelforgov

**Instagram:** https://www.instagram.com/rachelforgov/

**LinkedIn:** https://www.linkedin.com/in/rachelltrodriguez/

**Campaign Phone:** 561-323-1441

**Campaign Mailing Address:** 515 N FLAGLER DR STE 350 WEST PALM BEACH FL 33401

**Why are you running for this elected position? What are the two most compelling issues on which, if elected, you feel you can make a difference? ¿Por qué se postula para este cargo electo? ¿Cuáles son los dos temas más importantes en los que, si es electo/a, cree que puede hacer una diferencia para nuestro estado?**

In the last several years, I fought to protect individual civil rights in Florida and across the country, and learned that our court system has reached a breaking point, refusing to protect rights. So, when I was asked to run for governor, I prayed about it and ultimately decided I could better serve Florida families, residents, and businesses in public office than privately in the courts. In Florida, protecting our children is of paramount importance, as is ensuring that life is affordable and secure for our families and communities. I have been fighting to defend parental rights already and will continue to do so by reforming our Department of Children of Families and demanding transparency and accountability from our state courts. All of our financial incentives in Florida should no longer tax production, property or assets; and private companies cannot rely on government power to strip the rights of our citizens.

**What actions can be taken to protect Florida's environment, water quality and coastlines from pollution, overdevelopment and climate change? ¿Qué acciones pueden tomarse para proteger el medio ambiente de Florida, la calidad del agua y las costas frente a la contaminación, el desarrollo excesivo y el cambio climático?**

We need to update disaster infrastructure and systems in advance of any future catastrophic weather event. We should also require transparency and clear construction and operations requirements for developers on all AI data centers, and make Florida a place where AI development is decentralized and innovative, not centralized and controlled by unaccountable Surveillance State parties for purposes against Floridians' liberties. There are natural solutions to water conservation through purification and reuse as well as large-scale waste breakdown to convert trash to rich soil for agricultural use, which I currently promote with my partners through our soon-to-launch environmental technologies company. These solutions join economic development with environmental protection for Florida.

**Equitable and affordable access to healthcare is declining, in part due to the decrease of federal insurance subsidies. At the same time, more Medicaid costs are being pushed onto the states. How should the state address these issues? El acceso equitativo y asequible a la atención médica está disminuyendo, en parte debido a la reducción de los subsidios federales de seguros. Al mismo tiempo, más costos de Medicaid se están trasladando a los estados. ¿Cómo debería el estado abordar estos problemas?**

A critical baseline issue is the quality of healthcare provided - our systems largely manage illness, rather than seeking wellness. Florida's healthcare systems need to restore patient and parents' autonomy and rights and incentivize health, not perpetual cash flows for insurance shareholders and hospital administrations at the expense of Floridians' health. Medicaid costs also rise significantly because of largescale fraud in Florida - this needs to be audited and the recovered funds used for actual healthcare for Florida's families and communities in need. We can do a lot more to incentivize community-based healthcare which is holistic: caring for mental health, psychological and emotional needs, together with physical needs.

**The Florida Cabinet, acting as the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund, manages over 12 million acres of public lands. What is your philosophy on conservation, acquisition, and protection of natural resources, including Florida Forever projects, state parks, and coastal areas? El Gabinete de Florida, actuando como Junta de Fideicomisarios del Internal Improvement Trust Fund, administra más de 12 millones de acres de tierras públicas. ¿Cuál es su filosofía sobre la conservación, adquisición y protección de los recursos naturales, incluyendo proyectos de Florida Forever, parques estatales y zonas costeras?**

As a first principle, we have an obligation to steward the land and her resources given to us by God. Preservation of natural beauty and conservation research funding should be a priority for the state. State acquisition of land for this purpose is good but must not violate individual property rights at the same time - imminent domain has been abused in Florida. Any conservation project needs to be clearly outlined and held accountable on timetables and budget and perform in accordance with the goals of preserving Florida's critical ecosystems and coastline. We also need to curb negative effects of chemical residuals and pollution used in various industries and agriculture and provide natural solutions, such as using UV light for pest control, among other innovations.

**Insufficient housing is hurting Florida families and limiting Florida's economy. What state measures do you support to address affordable housing and reduce homelessness? La falta de vivienda está afectando a las familias de Florida y limitando la economía del estado. ¿Qué medidas estatales apoya para abordar la vivienda asequible y reducir la falta de hogar?**

At the state level, restrictions for foreign and large corporate investment in residential property is needed to ensure that Florida individuals and families have first priority in our state. The state can also promote homeowner insurance competition through financial incentives, and by upgrading disaster preparedness, push insurance companies to lower premiums that are rising based on that false justification. Fundamentally, beyond the issue of foreign investment, housing is a community, not a centralized state issue, and thus the state should also support localized solutions to specific housing needs. The Live Local Act has unintentionally created significant local conflict between residents who need property tax abatement and developers who get the tax breaks, rather than truly addressing affordable housing reform.

**What is your long-term plan for public education, specifically concerning teacher retention, curriculum changes, and the role of parental rights laws? ¿Cuál es su plan a largo plazo para la educación pública, específicamente en relación con la retención de maestros, cambios en el currículo y el papel de las leyes de derechos de los padres?**

Florida has a strong interest in remaining competitive and in ensuring that Floridians are well prepared for building a productive community in our state. Parental rights, including the education and upbringing of our children, are God-given, and the state does not have the authority to take those rights away nor remove parental responsibility. Thus, all education policy needs to hold parental rights and responsibilities as a priority and work with families and educators to ensure access to quality education; recruit and retain teacher talent; honor specialization in the trades and agriculture in conjunction with STEM pursuits to maximize outcomes for Florida's economy; incentivize adult learning and job training; as well as promote education of the whole student - including physical education, moral character, creative training, and academic fundamentals. Teaching is a vocation, not merely a job, and should be honored as such.

**Polls indicate the public is more concerned about the cost of property insurance than property taxes. What is your view and why? Las encuestas indican que el público está más preocupado por el costo del seguro de propiedad que por los impuestos a la propiedad. ¿Cuál es su opinión y por qué?**

I agree that insurance is for some a higher burden than tax, depending on when they purchased their home and applied homestead protections, and where they are located in the state. The state and local governments have direct control over taxation, but insurance policy includes private company rights, so the solutions are different. Florida can incentivize competition, drawing more options into the state, and in updating disaster preparedness infrastructure, remove the stated basis for many insurance premium increases. The state can also incentivize self-insurance, and community co-op solutions for homeowners. What is not addressed sufficiently is the consumptive drain of largely unaccountable HOAs all over Florida. The state can require that HOAs demonstrate periodic 75% approval vote for ongoing charter by the affected community, such that corrupted and unwanted HOA burdens are removed efficiently without violating the right to associate.



**James Walker Shaw**

**Party:** Republican

**Age:** 66

**Education:** Colgate

**Hometown:** okeechobee

**County:** Florida

**Campaign Website:** [www.votejim.us/](http://www.votejim.us/)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/people/James-W-Shaw-for-Governor/61568867360113/](https://www.facebook.com/people/James-W-Shaw-for-Governor/61568867360113/)

**Campaign Twitter Handle:** [x.com/JamesShawFL](https://twitter.com/JamesShawFL)

**Instagram:** <https://www.instagram.com/jameswshawfl/>

**Campaign Phone:** 7722902848

**Campaign Mailing Address:** 2160 58th ave pmb 241 Vero Beach FL 32966

**Why are you running for this elected position? What are the two most compelling issues on which, if elected, you feel you can make a difference? ¿Por qué se postula para este cargo electo? ¿Cuáles son los dos temas más importantes en los que, si es electo/a, cree que puede hacer una diferencia para nuestro estado?**

I love Florida, and I'm tired of watching it get paved over, roughly 45,000 acres of farmland a year, gone. I have 28 grandchildren who love this state too, and I want there to be a Florida left for them. I saw a headline calling the leading opponent "the \$67 Million Man" — nothing about the people, just PAC money raised. That's not me. I'm completely self-funded, beholden to no PAC and no special interest. I report only to the people of Florida, not to the donors who write the big checks. Economic Freedom / Lower Living Costs Shaw supports business-friendly policies for agriculture, manufacturing, and tourism that create real opportunity for Florida families. Shaw will aggressively pursue lowering living costs by creating competition driven solutions such as researching promising peptide and anti-parasitic healthcare treatments. Family Security First — As a father of 8 and grandfather of 28, Shaw frames protecting food, water, and public safety as protecting Florida's families

**What actions can be taken to protect Florida's environment, water quality and coastlines from pollution, overdevelopment and climate change? ¿Qué acciones pueden tomarse para proteger el medio ambiente de Florida, la calidad del agua y las costas frente a la contaminación, el desarrollo excesivo y el cambio climático?**

Stop AI Data Centers and Overdevelopment Shaw helped lead the coalition that defeated the "Okee-One" AI data center proposed near Lake Okeechobee, persuading the DeSantis administration to withdraw state funding and support. The project would have consumed millions of gallons of water annually, strained the local power grid, discharged chemical blowdown into already-stressed waterways, and created dangerous heat islands near environmentally sensitive land. Shaw calls it part of a larger fight: Florida is losing an estimated 45,000 acres of land a year, and he wants to keep farmland as farmland while protecting clean beaches, food, and water from unchecked expansion.

**Equitable and affordable access to healthcare is declining, in part due to the decrease of federal insurance subsidies. At the same time, more Medicaid costs are being pushed onto the states. How should the state address these issues? El acceso equitativo y asequible a la atención médica está disminuyendo, en parte debido a la reducción de los subsidios federales de seguros. Al mismo tiempo, más costos de Medicaid se están trasladando a los estados. ¿Cómo debería el estado abordar estos problemas?**

As Governor, I will direct Florida's universities to research promising, lower-cost treatment options — including peptide therapies that show potential as more affordable alternatives to expensive brand-name drugs, and anti-parasitic medications being studied for broader medical use. Florida has world-class research institutions. It's time they worked for Florida families, not just for publishers and patent holders. Competition is only half the answer. The other half is prevention. My administration will make clean food, self-care, and access to essential vitamins and minerals a real part of healthcare policy — because the cheapest healthcare is the care you never need. Florida deserves a system that rewards prevention, drives competition, and puts patients back in control — not pharmaceutical middlemen.

**The Florida Cabinet, acting as the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund, manages over 12 million acres of public lands. What is your philosophy on conservation, acquisition, and protection of natural resources, including Florida Forever projects, state parks, and coastal areas? El Gabinete de Florida, actuando como Junta de Fideicomisarios del Internal Improvement Trust Fund, administra más de 12 millones de acres de tierras públicas. ¿Cuál es su filosofía sobre la conservación, adquisición y protección de los recursos naturales, incluyendo proyectos de Florida Forever, parques estatales y zonas costeras?**

- candidate declined to respond -

**Insufficient housing is hurting Florida families and limiting Florida's economy. What state measures do you support to address affordable housing and reduce homelessness? La falta de vivienda está afectando a las familias de Florida y limitando la economía del estado. ¿Qué medidas estatales apoya para abordar la vivienda asequible y reducir la falta de hogar?**

The Florida Cabinet, sitting as the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund, holds a sacred responsibility: stewarding over 12 million acres of public land on behalf of every Floridian — not developers, not out-of-state corporations, not Big Tech. I've already shown I'll fight for that principle. When Big Tech tried to push through the 'Okee-One' AI data center project in Okeechobee County, I stood with local citizens to stop it — and the locals won. That facility would have drained hundreds of millions of gallons of water a year, strained our power grid, and paved over land that belongs to Florida families, all so out-of-state tech companies could turn a profit. As Governor, I will bring that same fight to the Cabinet. Florida's public lands are not for sale, not for lease, and not for exploitation — at any cost. I will oppose overdevelopment that threatens our water supply, our wildlife, and our way of life.

**What is your long-term plan for public education, specifically concerning teacher retention, curriculum changes, and the role of parental rights laws? ¿Cuál es su plan a largo plazo para la educación pública, específicamente en relación con la retención de maestros, cambios en el currículo y el papel de las leyes de derechos de los padres?**

I will get Florida schools to refocus on fundamentals: skills, critical thinking, cursive, manners, etiquette, ethics, recess, discipline (including drum corps and marching band programs), and instilling the value of hard work. Teachers will be charged with getting back to the fundamentals of logic and critical thinking. This is one way to combat the AI jobs scissor and the push towards Universal Basic Income. The majority of my 28 grandchildren are homeschooled. Parents are at the forefront of their children's education.

**Polls indicate the public is more concerned about the cost of property insurance than property taxes. What is your view and why? Las encuestas indican que el público está más preocupado por el costo del seguro de propiedad que por los impuestos a la propiedad. ¿Cuál es su opinión y por qué?**

Florida families aren't just fighting rising prices — they're fighting a system with no real competition, where a handful of players in every major industry set the price and everyone else pays it. I will treat Florida the way it deserves to be treated: as its own economic power. With nearly 24 million people, Florida is bigger than most countries. That gives us leverage — and I will use it. As Governor, I will bring that leverage to every major cost driver hurting Florida families: healthcare and insurance, homeowners' and auto insurance, food and grocery costs, energy, and housing. I will use the full negotiating power of a 24-million-person market to demand better prices, more competition, and more options — sector by sector, industry by industry.



**Caneste Succe**

**Party:** Republican

**Campaign Website:** [succeforgovflorida.com/](http://succeforgovflorida.com/)

**Why are you running for this elected position? What are the two most compelling issues on which, if elected, you feel you can make a difference? ¿Por qué se postula para este cargo electo? ¿Cuáles son los dos temas más importantes en los que, si es electo/a, cree que puede hacer una diferencia para nuestro estado?**

- candidate declined to respond -

**What actions can be taken to protect Florida's environment, water quality and coastlines from pollution, overdevelopment and climate change? ¿Qué acciones pueden tomarse para proteger el medio ambiente de Florida, la calidad del agua y las costas frente a la contaminación, el desarrollo excesivo y el cambio climático?**

- candidate declined to respond -

**Equitable and affordable access to healthcare is declining, in part due to the decrease of federal insurance subsidies. At the same time, more Medicaid costs are being pushed onto the states. How should the state address these issues? El acceso equitativo y asequible a la atención médica está disminuyendo, en parte debido a la reducción de los subsidios federales de seguros. Al mismo tiempo, más costos de Medicaid se están trasladando a los estados. ¿Cómo debería el estado abordar estos problemas?**

- candidate declined to respond -

The Florida Cabinet, acting as the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund, manages over 12 million acres of public lands. What is your philosophy on conservation, acquisition, and protection of natural resources, including Florida Forever projects, state parks, and coastal areas? El Gabinete de Florida, actuando como Junta de Fideicomisarios del Internal Improvement Trust Fund, administra más de 12 millones de acres de tierras públicas. ¿Cuál es su filosofía sobre la conservación, adquisición y protección de los recursos naturales, incluyendo proyectos de Florida Forever, parques estatales y zonas costeras?

- candidate declined to respond -

Insufficient housing is hurting Florida families and limiting Florida's economy. What state measures do you support to address affordable housing and reduce homelessness? La falta de vivienda está afectando a las familias de Florida y limitando la economía del estado. ¿Qué medidas estatales apoya para abordar la vivienda asequible y reducir la falta de hogar?

- candidate declined to respond -

What is your long-term plan for public education, specifically concerning teacher retention, curriculum changes, and the role of parental rights laws? ¿Cuál es su plan a largo plazo para la educación pública, específicamente en relación con la retención de maestros, cambios en el currículo y el papel de las leyes de derechos de los padres?

- candidate declined to respond -

Polls indicate the public is more concerned about the cost of property insurance than property taxes. What is your view and why? Las encuestas indican que el público está más preocupado por el costo del seguro de propiedad que por los impuestos a la propiedad. ¿Cuál es su opinión y por qué?

- candidate declined to respond -



## Bobby Williams

**Party:** Republican

**Age:** 47

**Education:** High school diploma

**Hometown:** Winter haven

**County:** Polk

**Campaign Website:** bwflgov.com/

**Facebook:** www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61573053591067

**Campaign Phone:** 863-247-3257

**Campaign Mailing Address:** Po box 82 Eagle lake FL 33839

Why are you running for this elected position? What are the two most compelling issues on which, if elected, you feel you can make a difference? ¿Por qué se postula para este cargo electo? ¿Cuáles son los dos temas más importantes en los que, si es electo/a, cree que puede hacer una diferencia para nuestro estado?

God told me to run. Biggest issue with Florida overdevelopment. We have to stop rezoning the state. Florida is full.

Affordability, the governor appoints boards who oversees increases across the board. All these boards need to be replaced.

What actions can be taken to protect Florida's environment, water quality and coastlines from pollution, overdevelopment and climate change? ¿Qué acciones pueden tomarse para proteger el medio ambiente de Florida, la calidad del agua y las costas frente a la contaminación, el desarrollo excesivo y el cambio climático?

Stop FWC from spraying. Start making fines that hurt on these big corporations that are polluting our waters.

Equitable and affordable access to healthcare is declining, in part due to the decrease of federal insurance subsidies. At the same time, more Medicaid costs are being pushed onto the states. How should the state address these issues? El acceso equitativo y asequible a la atención médica está disminuyendo, en parte debido a la reducción de los subsidios federales de seguros. Al mismo tiempo, más costos de Medicaid se están trasladando a los estados. ¿Cómo debería el estado abordar estos problemas?

By getting corruption, waste and fraud out of these programs. Start making people accountable. Start arresting people.

The Florida Cabinet, acting as the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund, manages over 12 million acres of public lands. What is your philosophy on conservation, acquisition, and protection of natural resources, including Florida Forever projects, state parks, and coastal areas? El Gabinete de Florida, actuando como Junta de Fideicomisarios del Internal Improvement Trust Fund, administra más de 12 millones de acres de tierras públicas. ¿Cuál es su filosofía sobre la conservación, adquisición y protección de los recursos naturales, incluyendo proyectos de Florida Forever, parques estatales y zonas costeras?

We need more conservation, more access to the outdoors and keep Florida, Florida

Insufficient housing is hurting Florida families and limiting Florida's economy. What state measures do you support to address affordable housing and reduce homelessness? La falta de vivienda está afectando a las familias de Florida y limitando la economía del estado. ¿Qué medidas estatales apoya para abordar la vivienda asequible y reducir la falta de hogar?

Stop big corporations from buying up developments and creating false real estate markets and false rental markets. Create campgrounds for homeless and allow faith based non profits to run them and have it to where they have wrap around services.



**What is your long-term plan for public education, specifically concerning teacher retention, curriculum changes, and the role of parental rights laws? ¿Cuál es su plan a largo plazo para la educación pública, específicamente en relación con la retención de maestros, cambios en el currículo y el papel de las leyes de derechos de los padres?**  
We got to revamp our whole education system, get testing out of schools. Get God and discipline back into schools. Teach life skills and trades first these students to have a future after graduating.

**Polls indicate the public is more concerned about the cost of property insurance than property taxes. What is your view and why? Las encuestas indican que el público está más preocupado por el costo del seguro de propiedad que por los impuestos a la propiedad. ¿Cuál es su opinión y por qué?**

Both keep increasing without any value to the taxpayer. Taxpayers have no say so in these issues. The governor appoints boards for insurance regulations and they keep getting the increases they ask for. Instead of being told NO. Property tax keeps going up but our services or value of services does not increase. Enough is Enough

## Chief Financial Officer

The CFO is responsible for overseeing the state's finances: paying bills, collecting taxes, monitoring investments, and auditing state agencies. Also serves as the State Fire Marshal and oversees the insurance, banking, and funeral industries. Is one of three elected members of the Governor's Cabinet. Serves 4-year term with a limit of 2 consecutive terms. The 2026 salary was \$139,988.



**Frank William Collige**

**Party:** Republican

**Age:** 45

**Education:** Doctorate in Business Administration

**Hometown:** Glen St Mary

**County:** Baker

**Campaign Website:** [www.frankforchange.com/](http://www.frankforchange.com/)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61569942080716](https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61569942080716)

**Campaign Phone:** 9045440043

**Campaign Mailing Address:** 7849 Aunt Mary Harvey Rd Glen St Mary FL 32040

**Why are you running for this elected position? What are the two most compelling issues on which, if elected, you feel you can make a difference? ¿Por qué se postula para este cargo electo? ¿Cuáles son los dos temas más importantes en los que, si es electo/a, cree que puede marcar una diferencia?**

I am running for Florida Chief Financial Officer because Floridians deserve transparency, accountability, and a government that works for the people, not political insiders. As a veteran, former state investigator, small business owner, and insurance professional, I have firsthand experience identifying problems and implementing solutions. The first issue is insurance affordability and accountability. Floridians continue to face rising premiums with little explanation or relief. I will fight for greater transparency, independent audits, and consumer-focused reforms that hold insurers and government accountable. The second issue is government transparency and fiscal oversight. Taxpayers deserve to know how their money is being spent. I will make financial information more accessible, strengthen fraud detection efforts, and reduce waste and duplication across state government.

**What do you think should be done to stabilize the housing and business insurance markets against major environmental disasters, such as hurricanes, floods and fires? ¿Qué cree que debería hacerse para estabilizar los mercados de seguros de vivienda y negocios frente a grandes desastres ambientales, como huracanes, inundaciones e incendios?**

Florida cannot insure its way out of environmental risk, but we can build a more stable and transparent insurance market. We need stronger mitigation efforts by incentivizing homeowners and businesses to harden their properties through grants and premium discounts for roofs, windows, flood protection, and other resiliency improvements. We must also increase transparency and accountability. Insurance companies seeking rate increases should justify them with independent forensic audits, so Floridians know exactly why costs are rising. Citizens Property Insurance should remain a true insurer of last resort while maintaining financial stability. Finally, we must reduce unnecessary bureaucracy, improve fraud detection, and promote responsible long-term planning that balances consumer protection with a healthy insurance marketplace. Floridians deserve an insurance system that is affordable, sustainable, and prepared before disasters strike, not one that reacts after the fact.

**What do you believe is driving Florida's property insurance crisis? What do you plan to do as the CFO to remedy the situation? ¿Qué cree que está impulsando la crisis del seguro de propiedad en Florida? De ser electo para este cargo, ¿qué planea hacer para remediar la situación?**

Florida's property insurance crisis is being driven by four things: storm risk, reinsurance costs, past insurer insolvencies, and a system that lacks real transparency. But the biggest problem is that Floridians keep being told reforms are working while their premiums keep going up and their rights keep shrinking. As CFO, I will demand proof. Any company requesting a rate increase should have to justify it with an audit of losses, expenses, reserves, reinsurance costs, executive compensation, affiliate payments, and claim handling practices. I will push to make those financials public so consumers can see why they

are paying more. I will strengthen fraud investigations, fight to restore fair consumer protections, and use the Cabinet, DFS, and legislative process to force accountability into Florida's insurance market.

**What do you believe should be the investment priorities for the State of Florida? How do you balance these priorities against social issues that may be used to influence financial decisions? ¿Cuáles cree que deberían ser las prioridades de inversión para el Estado de Florida? ¿Cómo equilibra estas prioridades frente a temas sociales que podrían influir en las decisiones financieras?**

Florida's investment priority should be simple: protect taxpayer money, preserve liquidity, and earn a responsible return without gambling with public funds. The state should focus on safety, transparency, long-term stability, and investments that serve Floridians, including infrastructure, disaster readiness, pension security, and economic resilience. Financial decisions should not be driven by political trends, social pressure, or corporate activism from either side. The CFO's job is fiduciary, not ideological. Every investment decision should be judged by risk, return, legality, transparency, and benefit to Florida taxpayers. Social issues should never override the duty to protect public money. Accountability must come first.

**What are the most significant changes or risks you see on the horizon for Florida's economy? ¿Cuáles son los cambios o riesgos más significativos que prevé para la economía de Florida?**

Florida's biggest economic risks are housing affordability, rising insurance costs, rapid population growth, strained infrastructure, and the protection of our water resources. We must also prepare for increasing energy demands from emerging technologies without overburdening taxpayers or depleting natural resources. Ignoring these issues could make Florida unaffordable for families, workers, retirees, and small businesses. Growth matters, but it needs to be sustainable. As CFO, I will advocate for fiscal discipline, long-term planning, and transparency so decisions are based on facts and sound financial principles. Florida's economy will remain strong only if we protect affordability, invest responsibly, and preserve the resources that make our state a great place to live and do business.

