

2020 Legislative Candidate Questionnaire

Juan Mendez

LD 26

Senate

Q1 The COVID-19 pandemic has created an economic crisis with many Arizonans losing their jobs or dealing with a reduction in income. What strategies would you support to help Arizona workers and families recover from this economic crisis? (Answers in bold)

Increase Arizona's weekly unemployment benefit (which at \$240 is the second-lowest in the U.S.) to closer to the national average of \$490 per week.

Eliminate barriers to enrolling in and maintaining food support benefits through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

Replenish and create a designated funding source for the Housing Trust Fund to assist low-income residents and those at risk of eviction or experiencing homelessness.

Increase state-funded childcare subsidies to enable more parents to return to the workforce.

None of the above

Other (please specify): **Cash payments that go to everyone who needs them— including those who missed out in the first round of stimulus**

Q2 When the new legislature convenes in January, it is very likely lawmakers will be facing a significant revenue shortfall in order to maintain current ongoing funding of state government. If that is the case, would you support raising new revenue by raising taxes or reversing past tax cuts – like previous tax cuts for corporations or the wealthy – in order to avoid making budget cuts to things like public education, healthcare and other priorities? (Answers in bold)

Yes

No

Comment: Our state needs new permanent sustainable revenue. Private individual success depends on public investment. Prosperity for the few founded on ecological destruction and persistent social injustice for the many is no foundation for an economic philosophy. The belief that government budgets are like family budgets that must be balanced only serves conservative ideology. As long as there is debt and balance is the goal, shrinkage is the only option, which means our communities go without investment. My economic philosophy is to ensure that other's short-term private interests do not undermine our shared long-term public goods.

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Q3 Which of the following do you support to create a fairer tax code for all Arizonans?
(Answers in bold)

Repealing targeted, special interest sales tax exemptions for certain luxury items like country club memberships, fine art to out of state purchasers, and private jets.

Enable legislators to evaluate whether tax credits are providing the desired return on investment by requiring corporations who claim tax credits to provide sufficient information on the jobs and economic benefits they are providing in exchange for the tax credit.

Increase the minimum corporate tax that large corporations must pay no matter how many tax breaks they claim from \$50 to \$500 (73% of Arizona corporations currently pay \$50 or less in state income taxes).

Establish one formula for determining how multistate corporate income is taxed rather than allowing corporations to choose the formula which results in paying the least (Arizona is the only state in the country that allows this).

Repeal the special tax treatment individual taxpayers receive on long-term capital gains which an analysis shows that 83 percent of the benefits of this tax break went to the top 5 percent of wealthiest incomes in Arizona.

Requiring a sunset date for all new tax credits and sales tax exemptions to require the legislature to review each tax break every five years to evaluate whether Arizona is receiving the desired return-on-investment for the tax giveaway.

Other (please specify): **Everyone needs to pay their fair share of taxes.**

Q4 The effects of discrimination against Black, Latino and American Indians have lingered and manifested as racial inequalities in Arizona's economy today. What steps would you take as a state lawmaker to create a more racially equitable and inclusive economy? (500 words or less)

Answer: **Removing the 3/4 majority requirement for raising revenue to ensure that those with high incomes pay a larger share of their income in state and local taxes than those with lower incomes. Investing more than enough to make high-quality schools in all communities. Reprioritizing existing tax credits, incentives, and other regulatory support for small business owners of color, immigrants, natives, and women.**

Q5 Please share what your priorities will be as a state lawmaker to strengthen Arizona's workforce and economy so that all Arizonans have better opportunities to move up the economic ladder? (500 words or less)

Answer: **My priorities to help us all prosper including; funding education at 2025 levels today instead of simply trying to get back to 2008 level funding, strengthening the jobs we already have by requiring higher pay and more benefits and keeping our public government transparent and accountable by keeping dark and dirty money out of politics. I continue to run as a Clean Elections candidate.**