

Reksten Candidate Questionnaire Responses

Q Why are you running for this position?

Why I Am Running for House District 13

I am seeking election to represent the people of Montana, specifically the constituents of House District 13, which includes Polson, Pablo, and Ronan. My primary goal is to advance sound policies that deliver real solutions for our communities. Guided by the slogan “for a better Lake County,” I am committed to serving my constituents to the best of my ability and continually learning how I can better support their needs.

Q What is the role of government?

The Role of Government

I believe that government should be both limited and accountable to the people, in accordance with the Constitution. The fundamental purpose of government is to protect life, liberty, and property, as articulated by James Madison in Federalist No. 45. When government control becomes excessive, it can restrict the constitutional freedoms that are meant to be safeguarded.

Q Do you support the Montana Republican Platform? How could the Platform be improved?

Support for the Montana Republican Platform

I place the highest level of accountability on my faith, being answerable first to my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Equally important is my responsibility to the constituents who have elected me to serve as their representative in House District 13. My dedication to these two sources of accountability guides every decision I make as a public servant.

I am a supporter of the majority of the Montana Republican Platform, which establishes a framework of guiding principles for our state. However, I acknowledge that the United States Constitution and the Montana Constitution are the ultimate laws governing our nation and state. These foundational documents provide the legal basis for all government actions and policies.

Having taken an oath to “support and defend” both the U.S. and Montana Constitutions, I am unwavering in my commitment to uphold these essential documents. My service is rooted in this

pledge, ensuring that I act in accordance with the Constitution and remain faithful to the principles and laws that protect the rights and freedoms of all Montanans.

Q What principles guide you in determining how you vote on spending bills?

Principles That Guide Spending Bills

When evaluating and supporting spending bills, I adhere to a philosophy of disciplined, conservative budgeting. It is crucial that government spending remains controlled and does not expand beyond what is necessary. All expenditures should be closely aligned with our constitutional responsibilities, ensuring that government fulfills its core obligations without overreaching.

These responsibilities encompass providing quality education, maintaining essential infrastructure—including roads, water access, bridges, and the electrical grid—and ensuring access to vital community services such as trash and sewer disposal, emergency medical care, fire protection, and law enforcement. Each of these areas is fundamental to the well-being of our communities and must be prioritized in budget decisions.

I am firmly committed to the principle that the government should not collect more funding from citizens than is required to meet these essential needs. By following this approach, taxpayer dollars can be utilized efficiently and effectively, striking a balance between meeting the needs of our communities and safeguarding the rights of our citizens.

Q How should the government address affordable housing?

Affordable Housing

Housing policy in Montana must be guided by free market principles to effectively meet the needs of our diverse communities. Each community within our state faces unique challenges, and a “one size fits all” approach is not appropriate. Instead, it is essential for local communities to work in partnership with legislators to determine and implement housing policies that are best suited to their specific circumstances.

Government should avoid imposing unnecessary regulations that could hinder the ability of communities to address housing issues. Rather than serving as a barrier, government should play a supportive role by assisting local communities with critical infrastructure needs such as water, sewer, and roads. Additionally, support for developing workplace housing is crucial to ensure that those who work in our communities can also afford to live there.

There are successful examples within Montana, such as Big Sky, where communities have collaborated effectively with government to address the housing needs of their citizens. These

partnerships demonstrate how working together can lead to practical solutions that benefit everyone involved.

Q How can Montana lower property taxes?

Property Taxes

Montana's budget relies primarily on income taxes, whereas property taxes serve as the main source of funding for local governments and the state's educational system. It is essential for each local government practice disciplined spending, ensuring fiscal responsibility at the community level. This approach is also crucial for providing sufficient resources to support quality education throughout Montana.

In 2023, Montana saw a major change when \$270 million in property tax burden was shifted onto residential housing. This development was largely caused by heightened demand for housing from out-of-state buyers, which led to an unfair financial strain on Montana residents.

The Montana Constitution mandates that the legislature maintain fairness across all tax classes. In response to the challenges faced by homeowners, lawmakers introduced HB 231 and SB 542 late in the 2025 legislative session. These bills provided partial solutions to pressing property tax issues, aiming to address some of the inequities present in the current system.

Despite the introduction of HB 231 and SB 542 as an initial remedy to the property tax issues faced by Montana homeowners, challenges persist within the system. The changes implemented by these bills have not fully resolved the inequities created by the reduction in residential property tax. As a result, a review of the effectiveness and outcomes of HB 231 and SB 542 will most likely be necessary during the 2027 legislative session. This review may highlight areas in need of further revision, ensuring that future legislative action is informed by the results of these initial measures and remains responsive to the ongoing needs of Montana residents.

Q What role does government have in developing Montana's economy?

Economic Development

Montana's approach to economic development centers on minimizing unnecessary government interference, allowing businesses to thrive while benefiting the broader community. By fostering an environment where businesses encounter fewer regulatory barriers, the state can attract new investments and support the success of existing enterprises.

Government plays a vital role as a partner in the development and maintenance of essential infrastructure, including roads, bridges, and water systems. These foundational services are critical not only for supporting daily life but also for enabling businesses to operate efficiently and

expand their operations. When government focuses its efforts on building and maintaining infrastructure, it helps lift barriers and creates opportunities for businesses to establish themselves and prosper within Montana.

Through this balanced approach—reducing interference while actively supporting infrastructure needs—Montana can cultivate a strong, resilient economy that encourages entrepreneurship, growth, and long-term prosperity for its residents and communities.