**The CFO of Florida fights financial fraud, waste, and abuse within state agencies and with state funds. Which should have the highest priority for audits – state agencies or local governments? Director(a) Financiero de Florida combate el fraude financiero, el despilfarro de fondos y el abuso dentro de las agencias estatales y con fondos estatales.**

**¿Qué debería tener mayor prioridad para auditorías: las agencias estatales o los gobiernos locales?**

Neither should automatically receive the highest priority because conducting broad audits everywhere would be costly and inefficient for taxpayers. My approach is to maximize transparency first. I will work to make state financial information publicly accessible so citizens, journalists, watchdog groups, and policymakers can review how taxpayer dollars are being spent. When financial irregularities, complaints, or questionable spending patterns are identified, we can then conduct targeted audits where they are truly needed. This approach focuses resources where they will have the greatest impact while reducing unnecessary costs. Accountability should not depend solely on government auditors. Floridians themselves should be able to follow the money and hold their elected officials accountable.

**The Florida Cabinet, acting as the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund, manages over 12 million acres of public lands. What is your philosophy on conservation, acquisition, and protection of natural resources, including Florida Forever projects, state parks, and coastal areas? El Gabinete de Florida, actuando como Junta de Fideicomisarios del Internal Improvement Trust Fund, administra más de 12 millones de acres de tierras públicas. ¿Cuál es su filosofía sobre la conservación, adquisición y protección de los recursos naturales, incluyendo proyectos de Florida Forever, parques estatales y zonas costeras?**

Florida's natural resources are one of our greatest assets and should be protected for future generations. My philosophy is conservation first, responsible stewardship second, and strategic acquisition only when there is a clear public benefit. We must protect our aquifer, springs, wetlands, state parks, and coastal areas while ensuring taxpayer dollars are spent wisely. I support Florida Forever projects that preserve environmentally sensitive lands, protect water resources, and strengthen flood resilience. Florida cannot continue to grow without limits while ignoring the strain on our infrastructure and natural resources. Every project should be evaluated for its long-term environmental and financial impact. Conservation is not an obstacle to economic growth. It is an investment in Florida's future and the quality of life that attracts families, businesses, and visitors to our state.



**Earle Ford**

**Party:** Democratic

**Age:** 40

**Education:** B.A. - University of Wyoming / J.D. - Dwayne O. Andreas School of Law

**Hometown:** Tampa

**County:** Hillsborough

**Campaign Website:** EarleforCFO.com

**Facebook:** www.facebook.com/p/Earle-Ford-for-CFO

**Campaign Twitter Handle:** earlefordfl

**Instagram:** EarleFordFL

**LinkedIn:** Earle Ford

**Campaign Phone:** 754-300-7988

**Campaign Mailing Address:** P.O. Box 124 Lutz FL 33549-5518

**Why are you running for this elected position? What are the two most compelling issues on which, if elected, you feel you can make a difference? ¿Por qué se postula para este cargo electo? ¿Cuáles son los dos temas más importantes en los que, si es electo/a, cree que puede marcar una diferencia?**

I am running for Chief Financial Officer to bring true accountability back to Florida's finances and to stand as a watchdog for working families. Serving as a U.S. Army paratrooper taught me the meaning of duty, my time as a prosecutor and an IRS lawyer auditing the ultra-wealthy has prepared me to take on powerful, entrenched interests, while also having a fundamental understanding of how government should operate. The two most compelling issues where I can make an immediate difference are reforming our broken property insurance market to protect consumers from bad-faith practices, and ruthlessly rooting out government corruption, waste, and financial fraud that preys on vulnerable Floridians.

**What do you think should be done to stabilize the housing and business insurance markets against major environmental disasters, such as hurricanes, floods and fires? ¿Qué cree que debería hacerse para estabilizar los mercados de seguros de vivienda y negocios frente a grandes desastres ambientales, como huracanes, inundaciones e incendios?**

Florida requires proactive, pragmatic resilience. To stabilize the market against environmental disasters, we must enforce stricter building codes and invest heavily in infrastructure resilience—particularly coastal and flood mitigation—to reduce the underlying risk. Stabilization means demanding transparent, risk-based modeling from insurers. This also means robust enforcement of third - party contractors and maximizing transparency in all situations to protect all parties involved. We cannot permit companies to blindly shift the costs of environmental risks to everyday Floridians while evading their own financial obligations when a disaster occurs.

**What do you believe is driving Florida's property insurance crisis? What do you plan to do as the CFO to remedy the situation? ¿Qué cree que está impulsando la crisis del seguro de propiedad en Florida? De ser electo para este cargo, ¿qué planea hacer para remediar la situación?**

This crisis is driven by a lack of strict regulatory oversight, unchecked corporate greed, lack of aggressive enforcement of third parties, and the escalating severity of natural disasters. Too many insurers are prioritizing profits over policyholders, resulting in exorbitant rate hikes and bad-faith claim denials. However, this is not only the insurers; my job as CFO is also to ensure consumers and contractors are operating transparently and ethically to ensure companies are protected as well. As CFO, I will prioritize consumer protection. I plan to launch aggressive audits of insurance companies, contractors, abusive litigation, investigate unjustifiable rate hikes, and ensure that providers operating in Florida actually fulfill their legal obligations to policyholders. If a company denies legitimate claims to line its pockets, the company will face accountability.

**What do you believe should be the investment priorities for the State of Florida? How do you balance these priorities against social issues that may be used to influence financial decisions? ¿Cuáles cree que deberían ser las prioridades de inversión para el Estado de Florida? ¿Cómo equilibra estas prioridades frente a temas sociales que podrían influir en las decisiones financieras?**

Florida must base its investment priorities entirely on fiscal responsibility, long-term stability, and securing the financial future of our communities, which includes robust, reliable pension management. Our investments should focus on infrastructure, education, and resilience projects that yield tangible economic returns. Fiduciary duty and objective data, not partisan gridlock, must guide financial decisions. The financial health of the state and protecting taxpayers must always take precedence over using public funds to wage political or social battles.

**What are the most significant changes or risks you see on the horizon for Florida's economy? ¿Cuáles son los cambios o riesgos más significativos que prevé para la economía de Florida?**

The greatest immediate risk to Florida's economy is the potential collapse of the property insurance market coupled with the economic fallout from severe environmental events. Families and businesses being priced out of insuring their properties will stifle real estate growth and cripple local economies. Additionally, lack of transparency and unchecked financial fraud threaten to drain the public resources we desperately need to build a sustainable, resilient economy for the future.

**The CFO of Florida fights financial fraud, waste, and abuse within state agencies and with state funds. Which should have the highest priority for audits – state agencies or local governments? Director(a) Financiero de Florida combate el fraude financiero, el despilfarro de fondos y el abuso dentro de las agencias estatales y con fondos estatales.**

**¿Qué debería tener mayor prioridad para auditorías: las agencias estatales o los gobiernos locales?**

While both require stringent oversight, auditing state agencies must be the highest priority. State agencies manage the vast majority of taxpayer funds and set the fiscal standard for the entire state. Accountability has to start at the top. By ensuring that state funds are completely free from fraud, waste, and abuse, we establish the blueprint, precedent, and resources necessary to hold local municipalities to the same standard. I will, however, note that it is important to respect the authority of local governments. They understand their communities better than anyone in Tallahassee, and they are also easier for their residents to hold accountable. Florida is a very large state, and cities need the flexibility and have the expertise to understand their particular situation.

**The Florida Cabinet, acting as the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund, manages over 12 million acres of public lands. What is your philosophy on conservation, acquisition, and protection of natural resources, including Florida Forever projects, state parks, and coastal areas? El Gabinete de Florida, actuando como Junta de Fideicomisarios del Internal Improvement Trust Fund, administra más de 12 millones de acres de tierras públicas. ¿Cuál es su filosofía sobre la conservación, adquisición y protección de los recursos naturales, incluyendo proyectos de Florida Forever, parques estatales y zonas costeras?**

Florida's natural resources protect our economy and our way of life. As a father raising two sons here, I want them to inherit the same unique environment that makes this state great. My core belief is that we should act early to preserve the environment. We must fully fund and fiercely protect initiatives like the Florida Forever program, safeguarding our state parks

and coastal areas from overdevelopment. Conservation isn't just about environmental stewardship; it is a critical component of our state's infrastructure resilience against flooding and storms.



## Blaise Ingoglia

**Party:** Republican

**Campaign Website:** [blaiseforflorida.com/](http://blaiseforflorida.com/)

**Facebook:** [blaiseforflorida.com/](http://blaiseforflorida.com/)

**Why are you running for this elected position? What are the two most compelling issues on which, if elected, you feel you can make a difference? ¿Por qué se postula para este cargo electo? ¿Cuáles son los dos temas más importantes en los que, si es electo/a, cree que puede marcar una diferencia?**

- candidate declined to respond -

**What do you think should be done to stabilize the housing and business insurance markets against major environmental disasters, such as hurricanes, floods and fires? ¿Qué cree que debería hacerse para estabilizar los mercados de seguros de vivienda y negocios frente a grandes desastres ambientales, como huracanes, inundaciones e incendios?**

- candidate declined to respond -

**What do you believe is driving Florida's property insurance crisis? What do you plan to do as the CFO to remedy the situation? ¿Qué cree que está impulsando la crisis del seguro de propiedad en Florida? De ser electo para este cargo, ¿qué planea hacer para remediar la situación?**

- candidate declined to respond -

**What do you believe should be the investment priorities for the State of Florida? How do you balance these priorities against social issues that may be used to influence financial decisions? ¿Cuáles cree que deberían ser las prioridades de inversión para el Estado de Florida? ¿Cómo equilibra estas prioridades frente a temas sociales que podrían influir en las decisiones financieras?**

- candidate declined to respond -

**What are the most significant changes or risks you see on the horizon for Florida's economy? ¿Cuáles son los cambios o riesgos más significativos que prevé para la economía de Florida?**

- candidate declined to respond -

**The CFO of Florida fights financial fraud, waste, and abuse within state agencies and with state funds. Which should have the highest priority for audits – state agencies or local governments? Director(a) Financiero de Florida combate el fraude financiero, el despilfarro de fondos y el abuso dentro de las agencias estatales y con fondos estatales. ¿Qué debería tener mayor prioridad para auditorías: las agencias estatales o los gobiernos locales?**

- candidate declined to respond -

**The Florida Cabinet, acting as the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund, manages over 12 million acres of public lands. What is your philosophy on conservation, acquisition, and protection of natural resources, including Florida Forever projects, state parks, and coastal areas? El Gabinete de Florida, actuando como Junta de Fideicomisarios del Internal Improvement Trust Fund, administra más de 12 millones de acres de tierras públicas. ¿Cuál es su filosofía sobre la conservación, adquisición y protección de los recursos naturales, incluyendo proyectos de Florida Forever, parques estatales y zonas costeras?**

- candidate declined to respond -



## Annette Taddeo

**Party:** Democratic

**Age:** 59

**Education:** University of North Alabama - Bachelor's Degree, Dartmouth Tuck School of Business - Executive Education

**Hometown:** Miami, FL

**County:** Miami-Dade

**Campaign Website:** [annettetaddeo.com/](http://annettetaddeo.com/)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/annette.taddeo/](http://www.facebook.com/annette.taddeo/)

**Campaign Twitter Handle:** [annette\\_taddeo](https://twitter.com/annette_taddeo)

**Instagram:** [@Annette\\_Taddeo](https://www.instagram.com/Annette_Taddeo)

**LinkedIn:** [www.linkedin.com/in/annettetaddeo/](http://www.linkedin.com/in/annettetaddeo/)

**Campaign Phone:**

**Campaign Mailing Address:** N/a Miami FL 33156

**Why are you running for this elected position? What are the two most compelling issues on which, if elected, you feel you can make a difference? ¿Por qué se postula para este cargo electo? ¿Cuáles son los dos temas más importantes en los que, si es electo/a, cree que puede marcar una diferencia?**



I am running for Chief Financial Officer because Florida families deserve a CFO who will fight for them. The CFO should be an independent watchdog for consumers and taxpayers – not a lapdog for the governor or anyone else. The two most compelling issues facing Floridians are affordability and anti-corruption. The CFO has direct regulatory oversight over the insurance industry, yet homeowners are being crushed by rising insurance costs while the government looks the other way. The insurance industry has more sway in the CFO's office than the voters. As CFO I will hold insurers accountable and demand transparency. And Tallahassee's culture of pay-to-play politics has eroded public trust. The cost of corruption to the Florida taxpayer is too high and getting higher. I will crack down on corruption, enforce transparency laws, audit no-bid contracts as required by law, and put Floridians – not political insiders – first.

**What do you think should be done to stabilize the housing and business insurance markets against major environmental disasters, such as hurricanes, floods and fires? ¿Qué cree que debería hacerse para estabilizar los mercados de seguros de vivienda y negocios frente a grandes desastres ambientales, como huracanes, inundaciones e incendios?**

Florida's insurance market is failing homeowners and businesses when they need it most – after a hurricane, a flood, or a fire. Insurers file for rate increases claiming losses, while funneling profits to affiliated companies hidden from regulators. Florida's own Office of Insurance Regulation commissioned a report proving it – and buried it. As CFO, I will demand full transparency and expose the affiliate arrangements insurers use to hide profits while charging Floridians the highest premiums in the nation. Stabilizing the market also requires protecting the resources Florida needs when disaster strikes. The same emergency fund that should be there for the next hurricane was drained to spend \$1.2 billion on Alligator Alcatraz – over \$1 million a day, twenty times more than most other detention facilities. No-bid contracts, no audits, no accountability. As CFO I will ensure Florida's emergency fund is protected for actual emergencies, not political stunts.

**What do you believe is driving Florida's property insurance crisis? What do you plan to do as the CFO to remedy the situation? ¿Qué cree que está impulsando la crisis del seguro de propiedad en Florida? De ser electo para este cargo, ¿qué planea hacer para remediar la situación?**

Florida's property insurance crisis has one root cause: a system rigged to protect carriers over consumers. Insurers claim losses to justify rate increases while funneling billions to their affiliated companies. Florida's own regulator commissioned a report proving it – and buried it rather than share it with lawmakers. Floridians have been paying for a lie. As a five-year member of the Florida Senate Banking and Insurance Committee, I saw firsthand how the system is failing consumers – and as CFO, I will put consumers first. I will demand full transparency in the affiliate arrangements insurers use to hide profits, strengthen oversight, aggressively enforce consumer protections, and increase competition so homeowners get the coverage they pay for. The politicians in Tallahassee who are supposed to hold insurers accountable have looked the other way. I will not.

**What do you believe should be the investment priorities for the State of Florida? How do you balance these priorities against social issues that may be used to influence financial decisions? ¿Cuáles cree que deberían ser las prioridades de inversión para el Estado de Florida? ¿Cómo equilibra estas prioridades frente a temas sociales que podrían influir en las decisiones financieras?**

Florida's investment priorities should serve one master: the long-term financial security of Florida families and taxpayers. That means investing state funds to maximize returns, protect pensions, and build fiscal resilience – not to advance any political agenda, left or right. The CFO oversees billions in state investments and has a fiduciary duty to put Floridians first. That duty is being violated when state funds are used as political weapons – like Hope Florida funds diverted from sick children to pay for political advertising. That is not fiscal management. That is corruption. I have stood up to my own party when Floridians' interests demanded it. I will apply that same independence to every investment decision – grounded in data and fiduciary responsibility. The moment we start using public funds as political leverage – in any direction – we put Florida families at risk.

**What are the most significant changes or risks you see on the horizon for Florida's economy? ¿Cuáles son los cambios o riesgos más significativos que prevé para la economía de Florida?**

Florida's economy faces three significant risks. First, the housing and affordability crisis. Florida families and workers are being priced out of the state. Businesses cannot find workers because people cannot afford to live here. As a small business owner, I have lived this firsthand. Second, corruption and the erosion of public trust. When billions flow through no-bid contracts with no audits, when Hope Florida funds meant for sick children get diverted to political ad campaigns, and when those charged with oversight look the other way – Florida families lose faith. An economy cannot thrive without trust, and right now that trust is broken. Third, one-party rule with no checks and balances. When the CFO acts as a guard dog for the governor instead of a watchdog for taxpayers, no one is asking the hard . That is how economies fail. As CFO I will be the independent check this state desperately needs.

**The CFO of Florida fights financial fraud, waste, and abuse within state agencies and with state funds. Which should have the highest priority for audits – state agencies or local governments? Director(a) Financiero de Florida combate el fraude financiero, el despilfarro de fondos y el abuso dentro de las agencias estatales y con fondos estatales.**

**¿Qué debería tener mayor prioridad para auditorías: las agencias estatales o los gobiernos locales?**

State agencies – without question. The CFO has a legal obligation to audit state agencies, and right now that obligation is not being met. The current CFO created FAFO to target Democratic-led local governments while ignoring his own legal obligations – auditing no-bid contracts and publishing all contracts on the FACTS database as required by Florida Statutes. That is pure politics. The biggest concentrations of state dollars – and the biggest opportunities for fraud, waste, and abuse – are at the state level. Billion-dollar no-bid contracts, Hope Florida funds diverted from sick children, emergency funds drained for political projects – none of that happened at the local level. It happened in Tallahassee, under this unelected CFO who would rather play politics than do his job. As CFO I will prioritize auditing state agencies first. Every audit will be professional, objective, and without partisan favoritism. Accountability means everyone – including the governor's office.

**The Florida Cabinet, acting as the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund, manages over 12 million acres of public lands. What is your philosophy on conservation, acquisition, and protection of natural resources, including Florida Forever projects, state parks, and coastal areas? El Gabinete de Florida, actuando como Junta de Fideicomisarios del Internal Improvement Trust Fund, administra más de 12 millones de acres de tierras públicas. ¿Cuál es su filosofía sobre la conservación, adquisición y protección de los recursos naturales, incluyendo proyectos de Florida Forever, parques estatales y zonas costeras?**

Florida's 12 million acres of public lands are a public trust – not a political asset. I believe in fully funding Florida Forever, protecting state parks from development pressure, and preserving our coastal areas and Everglades for future generations. As a State Senator I fought to protect Florida's springs from corporate water extraction, championed Everglades restoration funding, supported the Land Acquisition Trust Fund, and worked to ban fracking. Florida's natural environment is not just our heritage – it is the foundation of our economy, our tourism industry, and our quality of life. As a Cabinet member and Board of Trustee I will vote to protect public lands, oppose any effort to privatize or develop Florida's natural resources, and ensure that conservation decisions are made in the long-term interest of Floridians – not developers or political donors.

## Commissioner of Agriculture

The Commissioner safeguards the public through testing and inspection of food products, regulation of deceptive and unfair business practices, reduction of wildfires, promotion of environmentally safe agricultural practices, and management of public lands. The Commissioner also supervises the issuing of various state vocational licenses licenses to carry concealed weapons or concealed firearms. Is one of three members of the Governor's Cabinet. Serves 4-year term with a limit of 2 consecutive terms. The 2026 salary was \$139,988.



### Joey Mendoza Atkins

**Party:** Democratic

**Age:** 40

**Education:** B.A. Cum Laude – Major: Political Science – Minor: Criminal Justice at Florida Atlantic University; J.D at University of Toledo College of Law; Master's Degree in International Economic Development at Milano School for Policy, Management, and Environment;

**Hometown:** Jupiter

**County:** Palm Beach County, Florida.

**Campaign Website:** [www.joeyforflorida.com/](http://www.joeyforflorida.com/)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/JoeyforFlorida/](https://www.facebook.com/JoeyforFlorida/)

**Campaign Twitter Handle:** joeyforflorida

**Instagram:** <https://www.instagram.com/JoeyforFlorida>

**Campaign Phone:** 7867918426

**Campaign Mailing Address:** 21 NE 22nd Street, #904 Miami FL 33137

**Why are you running for this elected position? What are the two most compelling issues on which, if elected, you feel you can make a difference? ¿Por qué se postula para este cargo electo? ¿Cuáles son los dos temas más importantes en los que, si es electo/a, cree que puede hacer una diferencia?**

I'm running to make Florida healthy and affordable again, and to protect our natural resources from overdevelopment. Just two examples of common-sense issues that aren't covered in my other answers later on include cannabis legalization and protecting immigrant farm workers. A majority of Floridians voted to legalize cannabis in 2024, and researchers believe that legal access to cannabis could potentially alleviate the opioid addiction crisis among veterans. However current Commissioner Wilton Simpson has aggressively restricted hemp products and consistently thwarted attempts to legalize marijuana. Meanwhile, protecting immigrant farm workers would also help stabilize food costs by preventing artificial labor shortages, reducing crop spoilage, and saving farmers millions in turnover and recruitment expenses. When workers leave due to indiscriminate and extremist state government crackdowns or poor conditions, production plummets, driving up grocery prices due to scarcity.

**Florida is a top U.S. agricultural producer, producing most of the winter vegetables for the country. Yet, food insecurity, especially for children, continues to grow and will likely worsen as changes to SNAP benefits push costs to states. What legislation or programs would you support to help feed Floridians? Florida es uno de los principales productores agrícolas de Estados Unidos, produciendo la mayoría de los vegetales en la temporada de invierno del país. Sin embargo, la inseguridad alimentaria, especialmente entre los niños, continúa creciendo y probablemente empeore a medida que los cambios en los beneficios de SNAP transfieran costos a los estados. ¿Qué legislación o programas apoyaría para ayudar a alimentar a los floridianos?**

I would strengthen and expand "Farm to Food Bank" Projects: Utilizing TEFAP Farm to Food Bank Project Grants helps local growers harvest, package, and transport less-marketable or excess crops directly to local feeding programs. I'd double down on programs like Farmers Feeding Florida to subsidize operational costs for local farmers while stabilizing the food bank supply chain. I would advocate for and allocate more state budget dollars toward food bank infrastructure. Investing directly in cold-storage expansions and local distribution fleets allows contracted agencies to manage sudden influxes of USDA foods

without incurring localized deficits. I would implement stricter, more transparent pre-award audits on regional contractors to ensure that selected distribution agencies have the validated refrigeration, staff, and geographical outreach to fulfill their contracts before emergency food is bottlenecked. I would also establish cross-agency contingency plans with DCF.

**This elected office regulates gun licenses. What legislation or programs would you support to protect our youth and the public at large from gun violence? Esta oficina regula las licencias de armas. ¿Qué legislación o programas apoyaría para proteger a nuestros jóvenes y al público en general de la violencia armada?**

I would support common-sense pro 2nd Amendment state-level public safety bills such as safe storage mandates: requiring firearms in homes with minors to be secured with a trigger lock or inside a safe, and Universal Background Checks: endorsing bills that close private sale and gun show loopholes by requiring background checks for all firearm transfers.

**What measures do you propose to better manage agricultural runoff of fertilizers and other pollutants which contribute to harmful algae blooms and reduced water quality? ¿Qué medidas propone para reducir la contaminación del agua causada por fertilizantes de la agricultura y otros contaminantes que provocan la proliferación de algas dañinas y deterioran la calidad del agua?**

I would work to actually implement the consensus-based scientific recommendations for water quality improvement made by Governor DeSantis's Blue-Green Algae Task Force, including strengthening compliance and enforcement mechanisms with robust data-based water quality monitoring and explicit, measurable, science-based directives for policy change. Since the issuance of the Task Force recommendations, ecological conditions in Florida have not improved and, in many cases, they have worsened. At the same time, I'd also look to subsidize innovative waste conversion, for example proposing economic tax credits or grant incentives for livestock facilities to convert animal manure into commercial, stabilized bio-fertilizers, reducing raw waste runoff.

