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**Q1**

Candidate full name as it will appear on ballot:

Joshua Taylor Neal

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**Q2**

Political Party Affiliation:

Republican

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**Q3**

District #:

House District 17

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**Q4**

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

3 years on the West Side, entire life in the ABQ metro.

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**Q5**

Email address:

nealform@gmail.com

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**Q6**

Phone number:

505-457-8142

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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**

**No**

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

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**Q9**

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

Many families do not have hope for a future in NM. High violent crime, poor education, and unaffordable housing drive families away. My top priority is to make NM a place where families thrive. We've got to end catch and release and hold violent criminals until their trial. We need School Choice, so that every kid can go to good schools - no matter their zip code. And we need to invest in infrastructure - creating jobs, building houses, and laying the foundation for economic growth.

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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.)

**Non-recurring investments that are focused on improving specific aspects of our state. (What specifically would you seek to improve?)**

Other or comments::

Our infrastructure is deficient. According to the ASCE Infrastructure Report Card, in New Mexico 209 bridges are not structurally sound, 222 dams have been deemed "High Hazard", and 56% of our roads are in poor condition. One of the most significant opportunities we face is the current \$3.5 billion budget surplus. This surplus presents a unique chance to make transformative investments that will benefit our community for generations to come. By prioritizing infrastructure, affordable housing, and job creation, we can build a stronger, more resilient New Mexico that works for everyone. As a Civil Engineer, one of my top priorities is to create jobs by investing in infrastructure. This non-recurring investment will jump start the economy and pave the way for future investment in New Mexico.

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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::

Developers are discouraged from investing in NM for two main reasons: 1) the Gross Receipts Tax (GRT) is complex and very expensive, and makes it hard to build an industry here; 2) NM lacks a skilled workforce sufficient to support new industries. We need to reduce GRT or change it to something similar to a sales tax. Next, we need to invest in skilled workforce development programs. That will both raise people out of poverty and make it attractive for industries to invest in NM.

**Q12**

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

**Oppose (Please explain.),**

Other or comments::

Our current system often results in the catch and release of violent criminals, which not only undermines public safety but also contributes to recidivism. This is a serious concern for all of us who want to live in a safe and secure environment. I believe we can take a balanced approach that protects the rights of individuals while ensuring that dangerous criminals are not released back into our neighborhoods prematurely. Here are some specific reforms I propose: 1) Risk-based assessments for bail decisions. This means that individuals who pose a significant threat to public safety, such as those with a history of violent crime, should be held until their trial. Non-violent offenders, on the other hand, can be considered for bail under strict conditions that ensure they return for their court dates. 2) Enhanced monitoring: For those who are released on bail, we should invest in enhanced monitoring systems. This includes electronic monitoring and regular check-ins to ensure compliance with bail conditions. These measures can help prevent reoffending and ensure that defendants show up for their court appearances. 3) Accountability and Transparency: Finally, we need to ensure that our bail system is transparent and that there is accountability for decisions made. This means tracking outcomes and making data-driven adjustments to our policies. By doing so, we can create a system that is both fair and effective in keeping our community safe.

**Q13**

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

Other or comments::

Here are several measures I believe we should prioritize:

**Bail System Reform:** As mentioned before, reforming the bail system is essential. We must ensure that violent offenders are not released back into our communities. Implementing a risk-based assessment for bail decisions will help keep dangerous criminals off the streets while allowing non-violent offenders to participate in rehabilitation programs.

**Strengthening Law Enforcement:** Our law enforcement agencies need the resources to effectively combat crime. This includes increasing funding for police departments to hire more officers, invest in advanced technologies for crime investigation and DNA testing, and provide comprehensive training programs. Enhanced community policing efforts can also help build trust between law enforcement and the communities they serve.

**Improving Criminal Justice Processes:** Streamlining the criminal justice process to ensure swift and fair trials is crucial. This includes reducing case backlogs and ensuring that repeat offenders are prosecuted to the full extent of the law. Accountability within the judicial system is key to deterring criminal behavior.

**Support for Mental Health and Addiction Services:** A significant number of crimes are related to mental health issues and substance abuse. Expanding access to mental health services and addiction treatment programs can address the root causes of criminal behavior. By providing support and rehabilitation, we can reduce recidivism and help individuals reintegrate into society.

