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Page 1

**Q1**

Candidate full name as it will appear on ballot:

Ant L. Thornton

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**Q2**

Political Party Affiliation:

Republican

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**Q3**

District #:

Senate District 19

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**Q4**

How long have you lived in the district you seek to represent?

19 years

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**Q5**

Email address:

Ant@AntThorntonforNM.com

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**Q6**

Phone number:

817-946-4175

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**Q7**

**No**

Have you, or a business you have been associated with, ever been the subject of a tax lien or a bankruptcy proceeding?

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**Q8**

Have you ever been arrested, charged, or convicted of a misdemeanor or felony crime in New Mexico or any other state?

Yes (please explain):

In 1997 I was detained for a DUI allegation in Albuquerque. I took the case to court, and after three appearances before a judge, the case was summarily dismissed.

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**Q9**

What will be your #1 priority and what is your plan of action to address it, if elected?

We need to stop human, drug, and sex trafficking across our southern border. I recently visited Eagle Pass and Del Rio, Texas to see for myself, Operation Lonestar. I met with the Texas Border Czar, Michael Banks, who has formed a joint Task Force between the Texas Department of Safety (DPS) and the Texas Military Department to secure their border. They are currently building the wall, working with the local property owners, and meeting the federal requirements for the wall system. Prior to the building of the wall, they were encountering between 800-2000 illegal immigrants daily, that number is now down to less than 200 daily encounters.

They have evidence from the El Paso Customs and Border Patrol office to support the claim that the illegal immigration is now moving to New Mexico. Walls do work. NM needs to secure its border. Border security is public safety.

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**Q10**

Recently, New Mexico has enjoyed record budget surpluses in the \$3.5 billion range. What do you feel is the best use of surplus funds? (Please select and explain your top priority for surplus funds.)

**Returned to taxpayers.,**

Other or comments::

New Mexico is not a poor state. I would like to see an Oil and Gas Annual Rebate returned to every NM citizen at the end of the calendar year based on the budget surplus similar to what Alaska gives to each of its citizens. Every New Mexican, regardless of age would receive \$100 for every \$1 billion in budget surplus the state receives in oil and gas revenue. For a family of four in 2023 with a \$3.5 Billion surplus they would have received \$350 each totaling \$1400 at the end of the year for the family. Given that there are roughly 2 million citizens in New Mexico, this would have reduced the budget surplus by \$700 million leaving \$2.8 Billion for reserves or other non-recurring investments. Every citizen should be able to share in the wealth of this state. The alternative is to eliminate individual income state taxes outright or reduce them to 1% leaving more money in the pockets of families where it belongs. In addition, I would like to eliminate state taxes on social security and military pensions for retirees to make NM a more retirement friendly locale.

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**Q11**

Do you support or oppose the use of the Gross Receipts Tax system currently in effect?

**Oppose (Please explain.),**

Other or comments::

Only five other states besides New Mexico use some form of GRT, that includes: Delaware, Nevada, Ohio, Texas, and Washington. Our tax system needs to be simplified to allow municipalities to charge a local tax rate commensurate with their local needs and eliminate the GRT tax code which is old and antiquated.

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**Q12**

Do you support or oppose the current bail system our courts are using?

**Oppose (Please explain.),**

Other or comments::

Bail reform is needed to deter repeat offenders and to support law enforcement officers.

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**Q13**

Crime has reached an all-time high in New Mexico. What do you think the state legislature could do to address crime?

**Address mental health treatment.,**

**Pass legislation, similar to federal laws, with significant mandatory sentencing requirements for certain crimes and repeat offenders.**

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**Address addictions and other lifestyles that impact criminal behavior.**

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Other or comments::

All of the above are essential if we are to address the crime issue holistically. First we must remove the homeless off the street and offer them mandatory counseling, drug rehabilitation, mental illness treatment, or face mandatory incarceration where they will get proper treatment and food. It is NOT compassionate to allow people to live homeless on the street and anyone who thinks or feels that way has never lived on the streets for any period of time. Vagrancy should be outlawed in the state of New Mexico.

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**Q14**

New Mexico has passed laws that govern employer-employee relations such as increased minimum wage and paid time off among others. There have also been discussions about Paid Family Medical Leave Act (PFMLA), a living wage, and shortened work weeks. If elected, what position will you take on additional regulation of businesses on issues like those mentioned?

**I will not support additional government regulations on employer-employee relations.**

Other or comments::

I think minimum wage should and will be eliminated. With the advent of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and the introduction of a future that includes humanoid robots replacing actual workers, the cost of labor will go down as robots can work 24/7, don't require medical insurance, or vacation benefits. Many mundane and repetitive jobs will be replaced and this will happen much faster than people are anticipating. Businesses will adapt, labor costs will go down, and productivity will increase exponentially and no amount of regulation will stop this trend.

**Q15**

New Mexico's state tax revenue is largely funded by oil and gas producers who operate under some of the most stringent environmental regulations in the country. Do you support or oppose continued oil and gas production in NM?

**Support.,**

Other or comments::

See my answer to Question 10.

**Q16**

Do you feel that environmental regulations need to be increased or expanded from their current levels regarding New Mexico's land, air, and water?

**No; the environmental regulations we currently have in place work well for our state.**

**Q17**

What is your position on mandatory requirements for state-funded incentives that include pay-back measures if the requirements are not met?

**Support.,**

Other or comments::

I think the state needs to do a better job of oversight regarding incentives it pays to vendors to meet certain requirements. Whether the pay-back measures should be mandatory would be determined on a case-by-case basis. Each situation may be different and if the projects are properly monitored and assessed for progress on a regular basis, these pay-back measures would not be necessary.

**Q18**

Do you support or oppose changing the constitution and/or laws to require legislative approval for any emergency declaration/order lasting more than 60 days?

**Support.,**

Other or comments::

I think the NM Executive Branch should be limited to only 30 days for an emergency declaration. Anything longer than that should require legislative approval for every 30 day extension. This ensures the people's voices are heard.

**Q19**

What is your position on abiding by the state constitution?

**I support abiding to the state Constitution as written.,**

Other or comments::

The State and Federal Constitution are the supreme laws for the state and the country. If we do not abide by them, we risk anarchy, chaos, and societal decline.

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**Q20**

Is there anything else you would like to share about your candidacy or your desire to serve the people of your district?

I support universal school choice where parents can decide where their children will attend school. Given New Mexico's abysmal education ranking, creating competition in the schools will force more innovation in the classroom. I would also like to see a focus on growing technical and vocational programs for 9th - 12th grade to identify and support trade school students as well as college track students. Not everyone has to attend a 4 year institution.

Finally, Voter ID is critical to a safe and secure election. Identification is required for all matter of life's essentials: to purchase alcohol, to purchase a gun, to obtain medication, to fly on a commercial airliner, etc. One of the most important civic duties is to vote for your government representatives, and that duty should be protected. I will also advocate to utilize blockchain technology to ensure election integrity.

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