**The Florida Cabinet, acting as the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund, manages over 12 million acres of public lands. What is your philosophy on conservation, acquisition, and protection of natural resources, including Florida Forever projects, state parks, and coastal areas? El Gabinete de Florida, actuando como Junta de Fideicomisarios del Internal Improvement Trust Fund, administra más de 12 millones de acres de tierras públicas. ¿Cuál es su filosofía sobre la conservación, adquisición y protección de los recursos naturales, incluyendo proyectos de Florida Forever, parques estatales y zonas costeras?**

My philosophy is to fiercely protect Florida's public and rural lands and agricultural heritage from overdevelopment. Left in their natural state, our lands keep an immense amount of climate pollution out of the atmosphere. FL loses an equivalent of 10 acres of natural and working lands every hour to development, and with them, the invaluable natural goods and services they provide. I also want to stop the rapid, unregulated sprawl of hyperscale AI data centers across Florida. AI data centers drive up electricity demand and costs, and strain water supplies from the Floridan aquifer: a single large data center can consume as much electricity as a small city. Working to ensure that recently enacted legislation prohibiting utility companies from passing the costs of AI grid upgrades onto consumers is actually enforced will be critical, however, massive developments in rural areas would still continue to threaten local habitats and natural resources.

**What is the most important issue facing agriculture and forestry in Florida? How do you balance the needs of agriculture, forestry and the green industry (nurseries, landscapes) with environmental concerns? ¿Cuál es el problema más importante que enfrentan la agricultura y los bosques en Florida? ¿Cómo equilibra las necesidades de la agricultura, el manejo de los bosques y la industria verde (viveros, paisajismo) con las preocupaciones ambientales?**

The most critical issue facing Florida's agriculture and forestry sectors is rapid urban sprawl and land-use conversion. Rising land values and population growth are accelerating the loss of vital rural and green spaces to residential development, which threatens both the state's economic viability and its natural ecosystems. Florida's agriculture sector is undergoing rapid transformation due to biological shocks, environmental stressors, import competition, and accelerating urbanization. Citrus greening, laurel wilt, and hurricane-related damage have sharply reduced yields and acreage, while rising imports erode market share and depress prices. Urban development and recreational land-use expansion are accelerating land-value increases, which in turn drives farmland loss and abandonment. There is an urgent need for integrated strategies that improve resilience, strengthen land conservation, and enhance the long-term competitiveness of FL's agricultural sector.

**What are the key issues of concern for Florida consumers, and what ideas do you have to improve the Division of Consumer Services? ¿Cuáles son los principales temas de preocupación para los consumidores de Florida y qué ideas tiene para mejorar la División de Servicios al Consumidor?**

Property insurance and rent inflation, aggressive debt collection, and predatory scams are some of the key issues currently squeezing Floridians. We consistently rank fourth in the nation for per-capita debt collection complaints, and nearly 47% of state debt collection complaints cite abusive, predatory, or threatening behavior by collectors. One idea would be to launch a searchable, real-time database displaying consumer complaints by company name (similar to the federal CFPB portal) to deter deceptive local trade practices through radical transparency. Other ideas include creating a centralized "Single Digital Doorway" intake portal to instantly route complaints to the precise jurisdiction without forcing consumers to navigate bureaucratic mazes, and to transition the division's primary focus from educational brochure distribution to robust enforcement, particularly when it comes to renter's rights.



**Donald Allen Prichard**

**Party:** Democratic

**Age:** 44

**Education:** MBA - Western Governor's University/Bachelor's-American Military University

**Hometown:** Davie  
**County:** Broward  
**Campaign Phone:** 728-229-4858  
**Campaign Mailing Address:** P.O. Box 290142 Davie FL 33329

**Why are you running for this elected position? What are the two most compelling issues on which, if elected, you feel you can make a difference? ¿Por qué se postula para este cargo electo? ¿Cuáles son los dos temas más importantes en los que, si es electo/a, cree que puede hacer una diferencia?**

I'm running to make the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services the top state agency Floridians can count on to look out for their interests. I'm running to ensure our state's agriculture industry is supported and promoted domestically and internationally. And I'm running because Florida needs leadership that will always put the people ahead of politics -- period. My top priorities are: Provide innovative leadership that will ensure food safety and promote a strong and sustainable Florida agriculture industry. Strengthen the Consumer Services Division to provide aggressive protection for Florida's consumers against fraud, scams, and other illicit business activities.

**Florida is a top U.S. agricultural producer, producing most of the winter vegetables for the country. Yet, food insecurity, especially for children, continues to grow and will likely worsen as changes to SNAP benefits push costs to states. What legislation or programs would you support to help feed Floridians? Florida es uno de los principales productores agrícolas de Estados Unidos, produciendo la mayoría de los vegetales en la temporada de invierno del país. Sin embargo, la inseguridad alimentaria, especialmente entre los niños, continúa creciendo y probablemente empeore a medida que los cambios en los beneficios de SNAP transfieran costos a los estados. ¿Qué legislación o programas apoyaría para ayudar a alimentar a los floridianos?**

As your Commissioner of Agriculture, I will make expanding access to healthy, affordable food one of my highest priorities. I will fight for legislation and champion programs that encourage community gardens, strengthen farm share initiatives, and build lasting partnerships between local farmers, community organizations, schools, faith-based groups, and local governments. I am committed to working with legislators, agricultural leaders, and communities across our state to develop practical, long-term solutions that reduce food insecurity, support Florida's farmers, and ensure that every family, every child, every senior, and every veteran have reliable access to nutritious food.

**This elected office regulates gun licenses. What legislation or programs would you support to protect our youth and the public at large from gun violence? Esta oficina regula las licencias de armas. ¿Qué legislación o programas apoyaría para proteger a nuestros jóvenes y al público en general de la violencia armada?**

As your Commissioner of Agriculture, I will ensure that concealed weapons licenses are issued responsibly and in accordance with the law. I firmly support the Second Amendment and the constitutional rights of responsible, law-abiding citizens. That's why I will support legislation and policies that keep firearms out of the hands of convicted violent felons and individuals who are legally prohibited from possessing them. Strong background checks, thorough enforcement of existing laws, and accountability are essential to protecting both our constitutional freedoms and public safety. It is our responsibility to respect the rights of responsible gun owners while taking reasonable steps to prevent dangerous individuals from gaining access to firearms. As Commissioner, I will approach that responsibility with fairness, integrity, and an unwavering commitment to the safety of every Florida family.

**What measures do you propose to better manage agricultural runoff of fertilizers and other pollutants which contribute to harmful algae blooms and reduced water quality? ¿Qué medidas propone para reducir la contaminación del agua causada por fertilizantes de la agricultura y otros contaminantes que provocan la proliferación de algas dañinas y deterioran la calidad del agua?**

As Commissioner of Agriculture, I will work alongside our farmers to implement practical, science-based solutions that reduce fertilizer runoff and other pollutants that contribute to harmful algal blooms and declining water quality. Florida's farmers are among our state's greatest stewards of our land. They should not be expected to shoulder the financial burden of environmental protection alone. I will advocate for incentive-based programs, technical assistance, and cost-sharing partnerships that help producers adopt best management practices without threatening the viability of their farms. By investing in conservation, innovation, and collaboration instead of implementing unfunded mandates, we can protect our rivers, lakes, springs, and groundwater while ensuring that Florida agriculture remains strong for generations to come. I am committed to finding solutions that support our farmers, safeguard our environment, and strengthen the future of our state.

**The Florida Cabinet, acting as the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund, manages over 12 million acres of public lands. What is your philosophy on conservation, acquisition, and protection of natural resources, including Florida Forever projects, state parks, and coastal areas? El Gabinete de Florida, actuando como Junta de Fideicomisarios del Internal Improvement Trust Fund, administra más de 12 millones de acres de tierras públicas. ¿Cuál es su filosofía sobre la conservación, adquisición y protección de los recursos naturales, incluyendo proyectos de Florida Forever, parques estatales y zonas costeras?**

The preservation of Florida's land, protection of natural resources, and the safeguarding of our state parks, coastal areas, and Florida Forever projects are vital to our state's future. They are essential to our economy and our quality of life. As Commissioner and member of the Florida Cabinet, I believe we have a responsibility to protect these resources while ensuring they continue to benefit future generations. I support responsible conservation and strategic land acquisition that protects our water resources, preserves productive agriculture lands, safeguards wildlife habitats, and strengthens our environment long-term. My philosophy is simple: being a good steward of our state means leaving Florida better than we found it. I will balance conservation with responsible land management and support those who work on the land every day. We can preserve Florida's natural beauty, strengthen our economy, and ensure future generations inherit a state that is vibrant and productive.



**What is the most important issue facing agriculture and forestry in Florida? How do you balance the needs of agriculture, forestry and the green industry (nurseries, landscapes) with environmental concerns? ¿Cuál es el problema más importante que enfrentan la agricultura y los bosques en Florida? ¿Cómo equilibra las necesidades de la agricultura, el manejo de los bosques y la industria verde (viveros, paisajismo) con las preocupaciones ambientales?**

Forests are a vital piece of Florida's natural habitat. From the cypress forests of the Everglades to the longleaf pines and live oaks of North Florida, our natural landscapes are essential to the health of our state's ecosystem. As Commissioner of Agriculture, I will work to ensure these resources are protected while allowing agriculture, forestry, and the green industry to continue growing and creating jobs. I believe the best solutions come through collaboration, not unnecessary regulation. As such, I will work alongside our farmers, foresters, scientists, nursery owners, and conservation partners to promote viable, best-management practices that protect our environment while keeping our agriculture economy vibrant.

**What are the key issues of concern for Florida consumers, and what ideas do you have to improve the Division of Consumer Services? ¿Cuáles son los principales temas de preocupación para los consumidores de Florida y qué ideas tiene para mejorar la División de Servicios al Consumidor?**

Florida is a beautiful state with a warm and inviting year-round climate, it's a wonderful place to live. Unfortunately, many fraudsters and scammers like living here too. That's why it's important for Florida consumers to be aware and stay alert to protect themselves against scams and other illicit activities targeting them. In addition to the Division of Consumer Services, there are several other Florida agencies that provide consumer protection. I would like to see the Division of Consumer Services become the "411" for Floridians seeking assistance from all forms of frauds and scams. I'm not proposing moving any of the enforcement or oversight from the other agencies, rather we would provide Floridians with a single point of contact providing 24/7/365 access to Florida's Consumers information and real-time referral program for the appropriate agency. An enhanced service will not only ease access for consumers, but it will also accelerate the state's ability to protect consumers.



## **Wilton Simpson**

**Party:** Republican

**Campaign Website:** [wiltonsimpson.com/](http://wiltonsimpson.com/)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/simpsonwilton](http://www.facebook.com/simpsonwilton)

**Why are you running for this elected position? What are the two most compelling issues on which, if elected, you feel you can make a difference? ¿Por qué se postula para este cargo electo? ¿Cuáles son los dos temas más importantes en los que, si es electo/a, cree que puede hacer una diferencia?**

- candidate declined to respond -

**Florida is a top U.S. agricultural producer, producing most of the winter vegetables for the country. Yet, food insecurity, especially for children, continues to grow and will likely worsen as changes to SNAP benefits push costs to states. What legislation or programs would you support to help feed Floridians? Florida es uno de los principales productores agrícolas de Estados Unidos, produciendo la mayoría de los vegetales en la temporada de invierno del país. Sin embargo, la inseguridad alimentaria, especialmente entre los niños, continúa creciendo y probablemente empeore a medida que los cambios en los beneficios de SNAP transfieran costos a los estados. ¿Qué legislación o programas apoyaría para ayudar a alimentar a los floridianos?**

- candidate declined to respond -

**This elected office regulates gun licenses. What legislation or programs would you support to protect our youth and the public at large from gun violence? Esta oficina regula las licencias de armas. ¿Qué legislación o programas apoyaría para proteger a nuestros jóvenes y al público en general de la violencia armada?**

- candidate declined to respond -

**What measures do you propose to better manage agricultural runoff of fertilizers and other pollutants which contribute to harmful algae blooms and reduced water quality? ¿Qué medidas propone para reducir la contaminación del agua causada por fertilizantes de la agricultura y otros contaminantes que provocan la proliferación de algas dañinas y deterioran la calidad del agua?**

- candidate declined to respond -

**The Florida Cabinet, acting as the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund, manages over 12 million acres of public lands. What is your philosophy on conservation, acquisition, and protection of natural resources, including Florida Forever projects, state parks, and coastal areas? El Gabinete de Florida, actuando como Junta de Fideicomisarios del Internal Improvement Trust Fund, administra más de 12 millones de acres de tierras públicas. ¿Cuál es su filosofía sobre la conservación, adquisición y protección de los recursos naturales, incluyendo proyectos de Florida Forever, parques estatales y zonas costeras?**

- candidate declined to respond -

**What is the most important issue facing agriculture and forestry in Florida? How do you balance the needs of agriculture, forestry and the green industry (nurseries, landscapes) with environmental concerns? ¿Cuál es el problema más importante que enfrentan la agricultura y los bosques en Florida? ¿Cómo equilibra las necesidades de la agricultura, el manejo de los bosques y la industria verde (viveros, paisajismo) con las preocupaciones ambientales?**

- candidate declined to respond -

**What are the key issues of concern for Florida consumers, and what ideas do you have to improve the Division of Consumer Services? ¿Cuáles son los principales temas de preocupación para los consumidores de Florida y qué ideas tiene para mejorar la División de Servicios al Consumidor?**

- candidate declined to respond -



## **Matt Taylor**

**Party:** Republican

**Age:** 36

**Education:** Trade School

**Hometown:** Odessa, FL

**County:** Hillsborough

**Campaign Website:** [treadback.com/](http://treadback.com/)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/realmattthewelder/](http://www.facebook.com/realmattthewelder/)

**Campaign Twitter Handle:** Matt\_The\_Welder

**Instagram:** [Instagram.com/realmattthewelder](https://www.instagram.com/realmattthewelder)

**Campaign Mailing Address:** 1866 Jim Redman Pkwy #1024 Plant city FL 33563

**Why are you running for this elected position? What are the two most compelling issues on which, if elected, you feel you can make a difference? ¿Por qué se postula para este cargo electo? ¿Cuáles son los dos temas más importantes en los que, si es electo/a, cree que puede hacer una diferencia?**

- candidate declined to respond -

**Florida is a top U.S. agricultural producer, producing most of the winter vegetables for the country. Yet, food insecurity, especially for children, continues to grow and will likely worsen as changes to SNAP benefits push costs to states. What legislation or programs would you support to help feed Floridians? Florida es uno de los principales productores agrícolas de Estados Unidos, produciendo la mayoría de los vegetales en la temporada de invierno del país. Sin embargo, la inseguridad alimentaria, especialmente entre los niños, continúa creciendo y probablemente empeore a medida que los cambios en los beneficios de SNAP transfieran costos a los estados. ¿Qué legislación o programas apoyaría para ayudar a alimentar a los floridianos?**

- candidate declined to respond -

**This elected office regulates gun licenses. What legislation or programs would you support to protect our youth and the public at large from gun violence? Esta oficina regula las licencias de armas. ¿Qué legislación o programas apoyaría para proteger a nuestros jóvenes y al público en general de la violencia armada?**

- candidate declined to respond -

**What measures do you propose to better manage agricultural runoff of fertilizers and other pollutants which contribute to harmful algae blooms and reduced water quality? ¿Qué medidas propone para reducir la contaminación del agua causada por fertilizantes de la agricultura y otros contaminantes que provocan la proliferación de algas dañinas y deterioran la calidad del agua?**

- candidate declined to respond -

**The Florida Cabinet, acting as the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund, manages over 12 million acres of public lands. What is your philosophy on conservation, acquisition, and protection of natural resources, including Florida Forever projects, state parks, and coastal areas? El Gabinete de Florida, actuando como Junta de Fideicomisarios del Internal Improvement Trust Fund, administra más de 12 millones de acres de tierras públicas. ¿Cuál es su filosofía sobre la conservación, adquisición y protección de los recursos naturales, incluyendo proyectos de Florida Forever, parques estatales y zonas costeras?**

- candidate declined to respond -

**What is the most important issue facing agriculture and forestry in Florida? How do you balance the needs of agriculture, forestry and the green industry (nurseries, landscapes) with environmental concerns? ¿Cuál es el problema más importante que enfrentan la agricultura y los bosques en Florida? ¿Cómo equilibra las necesidades de la agricultura, el manejo de los bosques y la industria verde (viveros, paisajismo) con las preocupaciones ambientales?**

- candidate declined to respond -

**What are the key issues of concern for Florida consumers, and what ideas do you have to improve the Division of Consumer Services? ¿Cuáles son los principales temas de preocupación para los consumidores de Florida y qué ideas tiene para mejorar la División de Servicios al Consumidor?**

- candidate declined to respond -

## State Senator 16

Serves staggered 4-year terms with a limit of 2 consecutive terms. There are 40 Senators. The 2025 salary was \$29,697 (plus travel and subsistence). Only requirement is to pass a balanced state budget.



### Fentrice DeNell Driskell

**Party:** Democratic

**Education:** Harvard University, A.B. in Government (cum laude) and Georgetown Law, Juris Doctor

**Hometown:** Tampa

**County:** Hillsborough

**Campaign Website:** fentriceforflorida.com/

**Facebook:** www.facebook.com/FentriceForFL

**Campaign Twitter Handle:** fentriceforfl

**Instagram:** @fentriceforfl

**Campaign Mailing Address:** 13220 N 56th St Suite B Temple Terrace FL 33617-1107

**What are the two most important challenges facing Florida and, if elected, what actions will you take to address them within your first six months in office? ¿Cuáles son los dos desafíos más importantes que enfrenta Florida y, si es elegidofa, qué acciones tomará para abordarlos durante sus primeros seis meses en el cargo?**

Florida's two biggest problems are the cost of living and a state government that keeps stripping away our rights. In my first six months, I will file legislation to bring down property insurance rates and put affordable homes within reach of working families, including building on the Live Local Act so it helps the renters and first-time buyers who need it most. I filed these bills in the House and made them Caucus priorities as Leader. I will also file legislation to repeal the laws that have chipped away at our freedoms, gutted our schools, and silenced our communities. Voting no is the floor. The harder work, which I have done as House Dem Leader, is building unified Caucus opposition and answering every attack on the record. I will work with anyone serious about lowering costs, which is why many of my bills have passed unanimously. Where common ground is not available, I will stand up to the extremism that has turned Tallahassee into a place ordinary people no longer recognize.

**If documentary proof of US citizenship becomes necessary in order to register to vote, how would you help those Floridians, especially women, who no longer have or don't have easy and affordable access to documents to prove citizenship, such as certified birth and marriage certificates? Si se requiere prueba documental de ciudadanía estadounidense para registrarse para votar, ¿cómo ayudaría a los floridianos, especialmente a las mujeres, que ya no tienen o no tienen acceso fácil y asequible a documentos que prueben su ciudadanía, como certificados de nacimiento o matrimonio?**

A documentary proof of citizenship rule would block millions of eligible Floridians from voting. Married women whose names don't match their birth certificates, naturalized citizens, seniors whose old records were lost years ago, and working families who can't afford to pay for a replacement. I have opposed every version of this requirement at the state level, and I will keep doing so. If a requirement is imposed, I will fight for state funding to cover replacement birth certificates, marriage certificates, and naturalization papers, fee waivers for families who can't afford the cost, and real help from the Department of State and our supervisors of elections to get every eligible Floridian the documents they need. My team and I have partnered with community organizations across Tampa Bay to make sure people know what Florida law requires and how to make their voices heard. No eligible Floridian should lose their vote because they can't afford a copy of their own birth certificates.

**Insufficient affordable housing is hurting Florida families and limiting Florida's economy. What state measures do you support to address the affordable housing crisis, beyond tax and insurance reform, for both homeowners and renters? La falta de vivienda asequible está perjudicando a las familias de Florida y limitando la economía del estado. ¿Qué medidas estatales apoya para abordar la crisis de vivienda asequible, más allá de reformas fiscales y de seguros, tanto para propietarios como para inquilinos?**

The housing crisis is the defining economic challenge of this decade, and fixing it will take real action, not slogans. For renters, I will fight to fully restore the Sadowski Affordable Housing Trust Fund, which the Legislature has raided for years to plug budget holes. I will expand the Live Local Act to help the families who need it most. And I will push for tenant protections, including advance notice before a major rent hike. For first-time homebuyers, I support down payment assistance, restoring local authority to require affordable units in new development, and taking on the Wall Street investors who bought up Florida's starter home stock and turned it into rentals. Young Floridians are priced out of homeownership by hedge funds. I also support workforce housing for teachers, nurses, firefighters, and essential workers who can't afford to live where they work. When the people who teach our kids and answer 911 calls can't live here, Florida has a problem money won't fix later.

**Under what circumstances would you support access to abortion? ¿En qué circunstancias apoyaría el acceso al aborto?**

Decisions about pregnancy belong to the patient, their family, and their doctor. Politicians do not belong in our exam rooms. I support restoring the protections of Roe v. Wade, and supported Amendment 4 as a path to get there. So did 57 percent of Floridians. The only reason it did not become law is Florida's 60 percent bar, higher than almost any other state. A clear majority voted to protect reproductive freedom, and the Legislature has spent every session since pretending it did not hear them. I oppose Florida's six-week ban, which takes effect before many women know they are pregnant. That is the point of the law. I will fight to repeal it and restore real access to reproductive care. I also support protections for IVF and

contraception, because the same politicians coming for abortion access are already coming for those too. Floridians should build their families on their own timelines, with the people they love. That is not a political question. That is a private one. **With respect to preemption and home rule, is the relationship and balance of power between state and local governments in Florida appropriately addressing local issues or how should it be redefined? Con respecto a la preeminencia estatal (preemption) y la autonomía local (home rule), ¿cree que la relación y el equilibrio de poder entre los gobiernos estatales y locales en Florida están abordando adecuadamente los problemas locales? o ¿Cómo debería redefinirse?**

The balance of state and local authority is badly broken. Over the last decade, Tallahassee has stripped local governments of authority issue after issue, from worker protections to environmental rules to firearms ordinances. If your city did something Tallahassee disliked, Tallahassee took the power away. This is upside down. The Tampa City Council, St. Petersburg City Council, and our county commissions know our neighborhoods, water, and economy better than a legislator from the Panhandle ever will. As House Democratic Leader, I have led Caucus opposition to preemption bills session after session, because voting no is the floor. I support restoring real home rule, especially on environmental protection, land use, and public health, and legislation forcing the Legislature to prove a real need before overriding local control. There is a role for rules when uniformity matters, but what we have now is Tallahassee deciding it knows better than the people who live here.

**Equitable and affordable access to healthcare is declining, in part due to the decrease of federal insurance subsidies. At the same time, more Medicaid costs are being pushed onto the states. How should the state address these issues? El acceso equitativo y asequible a la atención médica está disminuyendo, en parte debido a la reducción de los subsidios federales de seguros. Al mismo tiempo, más costos de Medicaid se están trasladando a los estados. ¿Cómo debería el estado abordar estos problemas?**

Florida should expand Medicaid. Forty other states have done it. We have not, and it's one of the most expensive mistakes the Legislature has made. Expansion would cover hundreds of thousands of Floridians in the coverage gap, who earn too much for Medicaid but can't afford private insurance. It would bring back billions our families paid in federal taxes, now spent in other states. It would throw a lifeline to rural hospitals closing under uncompensated care. Every independent analysis shows expansion saves money or breaks even. As House Democratic Leader, I have made expansion a priority every year, standing with rural hospital administrators watching facilities close and speaking for families who skip prescriptions they can't afford. Filing a bill once is not enough. Building the case until the politics break is the work I'll keep doing in the Senate. I support oversight of Medicaid managed care, full funding for ADAP, and investment in health centers keeping rural Florida alive.

