

2020 Legislative Candidate Questionnaire

Victoria Steele

LD 9

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):

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:

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.

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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):

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: As a member of the Legislative Indigenous People's Caucus, we have been fighting to protect people from COVID-19 while far too many Native people do not have running water and electricity. Which means in the midst of so many other things, that children were not able to attend classes on the internet and that will put them behind.

Women, particularly women face the dilemma of going back to their jobs post virus and not having affordable, safe, quality child care. One of the ways we can address this is to help with child care expenses and to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment.

Native Americans, Blacks, and Latinix make up a disproportionate number of those in our corrections system and we must make significant changes in social justice. Racism is baked into the fabric of society to the point that most people don't recognize it and even progressive, educated people are too defensive to even think about it.

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: I believe that if Arizona committed to environmental justice goals of clean air and water and improving our infrastructure, especially our solar infrastructure, we could provide more clean, higher paying, secure jobs, and a better quality of life and I am dedicated to that. We must work to call out and eliminate all forms of structural racism and injustice.

I am committed to resolving our water issues in the Arizona desert and to addressing climate change because if we don't have water and our environment continues to become hotter and drier, all the other issues that we are committed to, won't matter because we won't be able to sustain our economy or our population.

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