Q What should be done with Montana’s surplus budget

Budget Surplus Management

When Montana experiences surplus tax revenues, it is essential that these funds are managed in ways that directly benefit the state's residents and address long-term obligations. Such obligations include the maintenance and improvement of schools, bridges, dams, and pension systems. Surplus funds should never be allocated to expand the size or scope of government beyond its current functions.

If the surplus is determined to be a one-time occurrence, there are two prudent courses of action: the funds can be returned to the people of Montana through rebates, or they can be invested in maintaining and upgrading critical infrastructure such as schools, bridges, and dams, as well as supporting pension obligations. Additionally, surplus funds may be used to expand infrastructure projects that serve the needs of communities throughout Montana.

In cases where surplus revenues become a recurring feature, the responsible approach is to reduce tax rates. This action protects both taxpayers and small businesses by ensuring that the tax burden remains fair and balanced, while also preventing unnecessary growth in government spending.

Q What are your views of government funded education, charter schools and home schooling: Pre K through higher education?

Education Policy

Montana’s education policy is guided by a commitment to parental choice, local control, and fiscal accountability. The Montana Constitution, in Article X, Section 1, affirms the collective goal to establish a system of education that develops the full educational potential of every person and guarantees equality of educational opportunity across the state.

Parental Choice and Educational Settings

Supporting the right of parents to select the educational environment that best aligns with their family values is fundamental. This includes options such as homeschooling, private schools, and charter schools. Efforts to broaden access to these choices—such as through the implementation of tax credits—are consistent with Republican principles and ensure that families have the flexibility to pursue the educational pathways that meet their needs.

Accountability for Taxpayer Dollars

It is essential that schools receiving taxpayer funding are held to high standards of accountability. These resources must be directed toward improving student outcomes, specifically:

- Enhancing academic achievement in reading and mathematics, enabling students to successfully engage with complex texts.
- Providing opportunities for career technical education through advanced learning experiences and career pathways, which allow students to earn credentials and dual credits.

Supporting Learning Environments and Teacher Compensation

Taxpayer funds should also be used to create classroom environments that foster effective learning. Additionally, increasing teacher pay is a priority, as it helps attract and retain talented educators, ensuring that Montana schools are staffed by the best and brightest professionals who are committed to student success.

Q When does human life begin?

Human Life

Pro-Life Beliefs and Faith Commitments

I have always held a pro-life position and firmly believe that life begins at conception. This conviction is rooted in my Christian faith and is defined by the teachings of the Bible. My belief in the sanctity of life shapes my perspective on related policy matters and guides my actions as a public advocate.

Community Engagement and Advocacy

During the last election cycle, I worked to raise awareness of the abortion initiative by meeting with pastors in my area. These conversations were part of a broader effort to encourage faith leaders and community members to take a stronger moral stance on this important issue. My advocacy also included speaking at one of our local churches, where I addressed the need to

stand against elective abortion and emphasized the importance of upholding pro-life values within our community.

Q What are your thoughts on Transgenderism?

Transgenderism

I maintain a firm stance against transgender reassignment procedures for minors. My conviction is that children should be safeguarded from undergoing these life-altering treatments, as they are not equipped to make such permanent decisions at a young age.

Furthermore, I oppose policies that permit biological males to enter women's bathrooms or participate in female sports. In athletic competitions, biologically transgendered males possess inherent physical advantages, resulting in unfair conditions for female athletes.

While I respect the autonomy of adults to make personal decisions regarding transgender identity, I do not support the use of taxpayer funds to cover the costs of elective procedures associated with gender reassignment. My views are consistent with both biblical teachings and Republican conservative principles, which inform and guide my approach to these issues.

Q What are your thoughts on climate change?

Climate Change

As a fourth-generation Montanan, I have witnessed firsthand that Montana's climate has always experienced changes and follows natural cycles. It is important to recognize these patterns and avoid alarmist policies that are not grounded in factual data. Such policies can have detrimental effects on our economy and the livelihoods of Montanans.

One key example is the opposition to natural gas and fossil fuel development, which plays a crucial role in supporting our state's electrical grid. The fight against these resources threatens not only our energy infrastructure but also our economic stability. Instead of adopting extreme measures, I believe in responsible stewardship and the thoughtful development of Montana's land, air, and water resources. By balancing environmental care with economic growth, we can ensure a prosperous and sustainable future for our state.

Q What can Montana do to address illegal immigration?

Illegal Immigration

I believe it is essential for Montana law enforcement to uphold and enforce United States immigration laws, taking a strong stand against illegal immigration. As a member of the House Administration Committee, I have consistently advocated for and supported legislation designed

to prohibit illegal immigrants from voting and to prevent them from accessing taxpayer-funded services. In my view, the integrity of our legal immigration system must be maintained by ensuring that all immigrants enter the country through lawful channels and adhere to the processes established by the federal government.

Furthermore, I am a strong proponent of robust border security and effective enforcement measures. I support the policies advanced by the Trump administration, which prioritize securing our borders to prevent the influx of fentanyl and other illegal drugs into our nation. By implementing and maintaining strong border protections, we can safeguard our communities and reinforce the rule of law.

Q What gun control laws will you support?

Gun Control Laws

I stand firmly against the implementation of new gun control laws. The Second Amendment of the United States Constitution clearly affirms that “the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed.” I believe that existing legislation already provides adequate regulation regarding firearms, and further restrictions are unnecessary.

Throughout my tenure, I have consistently aligned myself with the values of Montana Republicans in defending this essential constitutional right. My voting record reflects unwavering support for the protection of gun ownership. In recognition of this commitment, I have received endorsements from organizations such as the National Rifle Association (NRA) and the Montana Shooting Sports Association, underscoring my dedication to safeguarding the rights of law-abiding gun owners.