**Polls indicate the public is more concerned about the cost of property insurance than property taxes. What is your view and why? Las encuestas indican que el público está más preocupado por el costo del seguro de propiedad que por los impuestos a la propiedad. ¿Cuál es su opinión y por qué?**

Property insurance is the crisis. It is the line item breaking Florida households right now, and the biggest reason Floridians who can no longer afford to stay are leaving. Premiums have risen faster than wages and home values, faster than families can absorb. For a senior on a fixed income, renewal can mean keeping her home of forty years or selling it. I have heard this at every town hall and door I've knocked on for eight years. As House Democratic Leader, I have filed legislation to lower rates and made insurance reform a top Caucus priority, year after year. Recent changes have begun stabilizing the market, but premiums remain among the highest in the nation. In the Senate, I will expand the My Safe Florida Home and Condo programs, which fund wind mitigation upgrades that produce real savings, not savings that exist on paper but never show up on the bill. I will protect Citizens as a last resort insurer and have the honest conversation about climate risk driving carrier losses.



**Michele K. Rayner**

**Party:** Democratic

**Age:** 44

**Education:** Bachelor's and Master's from Florida State University, Law degree from Florida Coastal School of Law, currently working toward a Master of Divinity from Iliff School of Theology

**Campaign Website:** [micheleforflorida.com/](http://micheleforflorida.com/)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/micheleforfl/](https://www.facebook.com/micheleforfl/)

**Campaign Twitter Handle:** [micheleforfl](https://twitter.com/micheleforfl)

**Instagram:** <https://www.instagram.com/MicheleforFL/>

**Campaign Phone:** 3215780966

**Campaign Mailing Address:** 5010 Wild Senna Blvd Tampa FL 33619

**What are the two most important challenges facing Florida and, if elected, what actions will you take to address them within your first six months in office? ¿Cuáles son los dos desafíos más importantes que enfrenta Florida y, si es elegido/a, qué acciones tomará para abordarlos durante sus primeros seis meses en el cargo?**

I believe the top issues facing Florida are affordability and infrastructure. First, families are struggling with rising costs for groceries, insurance, utilities, and everyday necessities, making it harder to get ahead. Second, Florida's housing crisis is pricing teachers, first responders, healthcare workers, and young families out of the communities they serve. We need more attainable housing and stronger pathways to homeownership. Third, our growing population requires smart investments in transportation infrastructure, including roads, transit, and congestion relief. Addressing these challenges is essential to strengthening Florida's economy and improving quality of life for working families.



**If documentary proof of US citizenship becomes necessary in order to register to vote, how would you help those Floridians, especially women, who no longer have or don't have easy and affordable access to documents to prove citizenship, such as certified birth and marriage certificates? Si se requiere prueba documental de ciudadanía estadounidense para registrarse para votar, ¿cómo ayudaría a los floridianos, especialmente a las mujeres, que ya no tienen o no tienen acceso fácil y asequible a documentos que prueben su ciudadanía, como certificados de nacimiento o matrimonio?**

- candidate declined to respond -

**Insufficient affordable housing is hurting Florida families and limiting Florida's economy. What state measures do you support to address the affordable housing crisis, beyond tax and insurance reform, for both homeowners and renters? La falta de vivienda asequible está perjudicando a las familias de Florida y limitando la economía del estado. ¿Qué medidas estatales apoya para abordar la crisis de vivienda asequible, más allá de reformas fiscales y de seguros, tanto para propietarios como para inquilinos?**

- candidate declined to respond -

**Under what circumstances would you support access to abortion? ¿En qué circunstancias apoyaría el acceso al aborto?**

I believe abortion is healthcare and should be accessible to all. The government has no place in making personal medical decisions.

**With respect to preemption and home rule, is the relationship and balance of power between state and local governments in Florida appropriately addressing local issues or how should it be redefined? Con respecto a la preeminencia estatal (preemption) y la autonomía local (home rule), ¿cree que la relación y el equilibrio de poder entre los gobiernos estatales y locales en Florida están abordando adecuadamente los problemas locales? o ¿Cómo debería redefinirse?**

- candidate declined to respond -

**Equitable and affordable access to healthcare is declining, in part due to the decrease of federal insurance subsidies. At the same time, more Medicaid costs are being pushed onto the states. How should the state address these issues? El acceso equitativo y asequible a la atención médica está disminuyendo, en parte debido a la reducción de los subsidios federales de seguros. Al mismo tiempo, más costos de Medicaid se están trasladando a los estados. ¿Cómo debería el estado abordar estos problemas?**

Florida has had the opportunity to expand medicaid for over a decade and the republican legislature has refused to take up the bill. Estimates show that nearly a million more Floridians would have access to affordable healthcare, and we know that preventative healthcare saves us costs in the long run. By expanding medicaid, rural healthcare providers could expand their practices to start to eliminate healthcare deserts and keep Floridians healthy and safe.

**Polls indicate the public is more concerned about the cost of property insurance than property taxes. What is your view and why? Las encuestas indican que el público está más preocupado por el costo del seguro de propiedad que por los impuestos a la propiedad. ¿Cuál es su opinión y por qué?**

- candidate declined to respond -

## State Senator 18

Serves staggered 4-year terms with a limit of 2 consecutive terms. There are 40 Senators. The 2025 salary was \$29,697 (plus travel and subsistence). Only requirement is to pass a balanced state budget.



**Linda Kellis Harris**

**Party:** Democratic

**Age:** 75

**Education:** Associate degree in Business

**County:** Pinellas

**What are the two most important challenges facing Florida and, if elected, what actions will you take to address them within your first six months in office? ¿Cuáles son los dos desafíos más importantes que enfrenta Florida y, si es elegido/a, qué acciones tomará para abordarlos durante sus primeros seis meses en el cargo?**

Affordable & fair housing for Seniors/families with all rental policy guidelines applied uniformly for every applicant, every time and prevent displacement. "Caps" should be placed on rental amounts to prevent \$1400+ 1-bedroom units! Still working in RE property management going on 50 years from one coast to another so I'm definitely knowledgeable in this arena! Education covers a broad spectrum of areas needing help, but I will see that FREE State paid lunches are provided in public schools' year-round. I want to see the books returned to the libraries immediately. I will advocate for stronger teacher support and push for programs that prepares students for college and careers. I want to ensure PUBLIC schools are receiving the appropriate funds and not the private, charter schools.

**If documentary proof of US citizenship becomes necessary in order to register to vote, how would you help those Floridians, especially women, who no longer have or don't have easy and affordable access to documents to prove citizenship, such as certified birth and marriage certificates? Si se requiere prueba documental de ciudadanía estadounidense para registrarse para votar, ¿cómo ayudaría a los floridianos, especialmente a las mujeres, que ya**

**no tienen o no tienen acceso fácil y asequible a documentos que prueben su ciudadanía, como certificados de nacimiento o matrimonio?**

What a great question that I don't have an answer for at this time. After obtaining a RE license and a Notary Public in early 80s, I remarried but kept my maiden name attached so Linda Sue Kellis Harris is on every single legal document I have! Knowing this is an issue, I will definitely see what resources I have available.

**Insufficient affordable housing is hurting Florida families and limiting Florida's economy. What state measures do you support to address the affordable housing crisis, beyond tax and insurance reform, for both homeowners and renters? La falta de vivienda asequible está perjudicando a las familias de Florida y limitando la economía del estado. ¿Qué medidas estatales apoya para abordar la crisis de vivienda asequible, más allá de reformas fiscales y de seguros, tanto para propietarios como para inquilinos?**

As previously stated, I've been in the RE property management going on 50 years in July from one coast to another and it isn't any better any place else! Owners have outpriced their homes for sale or rent and that will never change unless guidelines are revised and regulations such as placing a "cap" on rates, i.e. need to STOP first/last/security requirements, STOP thinking their home/apartment is the Taj Mahal and adjust rates according to the fair market value! We need to stop foreign corporations from coming in and taking advantage of an already bad situation.

**Under what circumstances would you support access to abortion? ¿En qué circunstancias apoyaría el acceso al aborto?**

I was one of hundreds of women "arrested" in Houston, Texas at a protest/rally in January 1973 standing up for our rights under Roe v. Wade and I'm proud of myself! I'm a sponsor of Planned Parenthood because it was there for me from the late 60s forward for low-cost female supplies, medical exams, OB/GYN doctors, health care, etc. and abortions are NOT the women went there either! No insurance was not a problem either. I will assist any female that asks...come hell or high water!

**With respect to preemption and home rule, is the relationship and balance of power between state and local governments in Florida appropriately addressing local issues or how should it be redefined? Con respecto a la preeminencia estatal (preemption) y la autonomía local (home rule), ¿cree que la relación y el equilibrio de poder entre los gobiernos estatales y locales en Florida están abordando adecuadamente los problemas locales? o ¿Cómo debería redefinirse?**

At this stage of the game, I only see the Governor following in the footsteps of the MAGA party! Maybe local governments don't know how to handle much less balance power. Therefore, I really don't know how else to answer this question, but I'll find out how.

**Equitable and affordable access to healthcare is declining, in part due to the decrease of federal insurance subsidies. At the same time, more Medicaid costs are being pushed onto the states. How should the state address these issues? El acceso equitativo y asequible a la atención médica está disminuyendo, en parte debido a la reducción de los subsidios federales de seguros. Al mismo tiempo, más costos de Medicaid se están trasladando a los estados. ¿Cómo debería el estado abordar estos problemas?**

I am not as familiar with Medicaid as I am Medicare but neither agency is taking any responsibility or accountability for the constant increase in prices. As a senior with medical issues along with the husband, we've found ourselves literally tossing the proverbial coin to see which one of us gets the high-priced meds for the month, usually the husband with heart issues.

**Polls indicate the public is more concerned about the cost of property insurance than property taxes. What is your view and why? Las encuestas indican que el público está más preocupado por el costo del seguro de propiedad que por los impuestos a la propiedad. ¿Cuál es su opinión y por qué?**

I understand the seriousness of the issue and will definitely do more research on this issue.



**Karla Kemp**

**Party:** Democratic

**Age:** 55

**Education:** Masters Degree

**Hometown:** Saint Petersburg

**County:** Florida

**Campaign Website:** KarlaforFL.com

**Facebook:** www.facebook.com/KarlaKempforFL

**Campaign Twitter Handle:** KarlaforFL

**Instagram:** @KarlaKempforFL

**LinkedIn:** www.linkedin.com/in/karлакemp sustainableconsultant

**Campaign Phone:** (727)346-6440

**Campaign Mailing Address:** 3615 49th St N unit 119 Saint Petersburg Florida 33710

**What are the two most important challenges facing Florida and, if elected, what actions will you take to address them within your first six months in office? ¿Cuáles son los dos desafíos más importantes que enfrenta Florida y, si es elegido/a, qué acciones tomará para abordarlos durante sus primeros seis meses en el cargo?**

There are so many issues that are so important, but the biggest complaint is the cost of living, and when asked for what aspect, the cost of homeowners insurance is the first response I hear. As a Licensed Insurance Agent, I KNOW what they are doing to repeatedly increase our prices and yet decline @90% of all claims, breaching contract. I will change the law to stop Insurance companies moving their money out of state, &/or payout their investors, then claim they need to raise their prices.

We will also require them to honor their policies, not just fleece the public. If they paid their claims, they wouldn't be sued and they would be more financially solvent. There is so much more, but we need to protect our people with Medicaid for all or a state backed health system like Massachusetts while we pursue universal healthcare. Healthcare should be a service, not a profit margin. And, healthcare is a right! People should not be afraid of seeking healthcare because of the cost.

**If documentary proof of US citizenship becomes necessary in order to register to vote, how would you help those Floridians, especially women, who no longer have or don't have easy and affordable access to documents to prove citizenship, such as certified birth and marriage certificates? Si se requiere prueba documental de ciudadanía estadounidense para registrarse para votar, ¿cómo ayudaría a los floridianos, especialmente a las mujeres, que ya no tienen o no tienen acceso fácil y asequible a documentos que prueben su ciudadanía, como certificados de nacimiento o matrimonio?**

I would write a bill to create a portal that has a direct communication link to each State's Vital Records Office where we can do an instant access request for the records needed via the internet and provide a fund for all community members to be able to get a state sanctioned ID or Driver's License. If we have the money for Alligator Alcatraz, we have the funding for ID's and Licenses. The Department of Transportation already has a portal to all 50 states to verify driver's history due to the significant military presence here, they can utilize the same system. Most people already do most of their voter registration when they get an ID, anyway, they can do the complete process there and get clearance cited as such on their DL/ ID as well as a printed and certified document saying documentation completed should they lose their license.

**Insufficient affordable housing is hurting Florida families and limiting Florida's economy. What state measures do you support to address the affordable housing crisis, beyond tax and insurance reform, for both homeowners and renters? La falta de vivienda asequible está perjudicando a las familias de Florida y limitando la economía del estado. ¿Qué medidas estatales apoya para abordar la crisis de vivienda asequible, más allá de reformas fiscales y de seguros, tanto para propietarios como para inquilinos?**

I most certainly believe in blocking the purchase of homes by commercial entities. Additionally, a pied-à-terre tax, an annual surcharge specifically targeting luxury second homes valued at \$1 million or more that are not occupied as a primary residence shall be implemented. The levy is tiered, meaning higher-value properties are taxed at increasingly progressive rates, ranging from 0.8% to 1.3%. Meanwhile, if the federal government doesn't take over Mortgages, FL state can offer mortgages and refinancing with a max interest rate of 1%, significantly lowering the cost of mortgages and rents. Or, we could require banks to offer a percentage of their bank owned homes as low-in resources or to work with Habitat for Humanity in home ownership opportunities. Easier access to 1st time home buyer's incentives that are also the same in every county, making certification in the program easier and more affordable, providing an incentive for renters to pursue the American Dream.

**Under what circumstances would you support access to abortion? ¿En qué circunstancias apoyaría el acceso al aborto?**

Every bit of healthcare is between a woman and her doctor. I do support abortion up to the previous standard of late term, with the exception of death of the baby, severe defect, or the life of the woman. (Rape, incest, and any other reason is allowable as well.) Abortion is healthcare and no one has the right to keep you from healthcare, regardless of sex. If the woman's doctor says it is a necessary procedure for the health of the mother, she has full autonomy over her body.

**With respect to preemption and home rule, is the relationship and balance of power between state and local governments in Florida appropriately addressing local issues or how should it be redefined? Con respecto a la preeminencia estatal (preemption) y la autonomía local (home rule), ¿cree que la relación y el equilibrio de poder entre los gobiernos estatales y locales en Florida están abordando adecuadamente los problemas locales? o ¿Cómo debería redefinirse?**

For at least the past 15 years, our GOP led administrations aggressively attacked the rights of autonomy for communities and locals. They have repeatedly tried to isolate power to the State Executive to exert full control over all aspects of communities. Meanwhile, blocking their activities from the public as much as they can, until the law is already in place. We need to re-balance the power structure and allow cities and town to restore their autonomy. Communities should have the right to decide to have rainbow streets, to not have book banning/ burning, to honor their communities and strengthen the rights of their citizens. By keeping the power local, they can exert more power over their education systems, their police/ infrastructure, and the equal treatment of their employees. Fed. govt is supposed to support the state govt and state govt is supposed to support local government. Govt' is supposed to be by and for the people, not the rich only or corporations.

**Equitable and affordable access to healthcare is declining, in part due to the decrease of federal insurance subsidies. At the same time, more Medicaid costs are being pushed onto the states. How should the state address these issues? El acceso equitativo y asequible a la atención médica está disminuyendo, en parte debido a la reducción de los subsidios federales de seguros. Al mismo tiempo, más costos de Medicaid se están trasladando a los estados. ¿Cómo debería el estado abordar estos problemas?**

Given the incredible level of healthcare providers we have available in Florida, and the incredible amount of excess funds we seem to have for unproductive measures (i.e.- Alligator Alcatraz) We should develop a healthcare system similar to Mass and Washington state. Providing an insurance system that is sliding scale based on income. And, anyone who wants to practice in FL should be required to take it. Too many practitioners are not doing their jobs because then they can bill the insurance companies for a 2nd procedure (I have 1st hand experience in this.) or they are significantly marking up their prices because insurance companies will kick back the correct billing and medical records codes 3 times before it is suddenly correct and they pay the bill. So, they can keep the money in the bank and make interest on it. If insurance companies want to operate in FL, they must participate and honor claims appropriately, not decline based on AI. But, approve needed procedures.

**Polls indicate the public is more concerned about the cost of property insurance than property taxes. What is your view and why? Las encuestas indican que el público está más preocupado por el costo del seguro de propiedad que por los impuestos a la propiedad. ¿Cuál es su opinión y por qué?**

I agree, wholeheartedly. First of all, we get something back on paying taxes. On the whole, the insurance companies deny @90% of legitimate claims in the hopes that they will not appeal or sue for the enforcement of the contract. They also are taking advantage of the public by creating a 'Hurricane coverage' that is 75% of the cost of your insurance and then inappropriately use the statement "wind- driven rain is not covered", when as a hurricane that is exactly what you are paying for. Thus, a breach of contract. We should never have to use an attorney to enforce our contracts. If the insurance companies paid their claims, it would cost them significantly less. And, our prices would be lower. We need to change the laws to hold them accountable &/or start our own storm fund reducing the cost of insurance policies by @75%. As a licensed insurance agent, I have seen this from both sides and am equally frustrated. This is Corporate fraud.

## State Representative 62

Serves 2-year terms with a limit of 4 consecutive terms. There are 120 House members. The 2025 salary is \$29,697 plus (travel and subsistence). Only requirement is to pass a balanced state budget.



### Kyandra Shariece Darling

**Party:** Democratic

**Age:** 33

**Education:** Bachelor's in Political Science from the University of South Florida

**Hometown:** St. Petersburg, Florida

**County:** Pinellas County

**Campaign Website:** [www.darlingforfl.com/](http://www.darlingforfl.com/)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/darlingforfl](https://www.facebook.com/darlingforfl)

**Campaign Twitter Handle:** <https://x.com/DarlingforFl>

**Instagram:** Darlingforfl

**Campaign Phone:** 727-307-1961

**Campaign Mailing Address:** 200 Second Avenue S #321 Saint Petersburg FL 33701

**What are the two most important challenges facing Florida and, if elected, what actions will you take to address them within your first six months in office? ¿Cuáles son los dos desafíos más importantes que enfrenta Florida y, si es elegido/a, qué acciones tomará para abordarlos durante sus primeros seis meses en el cargo?**

Florida's two biggest challenges are affordability and access to opportunity. Families are struggling with housing, insurance, and everyday costs, while employers face workforce shortages. In my first six months, I will support expanding affordable and workforce housing, lowering barriers for small businesses, strengthening workforce training, and improving access to healthcare and mental health services. I will also work across party lines to deliver practical solutions.

**If documentary proof of US citizenship becomes necessary in order to register to vote, how would you help those Floridians, especially women, who no longer have or don't have easy and affordable access to documents to prove citizenship, such as certified birth and marriage certificates? Si se requiere prueba documental de ciudadanía estadounidense para registrarse para votar, ¿cómo ayudaría a los floridianos, especialmente a las mujeres, que ya no tienen o no tienen acceso fácil y asequible a documentos que prueben su ciudadanía, como certificados de nacimiento o matrimonio?**

Every eligible U.S. citizen deserves a fair and accessible path to register and vote. If documentary proof of citizenship is required, I will support making those documents easy, affordable, and timely to obtain. That includes reducing or waiving fees for eligible residents, expanding access to vital records through local government offices, and providing assistance for individuals whose names have changed due to marriage or other life events. We can protect election integrity while ensuring that unnecessary costs or bureaucratic barriers do not prevent eligible Floridians from exercising their constitutional right to vote.

**Insufficient affordable housing is hurting Florida families and limiting Florida's economy. What state measures do you support to address the affordable housing crisis, beyond tax and insurance reform, for both homeowners and renters? La falta de vivienda asequible está perjudicando a las familias de Florida y limitando la economía del estado. ¿Qué medidas estatales apoya para abordar la crisis de vivienda asequible, más allá de reformas fiscales y de seguros, tanto para propietarios como para inquilinos?**

Affordable housing is essential to Florida's future. I support increasing the supply of housing at all income levels by expanding workforce and attainable housing, streamlining responsible permitting, encouraging mixed-use and transit-oriented development, and strengthening public-private partnerships. I also support preserving existing affordable housing, expanding first-time homebuyer assistance, and protecting renters from unfair practices while respecting property rights. Teachers, first responders, healthcare workers, and working families should be able to live in the communities they serve.

**Under what circumstances would you support access to abortion? ¿En qué circunstancias apoyaría el acceso al aborto?**



I support a woman's right to make her own healthcare decisions in consultation with her family, faith, and medical provider—not politicians. I support access to abortion care before fetal viability and when necessary to protect the life or health of the pregnant woman or in cases of rape, incest, or fatal fetal abnormalities. Every person deserves compassionate, evidence-based healthcare and the freedom to make deeply personal medical decisions.

**With respect to preemption and home rule, is the relationship and balance of power between state and local governments in Florida appropriately addressing local issues or how should it be redefined? Con respecto a la preeminencia estatal (preemption) y la autonomía local (home rule), ¿cree que la relación y el equilibrio de poder entre los gobiernos estatales y locales en Florida están abordando adecuadamente los problemas locales? o ¿Cómo debería redefinirse?**

Florida works best when state and local governments are true partners. I support strong home rule, allowing local communities to address their unique needs while the state sets consistent standards on matters of concern. Excessive state preemption can prevent local leaders from responding to issues such as housing, transportation, resilience, and economic development. Decisions should be made at the level of government closest to the people whenever practical, while ensuring accountability and protecting constitutional rights.

**Equitable and affordable access to healthcare is declining, in part due to the decrease of federal insurance subsidies. At the same time, more Medicaid costs are being pushed onto the states. How should the state address these issues? El acceso equitativo y asequible a la atención médica está disminuyendo, en parte debido a la reducción de los subsidios federales de seguros. Al mismo tiempo, más costos de Medicaid se están trasladando a los estados. ¿Cómo debería el estado abordar estos problemas?**

Healthcare should be accessible and affordable for every Floridian. I support strengthening access to preventive and primary care, expanding the healthcare workforce, investing in community health centers, and improving mental health and addiction services. The state should maximize available federal resources, reduce administrative barriers, and improve efficiency so more dollars reach patients. We must also lower prescription drug costs and ensure families, seniors, veterans, and people with disabilities can access the care they need without financial hardship.

**Polls indicate the public is more concerned about the cost of property insurance than property taxes. What is your view and why? Las encuestas indican que el público está más preocupado por el costo del seguro de propiedad que por los impuestos a la propiedad. ¿Cuál es su opinión y por qué?**

Floridians are feeling the impact of rising property insurance costs, which have become one of the biggest threats to housing affordability. Lowering premiums requires increasing competition, improving market stability, strengthening consumer protections, and investing in resilient infrastructure that reduces storm-related losses. We must also ensure insurers are held accountable while protecting homeowners and renters from excessive costs. Addressing insurance affordability is essential to keeping families in their homes and supporting Florida's economy.



**Wengay M. Newton Sr.**

**Party:** Democratic

**Age:** 62

**Education:** Northeast High School C/O 1981, AS Degree Electronics Engineering and 15 years of Governance Experience

**Hometown:** St. Petersburg, Florida - Born and Raised

**County:** Pinellas

**Campaign Website:** [www.newthd62.com/](http://www.newthd62.com/)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/Newt4HD62](https://www.facebook.com/Newt4HD62)

**Campaign Twitter Handle:** <https://twitter.com/NEWTFL>

**Instagram:** <https://instagram.com/newthd70>

**LinkedIn:** <https://www.linkedin.com/in/newtfl/>

**Campaign Phone:** 727-619-6398

**Campaign Mailing Address:** Post Office Box 11551 St. Petersburg FL 33733

**What are the two most important challenges facing Florida and, if elected, what actions will you take to address them within your first six months in office? ¿Cuáles son los dos desafíos más importantes que enfrenta Florida y, si es elegido/a, qué acciones tomará para abordarlos durante sus primeros seis meses en el cargo?**

1. Affordability – I will propose or support legislation to provide for Obtainable Housing. 2. Living wage Jobs – I will propose or support legislation that would provide for continuing education and apprenticeship programs.

