

Name: **Zack Fields**

District: **House District 20**

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: We need continued fiscal discipline, additional revenue, and won't be able to sustainably pay a PFD unless oil prices or revenue substantially increase.

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: Yes

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 and making sure we use them (in addition to LWCF, ORLP, Pittman Robertson, etc)

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 don't think increases are going to be feasible. I would prefer forgoing a PFD this year compared to shutting down multiple university campuses or draining the Permanent Fund.

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: Personally I think liberal arts, climate research, and engineering should be the University's top instructional priorities.

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

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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: I like that concept but don't know enough to say how it'd work or what my role would be.

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 defer to you on that. I've heard from your organization a need for stronger/more expansive licensing requirements, as I recall.

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: I'll admit to not being conversant enough about this but generally don't support weakening workplace safety and licensing standards.

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: This is tricky because we need statewide building code standards without undermining stronger local codes like in Anchorage.

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

A8: Big question. My district and I strongly support a wide range of measures potentially including joining a multi-jurisdiction co2 market, or making our 50% voluntary RPS mandatory.

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

A9: I learn from your members every time I meet with you and I appreciate that.