

Name: **Lyn Franks**

District: **House District 15**

1. The State of Alaska continues to face significant budget challenges, how will you address the State's budget and revenue issues? Please provide details.

A1: The people of District 15 cannot afford any new taxes. It's clear that the State of Alaska needs new revenue sources to maintain its current budget. I hope to have meaningful and constructive conversations with the constituents of District 15 and State Legislators, to come up with viable solutions.

Today, with a changing climate that is disrupting people's lives, our solutions need to be significant and immediate. I will encourage business growth that is committed to promoting sustainability and living wages, while creating long lasting jobs for Alaskans.

2. In 2017, the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) ranked Alaska as having a C- with respect to the condition our state's infrastructure – see following link:

<https://www.infrastructurereportcard.org/state-item/alaska/> Do you support taxes and user fees, such as increased gas taxes, to help provide funding for these needs? If not, do you have another plan for maintaining our road system?

A2: It's imperative that we obtain our fair share from the oil companies if we want to increase funding for badly needed infrastructure projects.

3. Alaska is eligible for federal funds through the Lands and Water Conservation Fund for design and development of parks and cultural facilities. See following link:

https://omb.alaska.gov/ombfiles/21_budget/DNR/Proposed/2021proj32552.pdf Do you support the state receiving these funds? If not, why?

A3: Yes

4a. The University of Alaska (UA) system has faced severe budget reductions over the past several years. Do you support current funding levels, further decreases, or efforts to reestablish funding that has been cut in recent years? If increases, where do you see that funding coming from?

A4a: I support reestablishing funding for the UA system that has been cut over the years. This funding is a priority and it should come from regaining control of the oil tax credits with better investments from interest off the savings account reserve.

4b. As a follow up, if cuts are maintained or deepened, which programs within the UA system should be prioritized over others and where does the engineering curriculum fall in the

priorities list?

A4b: The budget cuts in 2019 decimated the UA system. Many essential degree programs were lost as a result and many educators and students left the state. The University of Alaska has lost the trust of many Alaskans and I would like to see them work to grow that community trust again. A strong university system is key to a diverse and robust economy. We must advocate for the funding of our university systems and help the expansion of Alaskan industries. STEM programs must be included in forward funding education.

4c. Architecture, landscape architecture, and interior design programs are not offered within the UA system. What are your thoughts on strengthening opportunities for Alaskans through the Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE) program to make attaining these professional degrees more feasible so Alaskans can return home to our state to fill the need for design professionals?

A4c: The idea of the Exchange is good but Alaska needs a more stable economy and better pay if we expect people to return to Alaska as design professionals.

5. Several states have sought to reduce or eliminate the scope of professional licensing (Engineers, Architects, Land Surveyors, and Landscape Architect) within their states. What is your stance on Alaska's current requirements for these professions: should the state's laws remain the same or be subject to change, and if changed, would you support decreasing or increasing the projects that require professional licensure?

A5: I do not know the extent of the current state statutes. However, we should not reduce or eliminate the scope of professional licensing.

6. The "Industrial Exemption", found in Alaska Statute 08.48.331(a)(10), allows certain infrastructure, systems, and structural projects to be designed without the requirement of a licensed Professional Engineer (PE) IF the project is such that the risk to human health, safety, and welfare is limited only to employees of the company doing the work and not the "general public". It has been suggested that some very significant engineering disasters in our nation's history, such as the Challenger Space Shuttle Disaster of 1986 and the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill of 2010, may have been linked to similar "Industrial Exemptions" and might have been averted had a licensed PE been the ultimate steward of safety in those examples. Do you feel it is appropriate or inappropriate to maintain Alaska's Industrial Exemption?

A6: The Industrial Exemption should not be allowed when it comes to human health, safety, and welfare. The requirement for licensed Professional Engineers should be strengthened and the Statute should be reviewed.

7. State law requires that all new buildings larger than a triplex are to be designed and

constructed to the latest approved edition of the International Building Code. However, engineers performing earthquake damage assessments after the November 2018 earthquake found that a large portion of buildings are not being built in conformance with the code where there is no formal enforcement. This led to more structural damage in Eagle River and the Matanuska Borough, where there is no code enforcement, compared to Anchorage, where there is code enforcement, even though ground motions were similar. What would you do to bolster adherence to and enforcement of building codes in the vulnerable and growing population centers around Alaska that are not currently under the purview of a local code official?

A7: There should be statewide conformance with building codes, to include areas where there is no formal enforcement at the moment. People's homes, businesses, and lives are at stake. The fact that there was no enforcement after the 1964 earthquake, and now the 2018 earthquake, is incomprehensible.

8. Do you have any plans to help reduce greenhouse gasses in order to mitigate the effects of climate change in Alaska?

A8: With an almost universal voice, climate scientists tell us we need immediate mitigation steps to drastically reduce our carbon footprint. This is extremely difficult in an oil-depend state like Alaska. Making the transition will take a lot of work and cooperation if we want to play our part in saving this planet for future generations. We need more implementation of sustainable technologies like solar, wind, geothermal, bore tides, and tidal energy.

On a very local level, if we are to build thriving communities in our neighborhoods, we need to change the way we have always done business. We must encourage business growth committed to promoting sustainability, and living wages while creating long lasting jobs for Alaskans.

It would be one of my highest priorities to join the Alaska State House to work on the climate crisis.

9. Is there anything you would like our organization to know about you?

A9: I'm running for the Alaska State Legislature, House District 15 because I want to make an active difference in my community. I've lived here for 32 years and raised my family in Muldoon. I want to give back to the community that's given so much to me. The state faces some tough decisions and I believe that I can represent my community with the experience and integrity to get the job done. That is why I'm fighting for Muldoon!