**If documentary proof of US citizenship becomes necessary in order to register to vote, how would you help those Floridians, especially women, who no longer have or don't have easy and affordable access to documents to prove citizenship, such as certified birth and marriage certificates? Si se requiere prueba documental de ciudadanía estadounidense para registrarse para votar, ¿cómo ayudaría a los floridianos, especialmente a las mujeres, que ya no tienen o no tienen acceso fácil y asequible a documentos que prueben su ciudadanía, como certificados de nacimiento o matrimonio?**

This is an unfunded mandate. I would propose and advocate for a program with funding to help defray the cost of obtaining the necessary documents to vote. I am the only candidate that has, Served two terms on St. Pete City Council 2008 – 2016, two terms in Florida House – 2016 -2020 and Florida Commission on Ethics 2022 – 2024. Local and Legislative experience with zero learning curve “Ready To Serve, Day One” “With 15 years of experience building bridges and relationships as a

minority member, I've learned how to work across the aisle to delivering millions in much needed resources to our community"

**Insufficient affordable housing is hurting Florida families and limiting Florida's economy. What state measures do you support to address the affordable housing crisis, beyond tax and insurance reform, for both homeowners and renters? La falta de vivienda asequible está perjudicando a las familias de Florida y limitando la economía del estado. ¿Qué medidas estatales apoya para abordar la crisis de vivienda asequible, más allá de reformas fiscales y de seguros, tanto para propietarios como para inquilinos?**

I would propose legislation supporting zoning and land use reform. I would advocate for policies that allow higher-density housing and mixed-use developments. I would also support zoning laws that allow for more affordable housing types like multi-family units and accessory dwelling units (ADUs).

**Under what circumstances would you support access to abortion? ¿En qué circunstancias apoyaría el acceso al aborto?**

I am Pro Choice; a women's body is a women's choice.

**With respect to preemption and home rule, is the relationship and balance of power between state and local governments in Florida appropriately addressing local issues or how should it be redefined? Con respecto a la preeminencia estatal (preemption) y la autonomía local (home rule), ¿cree que la relación y el equilibrio de poder entre los gobiernos estatales y locales en Florida están abordando adecuadamente los problemas locales? o ¿Cómo debería redefinirse?**

The government closest to the people is more responsive to the people. I am the only candidate that has, Served two terms on St. Pete City Council 2008 – 2016, two terms in Florida House – 2016 -2020 and Florida Commission on Ethics 2022 – 2024. Local and Legislative experience with zero learning curve "Ready To Serve, Day One" "With 15 years of experience building bridges and relationships as a minority member, I've learned how to work across the aisle to delivering millions in much needed resources to our community"

**Equitable and affordable access to healthcare is declining, in part due to the decrease of federal insurance subsidies. At the same time, more Medicaid costs are being pushed onto the states. How should the state address these issues? El acceso equitativo y asequible a la atención médica está disminuyendo, en parte debido a la reducción de los subsidios federales de seguros. Al mismo tiempo, más costos de Medicaid se están trasladando a los estados. ¿Cómo debería el estado abordar estos problemas?**

Florida is one of the states that has not expanded Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act. I would advocate for Medicaid expansion to cover more low-income residents who currently fall into the "coverage gap" where they earn too much to qualify for Medicaid but too little to afford private insurance.

**Polls indicate the public is more concerned about the cost of property insurance than property taxes. What is your view and why? Las encuestas indican que el público está más preocupado por el costo del seguro de propiedad que por los impuestos a la propiedad. ¿Cuál es su opinión y por qué?**

Insurance is always higher than property tax, that said. I pay \$700 in property tax, divided by 365 = \$1.92 a day. I would gladly pay that for essential services, like Police, Fire, EMS.

## US Senator

The United States Senate is a legislative chamber in the bicameral (two houses) legislature of the United States, and together with the House of Representatives makes up the United States Congress. Each state, regardless of population, is represented by two senators, who serve staggered six-year terms. A senator must be at least 30 years old, a U.S. citizen for at least 9 years, and a resident of the state he or she represents. The current salary (2026) for rank-and-file members of the Senate is \$174,000 per year.



**Christopher Gleason**

**Party:** Republican

**Campaign Website:** [www.voteforgleason.com/](http://www.voteforgleason.com/)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/Voteforgleason/](https://www.facebook.com/Voteforgleason/)

**What reforms to the US immigration system do you support? Why? ¿Qué reformas al sistema de inmigración de Estados Unidos apoya usted? ¿Por qué?**

- candidate declined to respond -

**Do you believe climate change is a financial threat to the economy of the nation? Why or why not? ¿Cree que el cambio climático representa una amenaza financiera para la economía del país? ¿Por qué?**

- candidate declined to respond -

**Name your top two legislative priorities for the next Congressional term. Mencione sus dos principales prioridades legislativas para el próximo período del Congreso.**

- candidate declined to respond -

**"Freedom of speech" is included in the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Exactly what does "Freedom of Speech" mean to you? La libertad de expresión está incluida en la Primera Enmienda de la Constitución de los Estados Unidos. ¿Qué significa exactamente para usted la "libertad de expresión"?**

- candidate declined to respond -

**Who has the right, Congress or the President, to oversee federal agencies? ¿Quién tiene el derecho de supervisar a las agencias federales: el Congreso o el Presidente?**

- candidate declined to respond -

**If documentary proof of US citizenship becomes necessary in order to register to vote, how would you help those citizens, especially women, who no longer have or don't have easy and affordable access to documents to prove citizenship, such as certified birth and marriage certificates? Si se requiere prueba documental de ciudadanía estadounidense para registrarse para votar, ¿cómo ayudaría a esos ciudadanos, especialmente a las mujeres, que ya no tienen o no tienen acceso fácil y asequible a documentos que prueben su ciudadanía, como certificados de nacimiento o matrimonio certificados?**

- candidate declined to respond -

**What role do you believe the federal government should play in education at the pre-school level, K-12 level and higher education? ¿Qué papel cree que debería desempeñar el gobierno federal en la educación a nivel preescolar, educación K-12 (primaria y secundaria) y educación superior?**

- candidate declined to respond -



**Ashley Moody**

**Party:** Republican

**Campaign Website:** [www.moody.senate.gov/](http://www.moody.senate.gov/)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61576106136804](https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61576106136804)

**What reforms to the US immigration system do you support? Why? ¿Qué reformas al sistema de inmigración de Estados Unidos apoya usted? ¿Por qué?**

- candidate declined to respond -

**Do you believe climate change is a financial threat to the economy of the nation? Why or why not? ¿Cree que el cambio climático representa una amenaza financiera para la economía del país? ¿Por qué?**

- candidate declined to respond -

**Name your top two legislative priorities for the next Congressional term. Mencione sus dos principales prioridades legislativas para el próximo período del Congreso.**

- candidate declined to respond -

**"Freedom of speech" is included in the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Exactly what does "Freedom of Speech" mean to you? La libertad de expresión está incluida en la Primera Enmienda de la Constitución de los Estados Unidos. ¿Qué significa exactamente para usted la "libertad de expresión"?**

- candidate declined to respond -

**Who has the right, Congress or the President, to oversee federal agencies? ¿Quién tiene el derecho de supervisar a las agencias federales: el Congreso o el Presidente?**

- candidate declined to respond -

**If documentary proof of US citizenship becomes necessary in order to register to vote, how would you help those citizens, especially women, who no longer have or don't have easy and affordable access to documents to prove citizenship, such as certified birth and marriage certificates? Si se requiere prueba documental de ciudadanía estadounidense para registrarse para votar, ¿cómo ayudaría a esos ciudadanos, especialmente a las mujeres, que ya no tienen o no tienen acceso fácil y asequible a documentos que prueben su ciudadanía, como certificados de nacimiento o matrimonio certificados?**

- candidate declined to respond -

**What role do you believe the federal government should play in education at the pre-school level, K-12 level and higher education? ¿Qué papel cree que debería desempeñar el gobierno federal en la educación a nivel preescolar, educación K-12 (primaria y secundaria) y educación superior?**

- candidate declined to respond -



**Angela Nixon**

**Party:** Democratic

**Age:** 42

**Education:** University of Florida

**Hometown:** Jacksonville

**County:** Duval

**Campaign Website:** [angienixon.com/](http://angienixon.com/)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/angieforfl/](https://www.facebook.com/angieforfl/)

**Campaign Twitter Handle:** AngieNixon

**Instagram:** <https://www.instagram.com/theangienixon/>

**LinkedIn:** <https://www.linkedin.com/in/angienixonfl>

**Campaign Phone:** 4435386615

**Campaign Mailing Address:** 1100 Kings Road Unit 2565 Jacksonville FL 32203

**What reforms to the US immigration system do you support? Why? ¿Qué reformas al sistema de inmigración de Estados Unidos apoya usted? ¿Por qué?**

Comprehensive, compassionate reform with a pathway to citizenship for undocumented residents, fair treatment of immigrants, and asylum claims processed fairly and efficiently. Ending the detention and deportation system that lets corporations profit off family separation and cruelty. Immigration reform must also protect workers and prevent exploitation. Corporations too often exploit a broken system to create a workforce vulnerable to abuse, wage theft, and unsafe conditions. That hurts all workers. Every worker, regardless of their birth place, deserves fair pay, safe conditions, and full protection of labor laws. We should never let businesses profit by creating a second class workforce, paying immigrants below market rate or using immigration status to silence workers. A fair immigration system and a strong labor movement go hand in hand. America is strongest when we protect human dignity, uphold the rule of law and ensure that every worker competes on a level playing field.

**Do you believe climate change is a financial threat to the economy of the nation? Why or why not? ¿Cree que el cambio climático representa una amenaza financiera para la economía del país? ¿Por qué?**

Yes. Climate change is already imposing enormous costs on families, businesses, and governments. In Florida, we see it through rising insurance prices, rent, infrastructure damage, agricultural losses, and increased healthcare costs. Too often hurricanes result in working people being pushed out of their neighborhoods, while big developers buy up land at a low cost and turn it over for a profit. No one should profit off of human suffering ever. Climate change is not simply an environmental issue. It is an economic issue, a housing issue, an insurance issue, and a public health issue. Failing to address climate change will cost far more than investing in resilience, clean energy, modern infrastructure, and disaster preparedness today. Investing in resilient infrastructure will also create millions of jobs for Americans.

**Name your top two legislative priorities for the next Congressional term. Mencione sus dos principales prioridades legislativas para el próximo período del Congreso.**

1. Medicare for all 2. Stopping corporations from causing excessive price spikes in groceries, fuel, and essential goods to pad their bottom lines.

**"Freedom of speech" is included in the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Exactly what does "Freedom of Speech" mean to you? La libertad de expresión está incluida en la Primera Enmienda de la Constitución de los Estados Unidos. ¿Qué significa exactamente para usted la "libertad de expresión"?**

Freedom of speech means that everyone has the right to express their opinions, beliefs, criticisms, and ideas without fear of government censorship or retaliation. It protects political dissent, journalism, religious expression, peaceful protest, artistic expression, and the free exchange of ideas that make democracy possible. Freedom of speech is one of the foundations of a free society because it allows people to challenge those in power, advocate for change, and engage in public debate.

**Who has the right, Congress or the President, to oversee federal agencies? ¿Quién tiene el derecho de supervisar a las agencias federales: el Congreso o el Presidente?**

The Constitution establishes a system of checks and balances. Congress has the authority and responsibility to oversee federal agencies because it creates laws, appropriates funding, and serves as an independent check on executive power. The President manages and directs the executive branch on a day-to-day basis, but congressional oversight is essential to ensuring transparency, accountability, and compliance with the law. Our democracy functions best when both branches fulfill their constitutional responsibilities.

**If documentary proof of US citizenship becomes necessary in order to register to vote, how would you help those citizens, especially women, who no longer have or don't have easy and affordable access to documents to prove citizenship, such as certified birth and marriage certificates? Si se requiere prueba documental de ciudadanía estadounidense para registrarse para votar, ¿cómo ayudaría a esos ciudadanos, especialmente a las mujeres, que ya no tienen o no tienen acceso fácil y asequible a documentos que prueben su ciudadanía, como certificados de nacimiento o matrimonio certificados?**

Every eligible citizen should be able to exercise their constitutional right to vote without facing unreasonable financial or bureaucratic barriers. If documentary proof of citizenship becomes required, I would support federal funding to ensure eligible citizens can obtain birth certificates, marriage certificates, passport records, and other qualifying documents at little or no cost. I would also support streamlined administrative processes, mobile document assistance programs, online verification systems where appropriate, and special accommodations for women whose names have changed through marriage or divorce. Voting rights should never depend on a person's income, geographic location, or ability to navigate complicated government systems. Our responsibility should be making it easier for eligible citizens to vote, not harder.

**What role do you believe the federal government should play in education at the pre-school level, K-12 level and higher education? ¿Qué papel cree que debería desempeñar el gobierno federal en la educación a nivel preescolar, educación K-12 (primaria y secundaria) y educación superior?**

The federal government should ensure every person, regardless of where they are born or their family's income, has access to quality education and a secure future. This means expanding universal early childhood education. Childcare and early learning are foundational investments, not luxuries. It means strengthening public K-12 schools, investing in teachers, and closing funding gaps between communities, so a child's ZIP code doesn't determine their opportunities. Public education, including school meals, should be completely free. Schools should expand access to college-level coursework and dual enrollment. Public colleges and universities should be tuition free. We should expand trade schools and workforce training,



with living stipends. We should invest more in education than incarceration. Education is a public good, not a privilege. A skilled, educated workforce strengthens our economy, increases innovation and helps ensure everyone has a chance to reach their full potential.



## **Neelam Taneja Perry**

**Party:** Republican

**Education:** Medical Doctor

**County:** USA

**Campaign Website:** [PerryforFL.com](http://PerryforFL.com)

**Facebook:** [facebook.com/agewellxyz](https://facebook.com/agewellxyz)

**Campaign Twitter Handle:** @NTPerry

**Instagram:** @agewellxyz

**LinkedIn:** @NeelamTaneja

**Campaign Phone:** 727-403-0022

**Campaign Mailing Address:** 2850 34th St. N., #1 St. Petersburg FL 33713

### **What reforms to the US immigration system do you support? Why? ¿Qué reformas al sistema de inmigración de Estados Unidos apoya usted? ¿Por qué?**

The Illegal immigration has been exploited by the enemy countries to Invade our country. They are here not to contribute to the progress of the country but to terrorize and destroy and kill and loot by defrauding our system and corrupt the government. So, the laws have to be very intricately created to prevent this and to protect the Citizens of America. I have the knowledge, the skills, the understanding and ability to make the right laws for the people to maintain peace and security for our nation.

### **Do you believe climate change is a financial threat to the economy of the nation? Why or why not? ¿Cree que el cambio climático representa una amenaza financiera para la economía del país? ¿Por qué?**

No I don't think so. On the contrary it is the law of nature that living beings adapt to the environment. There were Dinosaurs and other creatures which don't exist. This is just a false narrative by the Democrats. But we do need better laws for FEMA to stop corruption in the process of getting people funding for the destruction that they have sustained because of climate emergencies.

### **Name your top two legislative priorities for the next Congressional term. Mencione sus dos principales prioridades legislativas para el próximo período del Congreso.**

I'm running for United States Senator. My priorities are to stop weaponization of law enforcement, Healthcare Reform Act, Judicial Reform Act, Prescription Drug Reform Act, DHS law's specification, world peace, stop polarization of parties, fix immigration laws, border security, economic prosperity, affordability

### **"Freedom of speech" is included in the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Exactly what does "Freedom of Speech" mean to you? La libertad de expresión está incluida en la Primera Enmienda de la Constitución de los Estados Unidos. ¿Qué significa exactamente para usted la "libertad de expresión"?**

The Freedom of Speech STOPS where the other party's rights begin.

### **Who has the right, Congress or the President, to oversee federal agencies? ¿Quién tiene el derecho de supervisar a las agencias federales: el Congreso o el Presidente?**

As per the Constitution, the President is the Head of the Country. The Government is under the authority, power and control of the President. This has been a hard job for President Trump, where he has a 'do-nothing' current Senator, who cares only about her Special Interests and not the people, to have to take the responsibility of doing what is best for the American people. That's why I urge the people to Vote for me so that I can stand with The President, who stands for the people of America, to create the laws through the Senate to support his agenda. MAGA.

### **If documentary proof of US citizenship becomes necessary in order to register to vote, how would you help those citizens, especially women, who no longer have or don't have easy and affordable access to documents to prove citizenship, such as certified birth and marriage certificates? Si se requiere prueba documental de ciudadanía estadounidense para registrarse para votar, ¿cómo ayudaría a esos ciudadanos, especialmente a las mujeres, que ya no tienen o no tienen acceso fácil y asequible a documentos que prueben su ciudadanía, como certificados de nacimiento o matrimonio certificados?**

That's why we need new laws to protect these people and prevent the illegals from getting through and not getting caught. So I have the knowledge and experience to make sure that the best laws are written and enforced in the future.

### **What role do you believe the federal government should play in education at the pre-school level, K-12 level and higher education? ¿Qué papel cree que debería desempeñar el gobierno federal en la educación a nivel preescolar, educación K-12 (primaria y secundaria) y educación superior?**

I believe that children should be raised by their parents and education of their own children is a fundamental Parental Right and Responsibility of the parents. If the parents don't know or want help or aren't able or willing to provide care for their children then they should be subject to the laws.



## Ernest "Ernie" Rivera

**Party:** Republican

**Age:** 68

**Education:** Doctor of Ministry, Reformed Theological Seminary (Orlando), 2000; M.A. Education, New York University, 1990; B.A. Psychology, University of Puerto Rico (Río Piedras), 1981

**Hometown:** Land O Lakes

**County:** Pasco

**Campaign Website:** [ernie4senate.com](http://ernie4senate.com)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/ernie4senate/](https://www.facebook.com/ernie4senate/)

**Campaign Twitter Handle:** Ernie4Senate

**Instagram:** <https://www.instagram.com/ernie4senate/>

**Campaign Phone:** 9413104719

**Campaign Mailing Address:** 7403 Temple Terrace Hwy Temple Terrace FL 33637

### **What reforms to the US immigration system do you support? Why? ¿Qué reformas al sistema de inmigración de Estados Unidos apoya usted? ¿Por qué?**

Ernie Rivera supports legal immigration, secure borders, and the rule of law. He backs strengthening border security—including physical barriers where needed—ending sanctuary-city policies, and enforcing existing law to keep communities safe from criminals. He supports a fair, efficient legal immigration process for those willing to come the right way and embrace American values, our Constitution, and the rule of law. As a bilingual minister who has served immigrant and Hispanic communities for decades, Ernie believes we can be both a nation of laws and a nation that welcomes those who come legally and contribute. Faith. Family. Florida First.

### **Do you believe climate change is a financial threat to the economy of the nation? Why or why not? ¿Cree que el cambio climático representa una amenaza financiera para la economía del país? ¿Por qué?**

Ernie Rivera believes the greatest threat to Florida's economy is not climate policy debate but the cost of heavy-handed federal mandates that raise energy prices on working families. He opposes the Green New Deal and similar programs that would eliminate reliable, affordable energy and expand government control. Ernie supports American energy independence through an all-of-the-above approach—reliable traditional sources alongside emerging technologies like Small Modular Reactors. He favors responsible stewardship of Florida's natural resources, coastlines, and communities, achieved through innovation and the free market rather than costly regulation that burdens families and job creators.

### **Name your top two legislative priorities for the next Congressional term. Mencione sus dos principales prioridades legislativas para el próximo período del Congreso.**

Protect Florida families and our constitutional freedoms—defending the sanctity of life, religious liberty, parental rights, and the Second Amendment. 2) Restore fiscal responsibility and economic strength—lowering taxes, cutting wasteful spending, securing the border, and protecting the Medicare and Social Security benefits seniors have earned. Ernie Rivera will bring the conviction and servant's heart of nearly five decades of community service to Washington, fighting for Floridians rather than the political establishment. Faith. Family. Florida First.

### **"Freedom of speech" is included in the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Exactly what does "Freedom of Speech" mean to you? La libertad de expresión está incluida en la Primera Enmienda de la Constitución de los Estados Unidos. ¿Qué significa exactamente para usted la "libertad de expresión"?**

Freedom of speech means every American has the God-given, constitutionally protected right to speak, worship, and express their convictions without fear of government censorship or retaliation. To Ernie Rivera, it is the cornerstone of a free society—protecting not only popular speech but unpopular and faith-based speech in the public square. It guards the right of pastors to preach, parents to speak at school boards, journalists to report, and citizens to dissent. Ernie believes the First Amendment protects people of faith from being silenced, and he will defend free expression for all Americans, including those he disagrees with. A nation that protects free speech protects liberty itself.

### **Who has the right, Congress or the President, to oversee federal agencies? ¿Quién tiene el derecho de supervisar a las agencias federales: el Congreso o el Presidente?**

Under our Constitution, both branches share responsibility. Congress creates federal agencies, funds them, and exercises oversight through its power of the purse and investigative authority. The President, as head of the executive branch, is charged with faithfully executing the laws and directing executive agencies. Ernie Rivera believes in restoring proper constitutional balance—reining in an unaccountable administrative bureaucracy, strengthening congressional oversight, and ensuring federal agencies answer to the elected representatives of the people rather than operating as a fourth branch of government. The Constitution's separation of powers exists to protect liberty, and Ernie will defend it.

### **If documentary proof of US citizenship becomes necessary in order to register to vote, how would you help those citizens, especially women, who no longer have or don't have easy and affordable access to documents to prove citizenship, such as certified birth and marriage certificates? Si se requiere prueba documental de ciudadanía estadounidense para registrarse para votar, ¿cómo ayudaría a esos ciudadanos, especialmente a las mujeres, que ya no tienen o no tienen acceso fácil y asequible a documentos que prueben su ciudadanía, como certificados de nacimiento o matrimonio certificados?**

Ernie Rivera supports ensuring every legal vote counts and that only citizens vote, which protects the voice of every eligible American. He also recognizes the real concern that some citizens—including women whose names have changed through marriage—may face hurdles obtaining documents. Ernie believes any citizenship-verification requirement must be paired with

accessible, low-cost or free pathways to obtain needed records: streamlined access to birth and marriage certificates, mobile and rural document services, fee waivers for low-income citizens, and ample lead time so no eligible voter is disenfranchised. Election integrity and ballot access are not opposites—Ernie is committed to both.

**What role do you believe the federal government should play in education at the pre-school level, K-12 level and higher education? ¿Qué papel cree que debería desempeñar el gobierno federal en la educación a nivel preescolar, educación K-12 (primaria y secundaria) y educación superior?**

Ernie Rivera believes education decisions belong with parents, local communities, and states—not Washington bureaucrats. He supports returning control to families and empowering parents in their children's education, and favors eliminating federal overreach that imposes one-size-fits-all mandates. At the K-12 level, he champions parental rights, school choice, and curriculum free from government propaganda. For higher education, he supports transparency, affordability, protecting free speech on campus, and prohibiting foreign-government funding that compromises American institutions. Ernie trusts Florida's parents and teachers far more than federal agencies to prepare the next generation. Faith. Family. Florida First.



**Alex Vindman**

**Party:** Democratic

**Age:** 51

**Education:** Binghamton University (BA), Harvard University (MA), Johns Hopkins University (MAIA, Doctorate of International Affairs)

**Hometown:** Davie, Florida

**County:** Broward

**Campaign Website:** [alexvindman.com/](http://alexvindman.com/)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/vindmana](http://www.facebook.com/vindmana)

**Campaign Twitter Handle:** <https://x.com/AVindman>

**Instagram:** [https://www.instagram.com/alexander\\_s\\_vindman/](https://www.instagram.com/alexander_s_vindman/)

**LinkedIn:** <https://www.linkedin.com/in/alexander-vindman-11340280/>

**Campaign Phone:** 7542739410

**Campaign Mailing Address:** 4611 S University Drive #194 Davie FL 33328

**What reforms to the US immigration system do you support? Why? ¿Qué reformas al sistema de inmigración de Estados Unidos apoya usted? ¿Por qué?**

As an immigrant refugee myself, I am staunchly pro-immigration reform. I oppose efforts to expand inhumane immigration detention that treats all undocumented as criminals and dangers to society. A system that swiftly and fairly adjudicates immigration status aligns with the U.S. Constitution's expectation of speedy trials. I believe that existing asylum laws are broadly functional and permit asylum seekers access to the U.S. I loathe the policies of family separation and seriously question the policy of family detention that equates to collective punishment, including the innocent. I will always support those coming to this country for a better life, and I will proudly vote for and cosponsor legislation that creates a pathway to citizenship for Dreamers, Temporary Protected Status holders, and essential workers. We need clear and fair immigration systems, while also preserving border security that assures U.S. national security.