**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.**

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Other or comments::

I do not believe that government mandates are an efficient means of guaranteeing a healthy work life balance. Additionally, a government-run, government-regulated PFMLA program will be costly, inefficient, and highly damaging for our small businesses. I oppose government mandates to pay into government programs like PFMLA or similar. Instead, I support reductions to corporate income taxes or to GRT for companies, industries, and associations who voluntarily adopt PFMLA-like policies for the benefit of their employees.

**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::

The oil and gas sector is a cornerstone of our state's economy. It creates jobs, stimulates local businesses, and contributes substantial tax revenue. This revenue is crucial for funding education, healthcare, and other critical services that benefit all New Mexicans. I advocate for continued investment in technological innovation within the oil and gas industry. Advances in technology can lead to more efficient and cleaner extraction methods, reducing the environmental footprint of production. Additionally, supporting research and development in renewable energy sources can complement our traditional energy sector and pave the way for a more sustainable future. A balanced energy policy is crucial for long-term sustainability. This means not only supporting the oil and gas industry but also investing in renewable energy projects, including nuclear, wind, and solar. By diversifying our energy portfolio, we can ensure energy security, create new jobs, and reduce our dependence on any single source of revenue.

**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?

Other or comments::

Environmental protection is crucial for the health and well-being of our communities, as well as for the preservation of New Mexico's natural beauty. However, it is important to strike a balance between stringent environmental regulations and the economic needs of our state. New Mexico already has some of the most stringent environmental regulations in the country. These regulations are designed to protect our land, air, and water from pollution and degradation, ensuring that our natural resources remain sustainable for future generations. Rather than a blanket increase in regulations, I believe we should focus on regularly assessing the effectiveness of our current regulations. This involves reviewing scientific data, monitoring environmental health, and adapting our policies as needed. If certain areas are found to be at risk or existing regulations are insufficient, targeted adjustments can be made to address specific concerns. Investing in research and development for cleaner technologies and renewable energy sources can reduce our environmental footprint while also creating new economic opportunities. By encouraging innovation, we can find sustainable solutions that benefit both the environment and the economy.

**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 believe that state-funded incentives are a powerful tool to stimulate economic growth, attract businesses, and create jobs. However, it is essential that these incentives are used effectively and responsibly. Therefore, I support mandatory requirements for state-funded incentives that include pay-back measures if the requirements are not met. Implementing pay-back measures ensures that companies and organizations receiving state-funded incentives are held accountable for their commitments. This fosters transparency and trust in the process, demonstrating to taxpayers that their money is being used wisely and effectively.

**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::

Our government is built on a system of checks and balances to prevent any one branch from having too much power. Requiring legislative approval for extended emergency declarations ensures that executive authority is balanced with legislative oversight, maintaining this fundamental principle of our democracy. Legislative approval adds a layer of accountability and transparency to the process. It ensures that the executive branch must justify the need for prolonged emergency measures and allows elected representatives to review and debate the necessity and scope of these actions. This promotes a more open and representative process.

**Q19**

What is your position on abiding by the state constitution?

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

Other or comments::

Abiding by the state constitution is fundamental to the integrity and functioning of our government. As an elected official, I firmly believe in upholding and respecting the state constitution. Abiding by the state constitution is essential for upholding the rule of law, protecting individual rights, ensuring accountability, honoring democratic principles, maintaining public trust, and providing a clear framework for governance. As a public servant, I am committed to faithfully adhering to the state constitution and ensuring that all actions taken are in alignment with its provisions. This commitment is foundational to the effective and just governance of our state.

**Q20**

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

Albuquerque's West Side is a vibrant community, full of potential and diversity. As your candidate for the New Mexico House of Representatives for District 17, I am committed to addressing our most pressing challenges through a balanced and centrist approach to governance. It is my belief that moderation, pragmatism, and bipartisan cooperation are the keys to effective leadership.

In an era of political polarization, it is more important than ever to embrace moderacy and centrism in governance. This approach ensures that we are making decisions based on the best interests of all constituents, rather than adhering to rigid ideological positions. By working across the aisle and finding common ground, we can develop policies that reflect the diverse needs of our community and foster a spirit of cooperation and mutual respect.

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