***Arvadans for Progressive Action***

***Questions for State Legislative and Governor Candidates 2022***

***Brianna Titone House District 27***

1. *Have you read the the report on healthcare commissioned by HB19-1176? What will you do to implement its recommendation for a single payer system to pay for healthcare?*
   1. *Yes. It’s clear that a single payer system would cost the individual taxpayer less money, but as you know, it’s not that simple. I would point out the approximate amounts of how much goes into the healthcare system: around $38 Billion Dollars. I point this out because it shows the “strength” of the lobby around the issue, the reason why it’s so difficult to pass anything in this area. It also points out how expensive it is to set up a system like this in Colorado. State funding is very difficult, TABOR prevents us from raising money without voter approval, the approval that is difficult to get because they have so much money to thwart those efforts through ad campaigns. I had very frank conversations about this issue. I’m a pragmatist and a realist and I see the sausage being made. Creating public policy is not just having a good idea and making it happen. It’s much more nuanced than that. There are a lot of personalities, egos, and aspirations that play here. Could the legislature get a bill passed to get it on the ballot? Based on past results, I’m not sure. Will we be able to do this in the next session? Hard to say. It could be a worse situation for Dem representation next year. Could a ballot initiative be utilized? Possibly. But a ballot initiative is narrow in wording and can make it difficult to set up such a complicated system without touching all the aspects that need to be thoughtfully considered. At this point, based on my knowledge from being on the Health and Insurance Committee for 4 years and the long conversations I’ve had with advocates and opponents, and performance on bills which were changed drastically from their intended purposes, I don’t see this coming to fruition at this point in time. In order to accomplish this, as I’ve said with advocates, there needs to be a strong coalition, an educated electorate, and willing representatives to vote and advocate for such a bill. I will help with these efforts and keep a close eye on the temperature of the issue to help understand when the opportunity is right to succeed, but often failing repeatedly results in a harder road to success. This issue needs to have a critical mass to succeed, and I don’t feel that we’re quite there yet, but we are getting closer.*
2. *Would you support raising taxes on the wealthy with a constitutional amendment for a graduated income tax? What other ideas do you have to help with Colorado’s fiscal situation?*
   1. *Yes, but I suspect that this will be difficult to pass. If we are unable to remove TABOR, this may just as difficult, especially the way TABOR requires the wording on the ballot. I have supported this and would continue to support this. Until we have a way of cracking TABOR, we need to find ways of raising money to support many of our much-needed budget areas including schools. We are looking at that with the 1/3 TABOR funnel for schools’ ballot initiative.*
3. *The state legislature has passed a bill committing the state to cut climate pollution (from 2005 levels) 26% by 2025, 50% by 2030, and 90% by 2050. What further legislation will you promote in order to achieve those goals, and how will you address vehicle emissions as part of the framework?*
   1. *We have done a good job identifying sources of GHG emissions and finding ways to incentivize reducing these sources. Education to the public about the alternatives and how much money it could save would be one way to help move consumer demand. But changing over to low/zero GHG alternatives are difficult to as the general public to adopt when they cost considerable amounts for folks to switch to. There are many factors getting in the way of progress, especially with electric vehicles, many of which are influenced externally (supply chain, pandemic, war, etc.). There are areas where we can make differences, especially in reducing cars on roads, incentivizing alternative transportation, public transportation, and bike/pedestrian lanes. I feel that we have done a lot already and as technology expands and improves, we can begin to shift more towards implementing and incentivizing moving to these.*
4. *What is your position regarding public schools, including charter schools, school choice programs and the use of standardized tests to evaluate schools and teachers? What will you do to strengthen our public school system?*
   1. *I am a strong supporter of public schools. While charter schools have their place, they are no substitute for public schools. Public schools are foundational institutions in our communities, and we need to protect these and make them succeed. School choice is undermining public schools. This and other attempts to force parents to shift away to charter schools which has a deleterious effect on the public schools, which is what their desired result is. Standardized testing for teachers is not productive. This needs to be reformed and teachers need different ways of being evaluated that is not dependent on the students, which is a constant variable and is not truly reflective in the teacher’s actual performance. To Strengthen public schools, we need to pay teachers better, work on retention of teachers and support staff, provide better special and GT services, and expand school programs so parents don’t have to seek these at other schools.*
5. *How will you address the needs of the undocumented children who have only known the U.S. as their home country?*
   1. *The legislature has already done several things to help support these students. These children are here to no fault or choice of their own and should be given the opportunity to live the life they only know. Allowing these children to attend school, drive, and get healthcare are ways we can help them succeed. By speaking with these children and their families to understand their struggles, we can find gaps in ways we already are working to address these needs.*
6. *How will you address affordable housing, attainable housing, and housing for the homeless?* 
   1. *The legislature just spent a large sum of money on tying to help solve some of these problems, including families that fall outside the “affordable” AMI, which often leave them with few if any options. We need to continue to collect data, communicate with others outside of Colorado to find ideas that work, and persuade municipalities to approve housing projects that include affordable and attainable housing options. Similarly, to the issue of homelessness, which is a multifaceted issue, we need to find what is working, identify the root causes of homelessness, and work on prevention efforts whenever possible to keep people and families from getting to this place.*
7. *Do you support the right of workers, as well as public employees, to organize and engage in collective bargaining?*
   1. *Yes. I have several times supported these efforts and will continue to. I have attended collective bargaining negotiations in support of JSPA and showed up to support folks on the picket lines.*
8. *Do you support legislation to ban* *private correctional facilities in Colorado?*
   1. *Yes. There is no place to make profits on incarceration of people.*