**Do you believe climate change is a financial threat to the economy of the nation? Why or why not? ¿Cree que el cambio climático representa una amenaza financiera para la economía del país? ¿Por qué?**

The cost of homeowners insurance and utilities are skyrocketing, in part, due to environmental factors. In the Senate, I will fight to lower these costs and ensure everyday Floridians get much-needed relief from the affordability crisis my opponent, Ashley Moody, has created.

**Name your top two legislative priorities for the next Congressional term. Mencione sus dos principales prioridades legislativas para el próximo período del Congreso.**

Lowering costs for Floridians is my top priority. As I travel the state to meet voters, everybody tells me that life is unaffordable in our state. We need to lower the cost of housing, groceries, insurance, and health care. I also plan to fight the political corruption catering to special interests that is responsible for this affordability crisis.

**"Freedom of speech" is included in the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Exactly what does "Freedom of Speech" mean to you? La libertad de expresión está incluida en la Primera Enmienda de la Constitución de los Estados Unidos. ¿Qué significa exactamente para usted la "libertad de expresión"?**

Freedom of Speech means that all Americans have the right to express opinions, ideas, and their beliefs without being censored, sanctioned, or silenced by the government. As someone who called out corruption at the highest level, I know that We the People are the ultimate check on power.

**Who has the right, Congress or the President, to oversee federal agencies? ¿Quién tiene el derecho de supervisar a las agencias federales: el Congreso o el Presidente?**

The President has the right to appoint Cabinet secretaries and agency heads, and serves as the chief of the executive branch. Congress has the right – and responsibility – to establish agencies, control their funding, and conduct legislative oversight to ensure federal agencies are serving the American people and not wasting taxpayer dollars. One of the major reasons costs are skyrocketing is because Senators like my opponent have abdicated their responsibility to rein in the Executive Branch on matters such as tariffs; in the U.S. Senate, I will reassert Congress' Article I authority and fight to lower costs and hold corrupt politicians accountable.

**If documentary proof of US citizenship becomes necessary in order to register to vote, how would you help those citizens, especially women, who no longer have or don't have easy and affordable access to documents to prove citizenship, such as certified birth and marriage certificates? Si se requiere prueba documental de ciudadanía estadounidense para registrarse para votar, ¿cómo ayudaría a esos ciudadanos, especialmente a las mujeres, que ya no tienen o no tienen acceso fácil y asequible a documentos que prueben su ciudadanía, como certificados de nacimiento o matrimonio certificados?**

Only U.S. citizens should be able to vote in U.S. elections. In the U.S. Senate, I will oppose any legislation that disenfranchises eligible U.S. citizens from participating in our democracy. If there is red tape preventing eligible U.S. citizens from voting in elections, including women, my job as a U.S. Senator will be to cut this red tape and make sure any citizen who is eligible to vote has easy and affordable access to documents proving their citizenship and eligibility to vote.

**What role do you believe the federal government should play in education at the pre-school level, K-12 level and higher education? ¿Qué papel cree que debería desempeñar el gobierno federal en la educación a nivel preescolar, educación K-12 (primaria y secundaria) y educación superior?**

The federal government should ensure that there is enough funding at the pre-school level, K-12 level, and in higher education so that students, teachers, and families have the resources they need to succeed.

## District 13

U.S. Representatives are elected every two years (no term limits) to serve the voters of a specific Congressional District. A Representative must be at least 25 years old, a U.S. citizen for at least seven years, and a resident of the state he or she represents. Duties include passing laws, serving on committees, electing the leadership of the House of Representatives, and originating all matters of taxation. Representatives maintain offices in their home district and in Washington, D.C., where they provide extensive constituent services. The current salary (2026) for a member of the House is \$174,000 per year.



**Leela J. Gray**

**Party:** Democratic

**Age:** 59

**Education:** Bachelor's degree in Mass Communications from Elon University in North Carolina Master's degree in Journalism from Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana Master of Strategic Studies from the U.S. Army War College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania Juris Doctorate from Stetson University College of Law

in Gulfport, Florida

**Hometown:** Lynchburg, VA

**County:** Pinellas

**Campaign Website:** [www.leelagray.com/](http://www.leelagray.com/)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/leela.j.gray/](https://www.facebook.com/leela.j.gray/)

**Campaign Twitter Handle:** LeelaJGray

**Instagram:** <https://www.instagram.com/LeelaJGray>

**LinkedIn:** <https://www.linkedin.com/in/leelajgray/>

**Campaign Phone:** 727-338-8252

**Campaign Mailing Address:** P.O. Box 40162 St. Petersburg FL 33743

**What reforms to the US immigration system do you support? Why? ¿Qué reformas al sistema de inmigración de Estados Unidos apoya usted? ¿Por qué?**

Our immigration system is broken because politicians choose partisanship over solutions. Immigrants are vital to our heritage and economy — many have lived here for decades, paying taxes, and supporting the businesses that form Florida's backbone. In Congress, I'll push for immigration reform that secures our borders and treats immigrants with dignity. The Trump administration's approach to immigration is not only cruel, but lacks accountability and transparency, and in Congress, I will fight to restore humanity, common sense, and responsibility to the system for the American people.

**Do you believe climate change is a financial threat to the economy of the nation? Why or why not? ¿Cree que el cambio climático representa una amenaza financiera para la economía del país? ¿Por qué?**

In 2024, Hurricanes Helene and Milton wreaked catastrophic damage on Florida's 13th district. Two years later, our neighbors and small businesses are still rebuilding while navigating skyrocketing utilities and tripled property insurance rates. As a coastal community on the front lines, we see that climate change is an immediate economic threat. We must combat this crisis by growing our clean-energy economy and rewarding American businesses that innovate in clean energy technology and resilient infrastructure. As a retired Brigadier General, I also believe climate change poses a serious risk to our national security. We need a strategy that ensures energy diversity and reduces the threat to our environment. We cannot afford the cost of inaction.

**Name your top two legislative priorities for the next Congressional term. Mencione sus dos principales prioridades legislativas para el próximo período del Congreso.**

In Congress, I will tackle the cost-of-living crisis by taking on corporations and insurance monopolies driving up homeowners, flood, and health premiums, and passing a real middle-class tax cut. I will also fight to restore integrity, transparency, and



accountability to our government by prosecuting corruption. I will lead to build consensus, rather than engage in partisan politics, to solve our most pressing problems.

**“Freedom of speech” is included in the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Exactly what does “Freedom of Speech” mean to you? La libertad de expresión está incluida en la Primera Enmienda de la Constitución de los Estados Unidos. ¿Qué significa exactamente para usted la “libertad de expresión”?**

I spent 30 years in uniform fighting for our Constitution and the freedoms it bestows on the American people. The freedom to speak out and to make our voices heard by our leaders and our fellow citizens is the bedrock of our democracy. It is what makes America unique, resilient, and the greatest force for liberty in the world. It is what differentiates us from the tyrants and authoritarian adversaries, and it is what truly makes all citizens equal. In our great republic, no Americans’ voice is more important than the next. As I have throughout my life, I will always fight to protect our freedom of speech.

**Who has the right, Congress or the President, to oversee federal agencies? ¿Quién tiene el derecho de supervisar a las agencias federales: el Congreso o el Presidente?**

It is the Executive Branch’s role to execute the laws and manage the federal agencies. It is Congress’ constitutional responsibility to fund the government and provide oversight to ensure the funding is being properly used and the laws are being executed. This Congress, including FL-13’s current representative, has failed to provide that crucial check and balance to the Executive Branch. We must require oversight that creates transparency and accountability for all agency action, including spending, rulemaking, policy implementation, and federal overreach.

**If documentary proof of US citizenship becomes necessary in order to register to vote, how would you help those citizens, especially women, who no longer have or don’t have easy and affordable access to documents to prove citizenship, such as certified birth and marriage certificates? Si se requiere prueba documental de ciudadanía estadounidense para registrarse para votar, ¿cómo ayudaría a esos ciudadanos, especialmente a las mujeres, que ya no tienen o no tienen acceso fácil y asequible a documentos que prueben su ciudadanía, como certificados de nacimiento o matrimonio certificados?**

Laws requiring documentary proof of US citizenship for voting burden married women who change their last name, people of color, and service members. Passports are prohibitively expensive, so in Congress, I would push for a federal framework that allows for a wide range of secondary documents to be able to vote, including military IDs, marriage certificates, birth certificates, and divorce documentation. I would push for a federal law that requires states and municipalities to waive all fees for records if the applicant declares it is for voter registration purposes. Nine percent of all Americans do not have access to their birth certificate so any laws requiring proof of citizenship should mandate a provision to allow those people to register without undue burdens in their registration process. We should direct federal and/or state funding for the creation of a plan such as mobile units sent to communities to assist anyone that does not have access to their documents or needs help.

**What role do you believe the federal government should play in education at the pre-school level, K-12 level and higher education? ¿Qué papel cree que debería desempeñar el gobierno federal en la educación a nivel preescolar, educación K-12 (primaria y secundaria) y educación superior?**

President Trump’s dismantling of the Department of Education is a direct attack on public education in America. In Congress, I’ll fight to restore funding for K-12 public education, work to pay educators a fair, livable **Salary**, and invest in apprenticeship and trade programs for high school students and graduates, so they can graduate with the skills to compete in today’s economy.



**John William Liccione**

**Party:** Democratic

**Age:** 65

**Education:** Bachelor of Science Electrical Engineering

**Hometown:** New Milford, PA

**County:** Pinellas

**Campaign Website:** [johnforpinellas.com/](http://johnforpinellas.com/)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61586924175155](https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61586924175155)

**Campaign Twitter Handle:** [https://x.com/liccione\\_john](https://x.com/liccione_john)

**Instagram:** <https://www.instagram.com/johnlicc4c/>

**LinkedIn:** <https://www.linkedin.com/in/johnliccione/>

**Campaign Phone:** 443-698-8156

**Campaign Mailing Address:** 1497 Main St Suite 196 Dunedin FL 34698

**What reforms to the US immigration system do you support? Why? ¿Qué reformas al sistema de inmigración de Estados Unidos apoya usted? ¿Por qué?**

I support a secure, high-tech southern border, investing in ramping up immigration court capacity, humane treatment of those yearning to breathe free in America, and screening out the criminals seeking to do us harm. I’m the son and grandson of Italian immigrants who came to America through Ellis Island in the 30’s. If we could do immigration processing humanely and at scale some 9 decades ago, we can do so again. America was once a shining city on a hill, a beacon of freedom to the world. I will support legislation to redirect funding of this ungodly mass deportation system of Stephen Miller by defunding it and redirect funds to combat child sex trafficking and counterintelligence targeting our countries enemies.

**Do you believe climate change is a financial threat to the economy of the nation? Why or why not? ¿Cree que el cambio climático representa una amenaza financiera para la economía del país? ¿Por qué?**

Yes it is. After living through back to back hurricanes in 2024 and witnessed the thousands of homes and businesses destroyed, I've seen the financial devastation on the beach communities. I'm an engineer, the STEM candidate in my race, and I'll support legislation to increase investments and R&D in clean energy, federal grants for solar kits for homes and business, in smart-safe nuclear.

**Name your top two legislative priorities for the next Congressional term. Mencione sus dos principales prioridades legislativas para el próximo período del Congreso.**

Interdicting and ending child sex trafficking and defending our democracy by fighting corruption and defending the integrity of our elections and the voting rights of our people. I propose a National Child Defense Act of 2027 to take \$100B from the mass deportation budget and fund a strategic child defense initiative which will provide a multi-agency task force to interdict the Epstein networks, roll up the kingpins and those who enable them, and end this evil scourge. As to democracy defense, I've ALREADY sued Ron DeSantis to roll back his unconstitutional gerrymander map (see Liccione-v-DeSantis, et al, Case No. 26-002751-CI). I did not stand back and stand by while over 100K Pinellas County voters' congressional votes were deported from Pinellas over Tampa Bay into Manatee County. I'm the only candidate fighting this fight and walking my talk.

**"Freedom of speech" is included in the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Exactly what does "Freedom of Speech" mean to you? La libertad de expresión está incluida en la Primera Enmienda de la Constitución de los Estados Unidos. ¿Qué significa exactamente para usted la "libertad de expresión"?**

Freedom of the press/speech is the bedrock of our Constitution. We are watching the takeover of mainstream media by partisan forces and oligarchs with malicious agendas. They've infiltrated our media outlets, radio, local news, national news, much of social media. I write lyrics and perform comedic political satire and have been an independent investigative journalist at RussiLeaks, The Crabber News, and The Bleed on Substack. I marched to the White House during the George Floyd protests as a USAF veteran for black lives. I marched to the gates of the Russian embassy in 2022 gave a fiery speech into the embassy security cameras where I called Putin a pedophile president, and demanded the Russian people take him out. I operate at the bleeding edge of democracy with my speech, my music, my actions, and through creative acts of non-violence.

**Who has the right, Congress or the President, to oversee federal agencies? ¿Quién tiene el derecho de supervisar a las agencias federales: el Congreso o el Presidente?**

Congress has oversight responsibility and exercises influence and governance through the power of the purse, while the President has executive authority. That doesn't extend to Congressionally established independent agencies like the Federal Reserve and the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. The Republicans in Congress have abdicated their responsibility to keep in check a rogue president: They are cowed supplicants to a Putin-compromised president. I'm running to unseat Anna Luna who is the single most Russian-compromised member of Congress. She gives Capitol tours to sanctioned Russian Duma politicians, advocates for Russia, against Ukraine, while taking Chinese Communist Party laundered money through the Tampa iGas Corporation. I'm a veteran USAF/NSA intelligence analyst. I'll serve on the intelligence, defense, judiciary oversight committees. I will use the power of the purse and oversight to impeach and remove Pete Hegseth, Todd Blanch, other corrupt officials.

**If documentary proof of US citizenship becomes necessary in order to register to vote, how would you help those citizens, especially women, who no longer have or don't have easy and affordable access to documents to prove citizenship, such as certified birth and marriage certificates? Si se requiere prueba documental de ciudadanía estadounidense para registrarse para votar, ¿cómo ayudaría a esos ciudadanos, especialmente a las mujeres, que ya no tienen o no tienen acceso fácil y asequible a documentos que prueben su ciudadanía, como certificados de nacimiento o matrimonio certificados?**

Requiring proof of US citizenship to vote sounds like a virtue but it is not when it's enacted as a vice with malicious intent. We cannot deny women the right to vote because of a name change, without first having provided a properly funded and resourced phase-in period, over the next decade, so no woman is left behind at the ballot box. We did this with RealID. We can do it with voter registration. We cannot have a knife-edge cutover. The SAVE Act, for which Anna Luna is queen advocate, is a wolf in sheep's clothing. It purports to solve what is a SMALL problem with a big, flashy, draconian, non-democratic law that will hurt millions of women. We should provide a national hotline, support system, and funding to ensure all American women can vote instead of introducing MORE friction into the democratic process. We should be making it EASIER to vote legally, harder to vote illegally, and prosecute those committing actual at-scale election fraud.

**What role do you believe the federal government should play in education at the pre-school level, K-12 level and higher education? ¿Qué papel cree que debería desempeñar el gobierno federal en la educación a nivel preescolar, educación K-12 (primaria y secundaria) y educación superior?**

The Dept of Education must be properly funded and set national standards and infrastructure support. I support a national minimum teacher wage for public schools. Here in FL we are 50th in teachers' pay and that's an embarrassment. I support federal grants to ramp up STEM education and to recruit more STEM professionals into the teaching profession. For college, I'm calling for re-establishing FDR's Civilian Conservation Corps where our college age students can learn trades while having a portion of their college education covered for honorable service. I support capping college loan interest rates at 3 percent and advocate for the elimination of the bankruptcy exemption on college loans.



**Brandt Robinson**

**Party:** Democratic

**Age:** 56

**Education:** FSU - BS Political Science - With a minor in Black Studies. FSU -Masters in African American History  
**Hometown:** Palm Harbor  
**County:** Pinellas  
**Campaign Website:** brandtforcongress.com/  
**Facebook:** www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61585424938260  
**Campaign Twitter Handle:** https://x.com/brandtrobinson  
**Instagram:** https://www.instagram.com/brandtforcongress/  
**Campaign Phone:** 8137327239  
**Campaign Mailing Address:** PO Box 91 Palm Harbor FL 34684

**What reforms to the US immigration system do you support? Why? ¿Qué reformas al sistema de inmigración de Estados Unidos apoya usted? ¿Por qué?**

An affordable path to citizenship for green card holders and longtime undocumented residents who live, work, and pay taxes. Citizenship for DACA recipients. Investments in root-cause solutions abroad. ICE must be abolished for its constitutional and human-rights violations, and we need a new agency with independent oversight. Trump's policy is built on the lie that immigrants commit crimes or vote illegally, but immigrants commit far fewer crimes than citizens. 70-80% of ICE detainees are already in the legal immigration process yet are detained without due process. 8 U.S. citizens have been killed, thousands are missing, detainees are being tortured, and there's no accountability. We've spent \$38B on mass-detention real estate while private prisons make billions, yet we're told we can't afford healthcare. It's unconscionable.

**Do you believe climate change is a financial threat to the economy of the nation? Why or why not? ¿Cree que el cambio climático representa una amenaza financiera para la economía del país? ¿Por qué?**

Ignoring climate change endangers the economy. Just look at the \$2B in damage from Helene and Milton, neither were direct hits. Intense weather is driving insurance costs up, and people are leaving Pinellas because they can't afford to live here. We're becoming more vulnerable, not less. Our district lacks resilient infrastructure for a high-category storm. 80% of our economy is in service and hospitality, so failing to act on climate resiliency is a policy failure that could cost jobs, discourage visitors, and increase departures. We must invest in clean energy, modernized building codes, and innovative development. Neglecting nature, letting polluters off the hook, and paving over green space while flooding worsens makes no sense. Every region has its own disaster, and ignoring resiliency will have long-term consequences.

**Name your top two legislative priorities for the next Congressional term. Mencione sus dos principales prioridades legislativas para el próximo período del Congreso.**

Ending Citizens United is essential to addressing the affordability crisis. Unlimited spending by corporations, special interests, foreign actors, and the ultra-wealthy has produced politicians who rig the rules and make choices that burden working families. It shows up in forever wars, price manipulation across housing, utilities, food, and medicine, and in weak antitrust enforcement as markets consolidate. Pass the Progressive Caucus' 10-bill economic plan, which tackles housing, prescription costs, childcare, worker protections, and more to restore dignity and opportunity.

**"Freedom of speech" is included in the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Exactly what does "Freedom of Speech" mean to you? La libertad de expresión está incluida en la Primera Enmienda de la Constitución de los Estados Unidos. ¿Qué significa exactamente para usted la "libertad de expresión"?**

My mother taught us that the First Amendment is more than law — it's the freedom of expression and the core of our natural rights, the fire that keeps our democracy alive. It's the promise that your voice cannot be silenced, the shield that protects every courageous person who speaks against injustice and stands up for the common good. When it's threatened, we are threatened. We must defend it with everything we've got, because it means defending the very soul of who we are as human beings on this land.

**Who has the right, Congress or the President, to oversee federal agencies? ¿Quién tiene el derecho de supervisar a las agencias federales: el Congreso o el Presidente?**

Congress holds the constitutional responsibility for overseeing federal agencies. But real oversight only works when we elect more leaders who aren't bought by corporations or special interests. Pay-to-play politics is how we ended up with a Supreme Court that expanded executive power and why agencies like ICE continue violating constitutional and human rights without accountability. To fix oversight, we must first fix who we send to Congress.

**If documentary proof of US citizenship becomes necessary in order to register to vote, how would you help those citizens, especially women, who no longer have or don't have easy and affordable access to documents to prove citizenship, such as certified birth and marriage certificates? Si se requiere prueba documental de ciudadanía estadounidense para registrarse para votar, ¿cómo ayudaría a esos ciudadanos, especialmente a las mujeres, que ya no tienen o no tienen acceso fácil y asequible a documentos que prueben su ciudadanía, como certificados de nacimiento o matrimonio certificados?**

The SAVE Act and state versions like Florida's are built on the bigoted lie that non-citizens are voting in our elections. That claim is false. Independent studies consistently show that the U.S. runs clean elections. We already show ID to vote, and forcing millions of verified citizens to prove themselves again, at their own expense and time, is anti-democratic. Our campaign fully supports the advocacy groups pushing back in court and representatives holding strong in Congress. If this law moves forward, we will partner with those same groups to help voters obtain their records and push for the government to fully fund accessible document services.

**What role do you believe the federal government should play in education at the pre-school level, K-12 level and higher education? ¿Qué papel cree que debería desempeñar el gobierno federal en la educación a nivel preescolar, educación K-12 (primaria y secundaria) y educación superior?**

The federal government has a responsibility to make sure every student in America gets a fair shot across all levels. That means real access to public education and strong, consistent quality in every community. The Department of Education exists to uphold those goals, and it must be fully funded so it can do its job. Equity shouldn't be optional. Federal oversight is meant to close gaps, protect civil rights, support and ensure that no child's education depends on their location, condition or income. Access to quality education is foundational to a healthy democracy.

## District 16

U.S. Representatives are elected every two years (no term limits) to serve the voters of a specific Congressional District. A Representative must be at least 25 years old, a U.S. citizen for at least seven years, and a resident of the state he or she represents. Duties include passing laws, serving on committees, electing the leadership of the House of Representatives, and originating all matters of taxation. Representatives maintain offices in their home district and in Washington, D.C., where they provide extensive constituent services. The current salary (2026) for a member of the House is \$174,000 per year.

Click here to view the June 18th Democratic District 16 Candidate Forum: <https://youtu.be/MUXI71-sVHs?si=m9-UJEtSevTNJ4S5>

Click here to view the July 9th Republican District 16 Candidate Forum: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KhYDPCMilww>



### Sydney Gruters

**Party:** Republican

**Age:** 44

**Education:** University of Florida, Dual Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and Criminology

**Hometown:** Sarasota

**County:** Sarasota County

**Campaign Website:** [GrutersForCongress.com](http://GrutersForCongress.com)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61576458107829](https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61576458107829)

**Campaign Twitter Handle:** [SydneyGrutersFL](https://twitter.com/SydneyGrutersFL)

**Instagram:** [www.instagram.com/sydneygrutersforcongress/](https://www.instagram.com/sydneygrutersforcongress/)

**LinkedIn:** <https://www.linkedin.com/company/sydney-gruters-for-congress>

**Campaign Phone:** (240)762-9110

**Campaign Mailing Address:** 935 N Beneva Rd STE 801 P.O. Box 50037 Sarasota FL 34232

### **What reforms to the US immigration system do you support? Why? ¿Qué reformas al sistema de inmigración de Estados Unidos apoya usted? ¿Por qué?**

As a mom and lifelong Floridian, keeping our communities and children safe is my top priority. I support President Trump's efforts to secure our borders and enforce the rule of law, because every family deserves to feel safe at home. I also believe we must improve and streamline our legal immigration system so that those following the law are not buried in red tape, making it nearly impossible to navigate for business owners and individuals alike. We can have both strong border security and a legal system that works. I am committed to practical solutions that protect our neighborhoods, uphold our laws, and give families and employers the certainty they need.

### **Do you believe climate change is a financial threat to the economy of the nation? Why or why not? ¿Cree que el cambio climático representa una amenaza financiera para la economía del país? ¿Por qué?**

In Florida, we live with the reality of hurricanes, flooding, and rising insurance costs every day. As someone who has answered calls firsthand after natural disasters, helping families access relief and navigate federal agencies, I have seen firsthand how these challenges affect family budgets and small businesses. We need to invest in strong infrastructure, expand access to resources that work for our families, and ensure coverage stays affordable. I believe we can protect our environment while keeping our economy strong. My focus is on practical, commonsense steps that keep Florida families safe and help our local economy thrive.

### **Name your top two legislative priorities for the next Congressional term. Mencione sus dos principales prioridades legislativas para el próximo período del Congreso.**

My top priority is making life more affordable for working families in Southwest Florida. That means cutting taxes, reducing red tape that drives up prices, lowering the cost of housing and insurance, and making sure families can afford everyday essentials. My second priority is delivering first-class constituent service and serving as the true liaison between the people of Florida's 16th Congressional District and their federal government. For over 20 years, I have worked side by side with families as they navigate federal agencies, helping them solve problems and deliver real results. In Congress, I will bring that same dedication every day to serve our district.

### **"Freedom of speech" is included in the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Exactly what does "Freedom of Speech" mean to you? La libertad de expresión está incluida en la Primera Enmienda de la Constitución de los Estados Unidos. ¿Qué significa exactamente para usted la "libertad de expresión"?**

Freedom of speech is at the heart of what makes America the land of the free and home of the brave. It means every person has the right to speak up, share their beliefs, practice their faith, and take part in our Constitutional Republic without fear. I believe our universities should welcome open discussion and civil discourse, parents should have a voice in their children's



education, and journalists should be able to do their jobs freely. I have seen how important it is to protect these rights for everyone, and in Congress I will never waver in defending the First Amendment.

**Who has the right, Congress or the President, to oversee federal agencies? ¿Quién tiene el derecho de supervisar a las agencias federales: el Congreso o el Presidente?**

Congress and the President both play important roles in ensuring that federal agencies serve the American people. Congress is responsible for oversight and making sure taxpayer dollars are spent wisely, and I take that duty seriously. I support President Trump's efforts to hold agencies accountable and make government work for families, not for bureaucracy. Our system of checks and balances is there to protect our freedoms. In Congress, I will work hard to ensure every agency is transparent, efficient, and focused on serving the American people.

**If documentary proof of US citizenship becomes necessary in order to register to vote, how would you help those citizens, especially women, who no longer have or don't have easy and affordable access to documents to prove citizenship, such as certified birth and marriage certificates? Si se requiere prueba documental de ciudadanía estadounidense para registrarse para votar, ¿cómo ayudaría a esos ciudadanos, especialmente a las mujeres, que ya no tienen o no tienen acceso fácil y asequible a documentos que prueben su ciudadanía, como certificados de nacimiento o matrimonio certificados?**

Every eligible American should have the opportunity to vote and trust that their vote counts. Requiring proof of citizenship to register is a commonsense way to protect our elections. American women are more than capable of navigating this process. We run households, build careers, care for families, and handle more before 9 AM than most people do all day. Our state agencies exist to help all citizens access the records they need. I will work to ensure these processes are accessible to everyone. We can have secure elections and make it easy for eligible citizens to register, and I stand committed to both.

**What role do you believe the federal government should play in education at the pre-school level, K-12 level and higher education? ¿Qué papel cree que debería desempeñar el gobierno federal en la educación a nivel preescolar, educación K-12 (primaria y secundaria) y educación superior?**

I believe parents and local communities know best when it comes to education. For preschool and K-12 education, the federal government should leave curriculum decisions to parents, teachers, and local school boards. I also support accountability and transparency for colleges that receive federal dollars. My experience leading the New College Foundation showed me what happens when a public university loses its way and stops serving students. The transformation of New College, returning it to academic excellence and its core educational mission, showed me what is possible when leaders dare to demand better. That is the model I will carry to Congress: hold institutions accountable, protect students, and always put families first.



**Jonathan Harris**

**Party:** Democratic

**Age:** 40

**Education:** College Graduate - St. Petersburg College

**Hometown:** Jacksonville, FL

**County:** Hillsborough

**Campaign Website:** [www.jonharrisforcongress.com/](http://www.jonharrisforcongress.com/)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/people/Jon-Harris-For-Congress/61582008541993/](https://www.facebook.com/people/Jon-Harris-For-Congress/61582008541993/)

**Campaign Twitter Handle:** HarrisFL16

**Instagram:** <https://www.instagram.com/jonharrisforcongress/>

**Campaign Phone:** 813-445-3674

**Campaign Mailing Address:** PO Box 165 Riverview FL 33578

**What reforms to the US immigration system do you support? Why? ¿Qué reformas al sistema de inmigración de Estados Unidos apoya usted? ¿Por qué?**

Our immigration system is broken, and we need a fair, practical fix. I support a clear, earned pathway to citizenship for long-term undocumented immigrants and Dreamers who are working, paying taxes, and contributing to our communities, paired with smart, humane border security. We should keep families together, protect people seeking asylum, and modernize our system so businesses and farms can hire the workers they need without forcing people into the shadows. That approach is better for our economy, safer for our communities, and more consistent with America's values.

**Do you believe climate change is a financial threat to the economy of the nation? Why or why not? ¿Cree que el cambio climático representa una amenaza financiera para la economía del país? ¿Por qué?**

Yes. Climate change is already costing us billions through stronger hurricanes, floods, wildfires, heat waves, and higher insurance premiums, and those costs hit Florida especially hard. When homes become uninsurable, small businesses can't reopen after storms, and taxpayers keep footing the bill for disasters, that is a direct threat to our national and local economy. If we invest now in clean energy, resilient infrastructure, and protecting our coasts, we can save money over the long term, create good-paying jobs, and keep Florida a place where families and businesses can afford to stay.

**Name your top two legislative priorities for the next Congressional term. Mencione sus dos principales prioridades legislativas para el próximo período del Congreso.**

My first priority is protecting our democracy and voting rights. That means fighting partisan gerrymandering, restoring and strengthening the Voting Rights Act, expanding early voting and vote-by-mail, and making sure every eligible voter in Florida can cast a ballot that is counted. My second priority is rebuilding basic economic security for working families. I will work to

raise the federal minimum wage to at least 15 dollars as a floor on the way to a true living wage, support unions and small businesses, and lower costs for health care and housing so people are not one emergency away from losing everything. **“Freedom of speech” is included in the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Exactly what does “Freedom of Speech” mean to you? La libertad de expresión está incluida en la Primera Enmienda de la Constitución de los Estados Unidos. ¿Qué significa exactamente para usted la “libertad de expresión”?**

To me, freedom of speech means that people can speak, write, and express their views, especially about government and public issues, without fear of punishment or retaliation from the government. It protects the right to criticize elected officials, to organize and protest, and for communities who have often been silenced, including religious and racial minorities, to share their experiences and demand equal treatment. Freedom of speech does not mean there are no consequences for what we say, but it does mean the government should not be in the business of banning books, censoring lawful speech, or shutting down peaceful protest, while still enforcing laws against true threats and targeted harassment.

**Who has the right, Congress or the President, to oversee federal agencies? ¿Quién tiene el derecho de supervisar a las agencias federales: el Congreso o el Presidente?**

Both branches have a role in overseeing federal agencies, but in different ways. Congress creates and funds the agencies, writes the laws they must follow, holds hearings, and uses its oversight powers to make sure they are carrying out those laws and spending taxpayer money responsibly. The President leads the executive branch day to day and is responsible for making sure agencies faithfully execute the laws, appointing and, when necessary, removing agency leaders. A healthy system requires both: an engaged Congress that asks tough and a responsible President who manages the agencies in line with the law, not for personal or partisan gain

**If documentary proof of US citizenship becomes necessary in order to register to vote, how would you help those citizens, especially women, who no longer have or don't have easy and affordable access to documents to prove citizenship, such as certified birth and marriage certificates? Si se requiere prueba documental de ciudadanía estadounidense para registrarse para votar, ¿cómo ayudaría a esos ciudadanos, especialmente a las mujeres, que ya no tienen o no tienen acceso fácil y asequible a documentos que prueben su ciudadanía, como certificados de nacimiento o matrimonio certificados?**

I oppose new paperwork barriers that make it harder for eligible citizens to register and vote. Instead of forcing people to hunt down old documents, I support automatic voter registration, where eligible citizens are added to the rolls when they interact with government agencies, similar to how draft registration works. Agencies already collect the information needed to confirm citizenship and identity, so we should use that data to keep our rolls accurate and complete while making sure women, older voters, and low-income citizens are never blocked from voting just because they cannot afford or easily access a certified birth or marriage certificate.

**What role do you believe the federal government should play in education at the pre-school level, K-12 level and higher education? ¿Qué papel cree que debería desempeñar el gobierno federal en la educación a nivel preescolar, educación K-12 (primaria y secundaria) y educación superior?**

I believe the federal government should be a partner in education, not a micromanager. At every level, from pre-K through college, the federal role should be to set basic civil rights protections and high expectations for quality, while helping states and local districts meet them. That means expanding access to quality pre-K, setting and supporting strong K-12 standards so every child gets at least a basic floor of opportunity no matter their ZIP code, and helping fund schools so they can pay teachers fairly and provide up-to-date books, technology, and safe buildings. For higher education, the federal government should rein in predatory lending, expand grants and affordable paths like community college and trade programs, and make sure cost is never the reason a qualified student can't continue their education.



**Kelly Kirschner**

**Party:** Democratic

**Age:** 51

**Education:** B.S. / M.A. - Georgetown University

**Hometown:** Sarasota

**County:** Sarasota

**Campaign Website:** [kellykirschner.com](http://kellykirschner.com)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/kirschnerforcongress/](https://www.facebook.com/kirschnerforcongress/)

**Campaign Twitter Handle:** KellyKirschner

**Instagram:** <https://www.instagram.com/kirschnerforcongress/>

**LinkedIn:** <https://www.linkedin.com/in/kellykirschner/>

**Campaign Phone:** (727)351-3453

**Campaign Mailing Address:** 76 4th St N, #727 St. Petersburg FL 33701

**What reforms to the US immigration system do you support? Why? ¿Qué reformas al sistema de inmigración de Estados Unidos apoya usted? ¿Por qué?**

Our broken immigration system has created victims of congressional failure: families who want a secure border, people who have lived, worked, and raised families here for years, those who followed the legal immigration process, employers trying to do the right thing, and communities frustrated that Washington keeps choosing politics over solutions. I support reforms that secure the border, enforce the law firmly, fairly, and humanely, speed up legal immigration and asylum cases, create an earned pathway to legal status for long-term undocumented residents who have contributed here, and hold employers

accountable when they knowingly exploit undocumented workers. We can't keep spending billions on political spectacle while employers who knowingly profit from illegal labor walk away clean. We can protect our borders without abandoning our values. Government exists to solve real problems, not create new ones.

**Do you believe climate change is a financial threat to the economy of the nation? Why or why not? ¿Cree que el cambio climático representa una amenaza financiera para la economía del país? ¿Por qué?**

Yes. Call it climate change or risk management, Gulf Coast families are paying the price. Our economy depends on tourism, agriculture, fishing, and real estate, and every one of those industries is absorbing the costs. Insurance premiums are skyrocketing, families are losing coverage, hurricanes leave communities rebuilding for years, and our farmers and fishermen face growing financial risks from stronger storms and changing conditions. This isn't tomorrow's problem; it's today's bill. As Mayor, I held Florida Power & Light accountable, and I've seen firsthand what happens when families are left waiting for insurance payments and federal help after a hurricane. Government's job isn't to debate reality. It's to respond to it. In Congress, I'll fight for a national reinsurance backstop to lower insurance costs, a fully funded and proactive FEMA, disaster and crop insurance that work when families need them, and investments that make our communities more resilient before the next storm.

**Name your top two legislative priorities for the next Congressional term. Mencione sus dos principales prioridades legislativas para el próximo período del Congreso.**

Government is supposed to solve problems for the people it serves. My first priority is lowering the cost of living for Gulf Coast families. That means lowering insurance and healthcare costs, reducing prescription drug prices, expanding affordable housing by increasing the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit, preventing Wall Street investors from buying up single-family homes, and restoring competition by enforcing antitrust laws so dominant corporations can't use their market power to drive up costs for families. My second priority is protecting the healthcare and retirement security people have earned. I'll work to make healthcare more affordable and accessible, protect people with pre-existing conditions, strengthen Medicare and Medicaid, restore recent healthcare cuts, protect a woman's freedom to make her own healthcare decisions with her doctor, and ensure Social Security remains a promise kept. Congress should be solving these problems, not making them worse.

**"Freedom of speech" is included in the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Exactly what does "Freedom of Speech" mean to you? La libertad de expresión está incluida en la Primera Enmienda de la Constitución de los Estados Unidos. ¿Qué significa exactamente para usted la "libertad de expresión"?**

Freedom of speech protects every American's right to question those in power without fear of government retaliation. That protection matters most when the speech is unpopular, critical, or uncomfortable. As Mayor, I welcomed tough from residents, neighborhood activists, and the press because accountability makes government better. It should never matter whether I agree with what someone says because that's exactly when constitutional rights matter most. I also believe every citizen's voice should matter more than unlimited money in politics. That's why I led the successful passage of Florida's toughest municipal campaign finance reform law. I'll bring that same commitment to Congress by working to overturn Citizens United and restore the principle of one person, one vote. Freedom of speech means the government can't punish you for your political views, your criticism of those in power, or your peaceful dissent. Full stop.

**Who has the right, Congress or the President, to oversee federal agencies? ¿Quién tiene el derecho de supervisar a las agencias federales: el Congreso o el Presidente?**

Congress. Oversight isn't about protecting Congress or limiting a President. It's about protecting us. The Constitution gives Congress the responsibility to ask hard on our behalf because executive branch decisions affect our families, our freedoms, and our future. When Congress stops asking those or demanding answers, we lose one of our strongest protections. Today, Congress too often refuses to do that job. Representatives should ask: Is it lawful? Is it constitutional? Is it serving the public? Is anyone using public office for private gain? When there is credible evidence, Congress must investigate and follow the facts. Those aren't partisan. They're the job. As Mayor, I held Florida Power & Light, developers, and my own city government accountable because accountability matters. I'll bring that same commitment to Congress, regardless of who is President. That's what representation means.

**If documentary proof of US citizenship becomes necessary in order to register to vote, how would you help those citizens, especially women, who no longer have or don't have easy and affordable access to documents to prove citizenship, such as certified birth and marriage certificates? Si se requiere prueba documental de ciudadanía estadounidense para registrarse para votar, ¿cómo ayudaría a esos ciudadanos, especialmente a las mujeres, que ya no tienen o no tienen acceso fácil y asequible a documentos que prueben su ciudadanía, como certificados de nacimiento o matrimonio certificados?**

Every eligible American should be able to vote, and every legitimate vote should count. If Congress considers new proof-of-citizenship requirements, the first question should be: does this improve election integrity, or does it simply make it harder for eligible citizens to vote? Government exists to solve real problems, not create new ones. If government creates a new requirement, it has a responsibility to make compliance free, simple, and accessible. It shouldn't pull the rug out from under people by changing the rules right before an election. That means no-cost replacement of vital records, straightforward ways to resolve name changes, extended timelines so no one loses their right to vote because of a paperwork backlog, and a secure process for eligible voters to resolve documentation issues without being disenfranchised. The goal should be protecting both election integrity and every eligible citizen's constitutional right to vote.

**What role do you believe the federal government should play in education at the pre-school level, K-12 level and higher education? ¿Qué papel cree que debería desempeñar el gobierno federal en la educación a nivel preescolar, educación K-12 (primaria y secundaria) y educación superior?**

Every child deserves access to an excellent education that opens doors, regardless of how much money their family has. Opportunity shouldn't depend on wealth or political connections. The federal government's role is to expand opportunity and protect the public institutions that serve students. I've dedicated much of my career to that mission. I co-founded UnidosNow,

which has helped more than 1,000 first-generation students earn admission to the nation's top universities debt-free, and I built workforce and lifelong-learning programs at Eckerd College. I've also seen what happens when politics supersedes students. Our community recently lost nursing, teacher education, hospitality and veterans' programs when USF Sarasota-Manatee was dismantled and its campus transferred to New College. Education funding, whether state or federal, should expand opportunity, not be diverted for political patronage. I'll fight to ensure education dollars serve students, families, and communities.



## **Tamika Lyles**

**Party:** Democratic

**Education:** Bachelor of Science, Masters in Law, and currently completing her dissertation for her Doctorate in Law & Policy

**Hometown:** Jackson, Tennessee

**County:** Madison

**Campaign Website:** [www.tamikalyles.com/](http://www.tamikalyles.com/)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/LylesforFlorida](https://www.facebook.com/LylesforFlorida)

**Campaign Twitter Handle:** [lylesforflorida](https://twitter.com/lylesforflorida)

**Instagram:** <https://www.instagram.com/lylesforflorida>

**Campaign Phone:** 904-438-4772

**Campaign Mailing Address:** PO Box 420183 Kissimmee FL 34742

### **What reforms to the US immigration system do you support? Why? ¿Qué reformas al sistema de inmigración de Estados Unidos apoya usted? ¿Por qué?**

I support comprehensive immigration reform that secures the border while protecting constitutional rights and human dignity. She supports modern border security technology, increased efforts to combat human trafficking and drug smuggling, expanding legal immigration pathways, reducing visa backlogs, protecting Dreamers, and creating an earned pathway to citizenship for law-abiding undocumented immigrants. Tamika also supports abolishing ICE. She believes immigration enforcement should focus on genuine security threats, not indiscriminate civil enforcement. As a veteran, Tamika believes America can have secure borders without sacrificing its constitutional values. She supports reform because the current system is inefficient, backlogged, and too often fails both immigrants seeking a legal process and the American people, who deserve a secure, fair, and functional immigration system.

### **Do you believe climate change is a financial threat to the economy of the nation? Why or why not? ¿Cree que el cambio climático representa una amenaza financiera para la economía del país? ¿Por qué?**

Yes, I believe climate change is both an environmental and economic threat to the United States. More frequent hurricanes, flooding, wildfires, droughts, and rising sea levels increase disaster recovery costs, disrupt businesses and supply chains, damage infrastructure, drive up insurance premiums, and threaten agriculture and tourism, particularly in Florida. Tamika believes failing to address climate change will cost far more than investing in solutions. She supports the Green New Deal's goal of accelerating clean energy, strengthening climate resilience, and creating millions of good-paying union jobs while protecting workers during the transition. She sees climate action not only as an environmental responsibility, but as an economic opportunity to modernize infrastructure, reduce long-term costs, improve public health, strengthen energy independence, and position the United States as a global leader in clean-energy innovation.

### **Name your top two legislative priorities for the next Congressional term. Mencione sus dos principales prioridades legislativas para el próximo período del Congreso.**

Healthcare and Affordability

### **"Freedom of speech" is included in the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Exactly what does "Freedom of Speech" mean to you? La libertad de expresión está incluida en la Primera Enmienda de la Constitución de los Estados Unidos. ¿Qué significa exactamente para usted la "libertad de expresión"?**

The First Amendment's guarantee of freedom of speech means every American has the right to express their views, criticize the government, peacefully protest, organize, publish ideas, and advocate for change without fear of government censorship or retaliation. She believes this protection applies regardless of political ideology and is essential to a healthy democracy. Tamika supports robust protections for free expression, freedom of the press, peaceful assembly, and the right to petition the government. She also believes the government has a constitutional duty to protect public safety by enforcing laws against true threats, criminal conduct, and incitement to imminent violence, consistent with longstanding First Amendment principles. Her guiding belief is that democracy is strengthened when ideas are debated openly, rights are protected equally, and government remains accountable to the people.

### **Who has the right, Congress or the President, to oversee federal agencies? ¿Quién tiene el derecho de supervisar a las agencias federales: el Congreso o el Presidente?**

The President oversees federal agencies through the executive branch because most agencies are responsible for carrying out federal law under presidential administration. But Congress has constitutional oversight authority because Congress creates agencies, funds them, writes the laws they enforce, conducts investigations and hearings, and can reform, restrict, or eliminate agencies through legislation. Tamika's position is: no federal agency should operate beyond constitutional accountability. The President may administer agencies, but Congress must oversee them, fund them responsibly, investigate misconduct, and protect the people from abuse of power.



**If documentary proof of US citizenship becomes necessary in order to register to vote, how would you help those citizens, especially women, who no longer have or don't have easy and affordable access to documents to prove citizenship, such as certified birth and marriage certificates? Si se requiere prueba documental de ciudadanía estadounidense para registrarse para votar, ¿cómo ayudaría a esos ciudadanos, especialmente a las mujeres, que ya no tienen o no tienen acceso fácil y asequible a documentos que prueben su ciudadanía, como certificados de nacimiento o matrimonio certificados?**

I believe election integrity and voter access must go hand in hand. If documentary proof of citizenship is required to register to vote, no eligible citizen should be denied the right to vote because they cannot afford or easily obtain the necessary documents. She would support federal funding to reduce or eliminate the cost of obtaining certified birth certificates and other required records, streamline document replacement processes, and establish assistance programs for seniors, women who have changed their names through marriage or divorce, veterans, rural residents, and low-income Americans. She also supports secure electronic verification systems that minimize unnecessary paperwork while protecting election integrity. Tamika believes the right to vote should never depend on a person's financial means or ability to navigate burdensome bureaucracy. Every eligible citizen should have a fair and accessible path to exercising this fundamental constitutional right.

**What role do you believe the federal government should play in education at the pre-school level, K-12 level and higher education? ¿Qué papel cree que debería desempeñar el gobierno federal en la educación a nivel preescolar, educación K-12 (primaria y secundaria) y educación superior?**

I believe education is a shared responsibility, with states and local communities leading curriculum while the federal government ensures every child has an equal opportunity to succeed. She supports expanding access to affordable, high-quality preschool, strengthening K-12 public education through increased funding, teacher support, and equitable resources, and protecting students' civil rights. For higher education, Tamika supports making community college tuition-free, expanding access to affordable public colleges and universities, investing in trade schools and apprenticeships, and reducing the burden of student debt. As an educator, she believes the federal government should help remove financial barriers to education while respecting local control over instruction. Her goal is simple: every American, regardless of zip code or income, deserves access to a quality education that prepares them for success.



## **Glenn Pearson**

**Party:** Democratic

**County:** Manatee

**Campaign Website:** [www.glennpearsonforcongress.com/](http://www.glennpearsonforcongress.com/)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/gpear101/](https://www.facebook.com/gpear101/)

**Instagram:** <https://www.instagram.com/glennforcongress>

**Campaign Mailing Address:** 8955 U.S. Hwy 301 N., Unit 205 Parrish FL 34219

**What reforms to the US immigration system do you support? Why? ¿Qué reformas al sistema de inmigración de Estados Unidos apoya usted? ¿Por qué?**

I support comprehensive immigration reform that secures our borders while creating a fair, orderly, and humane immigration system. In Congress, I will work to pass legislation that provides a pathway to citizenship for DREAMers and long-term law-abiding residents, modernizes the legal immigration system to reduce backlogs, increases the number of immigration judges to speed legitimate asylum claims, and strengthens border security by focusing resources on fentanyl trafficking, human trafficking, and violent criminal organizations rather than mass workplace raids. I also support ending the misuse of private detention centers, ensuring due process, and protecting Temporary Protected Status for people fleeing war or natural disasters. Our immigration system should reflect both the rule of law and America's values.

**Do you believe climate change is a financial threat to the economy of the nation? Why or why not? ¿Cree que el cambio climático representa una amenaza financiera para la economía del país? ¿Por qué?**

Yes. Climate change is already increasing costs for families, businesses, and taxpayers through stronger storms, flooding, wildfires, rising insurance premiums, crop losses, and damage to infrastructure. In Congress, I will support investments in resilient infrastructure, strengthen flood mitigation and coastal restoration, expand clean energy and energy efficiency, and protect programs that help communities prepare for climate impacts. These investments reduce long-term costs, create jobs, and help protect our economy from increasingly expensive climate-related disasters.

**Name your top two legislative priorities for the next Congressional term. Mencione sus dos principales prioridades legislativas para el próximo período del Congreso.**

1. Lower the Cost of Living Through Universal Healthcare: Healthcare costs are one of the biggest financial burdens facing American families. I will work to establish universal healthcare so everyone has access to affordable care regardless of income or employment. I also support allowing Medicare to negotiate more prescription drug prices, capping out-of-pocket costs, and preventing medical debt from pushing families into financial hardship. Lower healthcare costs mean more money in working families' pockets. 2. End the Influence of Big Money in Politics: Our government cannot effectively address the challenges facing working families while billionaires and special interests dominate our elections. I will support legislation to overturn Citizens United, require full disclosure of political spending, strengthen campaign finance laws, and expand public financing of federal campaigns. Congress should answer to voters—not wealthy donors and corporate interests.

**"Freedom of speech" is included in the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Exactly what does "Freedom of Speech" mean to you? La libertad de expresión está incluida en la Primera Enmienda de la Constitución de los Estados Unidos. ¿Qué significa exactamente para usted la "libertad de expresión"?**

For more than 30 years as a journalist, I saw firsthand why freedom of speech and a free press are essential to a healthy democracy. The First Amendment protects every American's right to speak, criticize the government, worship freely, assemble peacefully, and hold those in power accountable without fear of censorship or retaliation. It protects ideas we agree with and those we don't. As a member of Congress, I will defend those constitutional rights and oppose efforts by any administration to silence journalists, punish political opponents, or interfere with the public's right to know. Democracy cannot survive without the free exchange of ideas and facts.

**Who has the right, Congress or the President, to oversee federal agencies? ¿Quién tiene el derecho de supervisar a las agencias federales: el Congreso o el Presidente?**

The Constitution establishes a system of checks and balances. The President is responsible for managing the Executive Branch, but Congress has the constitutional authority to create federal agencies, fund them, conduct oversight, and, when appropriate, provide statutory protections that preserve the independence of agencies charged with enforcing the law without political interference. I believe concentrating too much power in any one branch threatens our democracy. As a member of Congress, I will defend Congress's oversight role and support legislation that protects the independence and integrity of agencies whose decisions should be based on law, science, and the public interest—not politics.

**If documentary proof of US citizenship becomes necessary in order to register to vote, how would you help those citizens, especially women, who no longer have or don't have easy and affordable access to documents to prove citizenship, such as certified birth and marriage certificates? Si se requiere prueba documental de ciudadanía estadounidense para registrarse para votar, ¿cómo ayudaría a esos ciudadanos, especialmente a las mujeres, que ya no tienen o no tienen acceso fácil y asequible a documentos que prueben su ciudadanía, como certificados de nacimiento o matrimonio certificados?**

If such a law were enacted, I would work to repeal it. Until then, I would support federal funding to help citizens obtain required documents at little or no cost, establish a simple process for replacing lost birth and marriage certificates, require states to accept a broad range of government records to verify citizenship, and ensure that married women, seniors, military members, rural residents, people with disabilities, and low-income Americans are not disenfranchised because of paperwork. Every eligible citizen should be able to exercise the fundamental right to vote.

**What role do you believe the federal government should play in education at the pre-school level, K-12 level and higher education? ¿Qué papel cree que debería desempeñar el gobierno federal en la educación a nivel preescolar, educación K-12 (primaria y secundaria) y educación superior?**

Education is primarily a state and local responsibility, but the federal government has an essential role in ensuring every child has an equal opportunity to succeed. I support expanding access to high-quality early childhood education, fully funding programs that serve disadvantaged students and children with disabilities, investing in public schools and teacher recruitment, and enforcing civil rights protections. I oppose diverting public education funds to private school voucher programs. For higher education, Congress should partner with states to make tuition-free attendance at public colleges and universities a reality, expand Pell Grants, strengthen career and technical education, and substantially reduce or eliminate the crushing burden of student loan debt. In the richest nation on earth, higher education should be an opportunity—not a lifetime of debt.



**Edward Peter Pope**

**Party:** Republican

**Age:** 57

**Education:** Doctorate in Criminal Justice (Executive Leadership & Social Behavior); Master of Science in Criminal Justice Executive Leadership; Master of Science in Criminal Justice (Critical Incident Management & Counter-Terrorism); Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice; Associate of Arts.

**Hometown:** Parrish, Florida

**County:** Manatee

**Campaign Website:** [edpopeforcongress.com/](http://edpopeforcongress.com/)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61584937553180](https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61584937553180)

**Campaign Phone:** 941-626-6173

**Campaign Mailing Address:** 7804 110th Ave East Parrish FL 34219

**What reforms to the US immigration system do you support? Why? ¿Qué reformas al sistema de inmigración de Estados Unidos apoya usted? ¿Por qué?**

The United States has always been a nation of immigrants, but it is also a nation of laws. I support comprehensive immigration reforms that first restore control of our borders while creating a fair, efficient, and lawful immigration system that serves America's interests. The first priority must be securing the border. A nation cannot maintain sovereignty without knowing who is entering, why they are entering, and whether they pose a threat to public safety or national security. I support increased border security resources, modern technology, stronger enforcement of existing laws, and policies that deter illegal entry. At the same time, our legal immigration system should be streamlined and modernized. Individuals who follow the law, contribute to society, and seek to become part of the American dream should not face unnecessary bureaucratic delays. We should reduce processing backlogs, improve efficiency, and prioritize applicants who bring valuable skills to the United States.

**Do you believe climate change is a financial threat to the economy of the nation? Why or why not? ¿Cree que el cambio climático representa una amenaza financiera para la economía del país? ¿Por qué?**

Yes, I believe that changes in climate patterns, severe weather events, and environmental challenges can present financial risks to our economy. Those risks are particularly evident in areas such as insurance costs, infrastructure resilience, agriculture, energy reliability, disaster recovery, and coastal communities. As a Floridian, I have seen firsthand how hurricanes, flooding, and severe weather can impact families, businesses, and local governments. Regardless of where one stands in the broader climate debate, it is clear that repeated natural disasters carry significant economic consequences that must be addressed through responsible planning and preparation. At the same time, I believe we must approach these challenges with practical, data-driven solutions rather than partisan ideology. Protecting our environment and strengthening our infrastructure should not come at the expense of economic growth, energy reliability, or American competitiveness.

**Name your top two legislative priorities for the next Congressional term. Mencione sus dos principales prioridades legislativas para el próximo período del Congreso.**

1. The federal government's first responsibility is to protect the American people. I will support legislation that secures our southern border, strengthens immigration enforcement, combats drug trafficking and human trafficking, and provides law enforcement and border security personnel with the resources they need to protect our nation. A secure border is essential to public safety, national security, and maintaining the integrity of our immigration system. 2. America's national debt, government spending, and inflation continue to place tremendous pressure on families, seniors, and small businesses. I will support legislation that reduces wasteful spending, promotes energy independence, encourages economic growth, and creates an environment where businesses can thrive and create jobs. Washington must learn to live within its means just as American families do. Fiscal responsibility is critical to protecting future generations and preserving programs

**"Freedom of speech" is included in the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Exactly what does "Freedom of Speech" mean to you? La libertad de expresión está incluida en la Primera Enmienda de la Constitución de los Estados Unidos. ¿Qué significa exactamente para usted la "libertad de expresión"?**

To me, freedom of speech is one of the most important protections guaranteed by the Constitution because it safeguards every other liberty we enjoy as Americans. Freedom of speech means that individuals have the right to express their opinions, beliefs, ideas, and criticisms of government without fear of censorship, retaliation, or punishment by the government. The true test of freedom of speech is not whether we protect speech we agree with it is whether we protect speech we disagree with. A free society depends on the open exchange of ideas, vigorous debate, and the ability of citizens to challenge those in positions of power. Throughout our nation's history, progress has often begun with individuals who were willing to speak unpopular truths and challenge conventional thinking. That freedom, however, comes with responsibility. While citizens have the right to express their views, they must also be prepared for others to exercise that same right.

**Who has the right, Congress or the President, to oversee federal agencies? ¿Quién tiene el derecho de supervisar a las agencias federales: el Congreso o el Presidente?**

The Constitution establishes a system of checks and balances in which both Congress and the President have important but distinct oversight responsibilities regarding federal agencies. The President, through Article II of the Constitution, is responsible for executing the laws enacted by Congress and overseeing the Executive Branch agencies that carry out those laws. Federal agencies ultimately report to the Executive Branch and are responsible for implementing policies and programs authorized by law. Congress, however, has a constitutional duty to conduct oversight of those same agencies. Congress creates agencies through legislation, appropriates funding, confirms many senior officials, and has the responsibility to ensure agencies are operating within the authority granted to them by law. Congressional oversight is essential to accountability, transparency, and preventing abuse of power.

**If documentary proof of US citizenship becomes necessary in order to register to vote, how would you help those citizens, especially women, who no longer have or don't have easy and affordable access to documents to prove citizenship, such as certified birth and marriage certificates? Si se requiere prueba documental de ciudadanía estadounidense para registrarse para votar, ¿cómo ayudaría a esos ciudadanos, especialmente a las mujeres, que ya no tienen o no tienen acceso fácil y asequible a documentos que prueben su ciudadanía, como certificados de nacimiento o matrimonio certificados?**

I support measures that verify voter eligibility and strengthen confidence in our elections. However, if proof of citizenship is required, government has a responsibility to make the process of obtaining necessary documents affordable, accessible, and efficient. No eligible citizen should be prevented from registering to vote because of excessive costs or bureaucratic obstacles. We can protect election integrity while ensuring every eligible American has a fair opportunity to participate in our democracy.

**What role do you believe the federal government should play in education at the pre-school level, K-12 level and higher education? ¿Qué papel cree que debería desempeñar el gobierno federal en la educación a nivel preescolar, educación K-12 (primaria y secundaria) y educación superior?**

I believe the federal government's role in education should be limited and supportive, while states, local communities, parents, and educators maintain primary responsibility. At the preschool level, federal support should be flexible and targeted. In K-12 education, Washington should focus on protecting rights and supporting opportunity while empowering parents and local decision-makers. In higher education, the focus should be on affordability, accountability, workforce development, and expanding pathways through colleges, trade schools, and apprenticeships. Education works best when decisions are made closest to the students being served.



## Jan Schneider

**Party:** Democratic

**Education:** Yale Law School – JD (Law Journal), Yale University – MPhil & PhD (Political Science), University of Geneva – Certificate (International Organizations), Columbia University School of International and Public Affairs – MIA & Certificate (Russian Institute) & Brown University -- BA summa cum laude (in 3 years)

**Hometown:** Sarasota

**County:** Florida

**Campaign Website:** [votejan.com/](http://votejan.com/)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/VoteJan](https://www.facebook.com/VoteJan)

**Campaign Twitter Handle:** VoteJan

**Instagram:** <https://www.instagram.com/votejanfl16/>

**LinkedIn:** <https://www.linkedin.com/in/jan-schneider-9304751b7/>

**Campaign Phone:** 941-706-5251

**Campaign Mailing Address:** 227 Seagull Lane Sarasota FL 34236

### **What reforms to the US immigration system do you support? Why? ¿Qué reformas al sistema de inmigración de Estados Unidos apoya usted? ¿Por qué?**

Jan Schneider will fight to end ICE and Border Patrol abuses and illegalities and to reduce ICE funding and staffing; to end appalling treatment of detainees, including in inhumane facilities; to create a path to citizenship for deserving immigrants; and to uphold legal requirements and civil liberties.

I would have voted for the Bipartisan Border Bill of 2024. Republicans killed it to preserve the border as a campaign issue. A new immigration bill needs: a fair process for considering asylum claims; strengthened provisions against drug and human trafficking and currency smuggling; and assurances of humane treatment. It should also include: a path to citizenship for "Dreamers" and DACA recipients; preservation of Temporary Protected Status for people from countries afflicted by armed conflict, environmental disasters, epidemics or other extraordinary conditions; and accelerated transition to permanent status for Afghan allies who entered under Operation Allies Welcome.

### **Do you believe climate change is a financial threat to the economy of the nation? Why or why not? ¿Cree que el cambio climático representa una amenaza financiera para la economía del país? ¿Por qué?**

Yes. Climate change is a clear financial threat to the U.S. economy.

Among other things, coastal flooding from rising sea levels is already causing governments, companies and people huge amounts of property damage. For businesses, floods, fires and droughts interrupt supply chains and damage inventories. For families, hotter summers lead to higher air conditioning bills; escalating storm and other risks lead to declines in property values and vastly increased or unaffordable insurance rates; and droughts and other catastrophes increase food and other prices.

The United States should – again – rejoin the Paris Climate Agreement. But that is a beginning rather than a solution. In order to limit climate change, the United State must itself accelerate transition to clean and renewable energy sources, reduce dependence on fossil fuels and implement the "polluter pays" principle. And the federal government should reform its reinsurance programs and expand FEMA.

### **Name your top two legislative priorities for the next Congressional term. Mencione sus dos principales prioridades legislativas para el próximo período del Congreso.**

**CAMPAIGN FINANCE.** Just 300 billionaires poured \$3 billion into federal elections in the 2024 cycle, 19% of all reported contributions.

In Citizens United v. FEC, the Supreme Court exacerbated the previous big money situation, by equating money and speech and corporations and citizens. Recently, the Court made it worse in National Republican Senatorial Committee v. FEC, by striking down limits on political party expenditures. I will fight: to prohibit corporate PACs from contributing to federal candidates; to ban lobbyist fundraising; and to close "dark money" loopholes.

**HEALTHCARE.** The United States healthcare system is sick. We spend 18% of GDP on health, the highest per capita, and still rank worse than other developed countries on health indicators.

Healthcare should be a right. Congress should: revive Affordable Care Act tax credits; transition to Medicare for All; restore Medicare, Medicaid and VHA cuts; reduce drug prices; and restore access to reproductive care.

### **"Freedom of speech" is included in the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Exactly what does "Freedom of Speech" mean to you? La libertad de expresión está incluida en la Primera Enmienda de la Constitución de los Estados Unidos. ¿Qué significa exactamente para usted la "libertad de expresión"?**

First Amendment "freedom of speech" means the right to express ideas and opinions without government interference. It includes not only spoken and written words, but also symbolic expression such as artwork, flag burning, protesting and even expressive clothing. The highest level of protection is accorded political and civic commentary, however unpopular.

What free speech does not include is incitement to violence or danger (e.g., yelling "fire" in a crowded theater when there is no fire), false statements constituting slander or libel, or patently obscene material. Although free speech protects the utterer from government interference, governments may enforce time, place and manner restrictions.

These days, free speech also apparently covers anything President Trump wants to say, even if knowingly false, contradictory or intended to incite insurrection. On the other hand, it has been argued to preclude a perceived enemy from sharing a photo of seashells arranged to spell "86 47".



**Who has the right, Congress or the President, to oversee federal agencies? ¿Quién tiene el derecho de supervisar a las agencias federales: el Congreso o el Presidente?**

Both are supposed to – in different ways:

Congress makes the laws that create federal agencies; define their rights, responsibilities and restrictions; and provide funding for their operations. Congressional control continues through the power-of-the-purse over the "discretionary" part of the federal budget (national defense, justice, education, etc., but excluding automatic expenses like Social Security). Congress can also conduct oversight hearings, with attendant subpoena powers over documents and testimony and the possibility of contempt citations.

The president, as the head of the executive branch, is supposed to make sure that laws are carried out. The president oversees agencies by appointing their heads and other officials (some subject to Senate confirmation), setting priorities and managing spending, and broadly managing day-to-day operations.

This is part of the Constitutional design of checks and balances and separation of powers. At present, these are often undermined.

**If documentary proof of US citizenship becomes necessary in order to register to vote, how would you help those citizens, especially women, who no longer have or don't have easy and affordable access to documents to prove citizenship, such as certified birth and marriage certificates? Si se requiere prueba documental de ciudadanía estadounidense para registrarse para votar, ¿cómo ayudaría a esos ciudadanos, especialmente a las mujeres, que ya no tienen o no tienen acceso fácil y asequible a documentos que prueben su ciudadanía, como certificados de nacimiento o matrimonio certificados?**

The SAVE America Act would block millions of eligible citizens from voting. Its "show your papers" provisions specify photo IDs to register and vote, with a list much more restrictive than current requirements. This would disproportionately affect women, who could become ineligible to vote because their married names do not match those on birth certificates or passports. If the SAVE Act passes, I will fight to repeal it or at the least amend its ID and other requirements.

The SAVE Act would also require voter registration to be in person. This would disproportionately affect younger, older, minority, military, tribal, rural and newly-naturalized citizens (particularly now with ICE threats). And multiple other provisions also threaten our freedom.

President Trump's cherished SAVE Act addresses a non-problem. Voters in every state are already required to affirm or verify their citizenship status when registering. As dozens of courts have held, fraud in this regard is virtually non-existent.

**What role do you believe the federal government should play in education at the pre-school level, K-12 level and higher education? ¿Qué papel cree que debería desempeñar el gobierno federal en la educación a nivel preescolar, educación K-12 (primaria y secundaria) y educación superior?**

With regard to pre-school education, the federal government should continue to fund Head Start Preschool programs and to fund Child Care and Development Block Grants to help low income families with childcare, including preschool.

Regarding K-12, the Every Student Succeeds Act, replacing No Child Left Behind, is the main federal law. The federal government should continue to require states to measure performance and to help students from low-income families pursuant to the ESSA. The government should also continue to provide for special education students under the Disabilities Education Act and prevent discrimination under the Civil Rights Act.

As to higher education, the federal government is the primary source of student assistance for college and beyond. The Department of Education administers billions of dollars in grants, work-study programs, and student loans under the Higher Education Act. Other agencies fund academic research.

These activities should be expanded



**Edward Speir**

**Party:** Republican

**Age:** 57

**Education:** BS Business Administration Emphasis in Computer Information Systems

**Hometown:** Bradenton

**County:** Florida

**Campaign Website:** [eddiespeirforcongress.com/](http://eddiespeirforcongress.com/)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100094244317588](https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100094244317588)

**Campaign Twitter Handle:** @eddiespeir

**Instagram:** <https://www.instagram.com/eddie.speirforcongress>

**Campaign Phone:** 941-779-8991

**Campaign Mailing Address:** 5523 Title Row Drive Bradenton FL 34210-4069

**What reforms to the US immigration system do you support? Why? ¿Qué reformas al sistema de inmigración de Estados Unidos apoya usted? ¿Por qué?**

America is a nation of immigrants and a nation of laws. Those two things are not in conflict unless we allow them to be. I support finishing the border barrier, restoring remain in Mexico, and ending catch and release. I support ending birthright citizenship for children of illegal immigrants. Legal immigration should prioritize merit and skills, not chain migration. The diversity visa lottery should be eliminated. H1B reform is overdue. Employers must pay above median market rates, prove they tried to hire Americans first, and face a hard cap reduction on total visas issued. Criminal aliens go first. No amnesty.

**Do you believe climate change is a financial threat to the economy of the nation? Why or why not? ¿Cree que el cambio climático representa una amenaza financiera para la economía del país? ¿Por qué?**

Climate change policy as currently practiced is absolutely a financial threat to the economy. Regulatory overreach, energy restrictions, and ESG mandates driven by climate ideology have raised energy costs, driven manufacturing overseas, and cost American workers jobs and wages. I believe in responsible stewardship of our natural resources and environment. I've made that a cornerstone of this campaign fighting against overdevelopment and the destruction of Old Florida's wetlands and water supply. What I reject is the weaponization of climate policy to transfer wealth, expand government control, and punish American energy production while China and India face no equivalent restrictions. Energy independence is national security. Affordable energy is economic security. Protecting our land and water from corporate exploitation is genuine environmentalism. Handing our economy to green energy mandates that don't work is not.

**Name your top two legislative priorities for the next Congressional term. Mencione sus dos principales prioridades legislativas para el próximo período del Congreso.**

First, campaign finance reform forcing full transparency on every dollar from special interests and developers. Anonymous money buying politicians is the root of overdevelopment and corruption. Second, ban omnibus spending bills entirely. One subject per bill. Every dollar justifies itself in a public vote. No more hiding waste inside must pass legislation. Third, break up Big Tech monopolies through antitrust enforcement and interoperability standards modeled on the 1982 Bell breakup. That breakup unleashed innovation and competition. The same thing happens today when we force these platforms open. All three serve the same principle. Power back to We the People.

**"Freedom of speech" is included in the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Exactly what does "Freedom of Speech" mean to you? La libertad de expresión está incluida en la Primera Enmienda de la Constitución de los Estados Unidos. ¿Qué significa exactamente para usted la "libertad de expresión"?**

Freedom of speech means the government cannot silence you for what you believe or what you say. It is the first freedom listed because every other freedom depends on it. You cannot defend your rights if you cannot speak about them. To me it also means resisting the modern mechanisms of censorship that don't wear a government badge. When Big Tech platforms collude with federal agencies to suppress lawful speech, that is a First Amendment violation in everything but name. The Twitter Files proved it happened. It must never happen again. Section 230 reform is part of this fight. Platforms that act as publishers by censoring viewpoints should be treated as publishers under the law, not neutral utilities protected from liability. Free speech is not comfortable speech. It protects the voice you disagree with as much as your own. That's the whole point and I'll defend it without exception.

**Who has the right, Congress or the President, to oversee federal agencies? ¿Quién tiene el derecho de supervisar a las agencias federales: el Congreso o el Presidente?**

Congress. Federal agencies derive their authority from legislation passed by Congress. The Constitution vests legislative power in the House and Senate, not the executive branch. When agencies write rules that carry the force of law they are exercising power that belongs to the people's elected representatives, not unelected bureaucrats answering to a president. The Supreme Court's Chevron doctrine, now overturned, allowed agencies to interpret their own authority for decades. That was a mistake that handed the executive branch power it was never supposed to have. Congress created these agencies, Congress funds them, and Congress must reassert real oversight over them. That means sunset clauses on agency rules, congressional approval of major regulations, and the ability to defund agencies that operate outside their statutory authority. The presidency executes the law. Congress writes it. That line matters and I will fight to restore it.

**If documentary proof of US citizenship becomes necessary in order to register to vote, how would you help those citizens, especially women, who no longer have or don't have easy and affordable access to documents to prove citizenship, such as certified birth and marriage certificates? Si se requiere prueba documental de ciudadanía estadounidense para registrarse para votar, ¿cómo ayudaría a esos ciudadanos, especialmente a las mujeres, que ya no tienen o no tienen acceso fácil y asequible a documentos que prueben su ciudadanía, como certificados de nacimiento o matrimonio certificados?**

I support proof of citizenship to vote. I also support making sure every eligible American citizen can actually access that proof without it becoming a barrier that disenfranchises legitimate voters. Birth certificates typically cost between \$10 and \$30. Marriage certificates are similar. These are not prohibitive costs for most people, and states already have fee waiver programs for low income applicants that can be expanded without federal involvement. What matters most is simplifying the name reconciliation process that creates unnecessary barriers specifically for women whose legal name changed through marriage or divorce. That's a state level administrative fix, not a funding problem. Every eligible citizen should be able to vote. Every non-citizen should not. Those two things are not in conflict if we build the system right. Election integrity and voter access are both requirements of a functioning republic.

**What role do you believe the federal government should play in education at the pre-school level, K-12 level and higher education? ¿Qué papel cree que debería desempeñar el gobierno federal en la educación a nivel preescolar, educación K-12 (primaria y secundaria) y educación superior?**

None, none, and less than it does now. Education is a local and family function. The Department of Education has spent fifty years spending more money and producing worse results. It should be eliminated. Preschool is a family decision. Federal programs have repeatedly failed while expanding government influence over the youngest children. K-12 belongs to parents, local school boards, and states. Federal dollars come with federal strings. Cut the strings by cutting the dollars. Higher education needs federal student loan reform, not more spending. Easy federal money has inflated tuition for decades and saddled a generation with debt. The best education decisions are made by the most local and most informed authority. That's the parent, then teacher, the local community and then state.