

2018 ELECTION QUESTIONS – CONGRESS: Jim Hagedorn

Top priority: If elected, what is your top priority for the 2019 Congress? Why are you running for office?

I'm running for Congress to serve as a conservative reinforcement in the U.S. House and to partner with likeminded colleagues to keep moving our nation in the right direction – to keep America safe; make America prosperous; defend our God-given rights and sustain agriculture and our rural southern Minnesota way of life.

Foreign affairs: How do you grade President Trump's foreign policy record? Which of his initiatives do you support, and which do you oppose? Be specific.

The President has earned an A grade for his handling of foreign affairs. He has aggressively addressed the unfair trade practices of China in defense of American jobs. His administration is working hard to denuclearize the Korean Peninsula, something no other president of either party attempted to do. He rolled back the failed Iran deal and has lent support to Iranians who are seeking freedom. He has virtually eliminated ISIS by relaxing the rules of engagement and allowing our troops to vigorously deal with that threat. He has provided defensive weapons to Poland and Ukraine, something promised, but never delivered by former President Obama. And in Israel, moving the U.S. embassy to Jerusalem is yet another example of his firm, decisive leadership which has strengthened our country abroad.

Health care: What role should the federal government play in combating the opioid epidemic?

Over 2 million Americans are facing addiction to opioids and other drugs in a crisis that is killing 115 people every day. Americans all across the country, regardless of income or ethnic group, are feeling the chilling effects of opioid abuse. Too many are faced with the daunting task of confronting this issue alone, many of whom are suffering from depression and suicide.

The federal government should take the role of taking steps to end the stigma associated with opioid abuse and confront the crisis head on. I believe the federal government should ensure that doctors, first responders, and state and local governments have the resources, technology, and training they need to better serve patients and combat this crisis. Additionally, patients need expanded access to a wider range of treatment options so that they can receive tailored care suited to their specific needs, especially in rural communities where opioid addiction is 40 percent higher than metropolitan areas.

Education: What role should the federal government play in ensuring that U.S. graduates can compete in the global economy? Are there specific measures that you advocate?

Despite a currently thriving economy, businesses and companies struggle to find qualified workers to fill jobs. Individuals need to come into the workforce prepared with skills to succeed. The federal government should support workforce development so that American workers stay competitive in the global economy.

With low unemployment, there are more jobs than workers. The skills needed to fill these jobs will continue to increase and become more complex. Congress should continue preparing students for the jobs of tomorrow and encourage others to obtain the skills they need to better their economic situation, moving from welfare to a skilled job. I support a bill introduced by Congressman Glenn Thompson, H.R.

2353 – Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act that reauthorizes the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education programs through 2023, which is the federal funding source for CTE programs in high school and postsecondary levels with the purpose of preparing students with the CTE workforce skills needed to move on to a skilled position.

Energy: Is the United States doing enough to reduce carbon emissions? What can the federal government do to promote homegrown energy?

An energy independent America is a strong America, and an America whose energy needs cannot be held hostage by outside forces. Therefore, we should embrace an “all of the above” approach to energy production which includes oil, natural gas, clean coal, renewables and conservation. Higher energy taxes would cripple our economy and dramatically lower the standard of living for middleclass Minnesotans.

Debt: Federal entitlements are the main drivers of rising U.S. debt. What specific steps can be taken to keep programs such as Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid solvent and still serve those individuals in need?

Return Medicaid to the states, reinstate work requirements for able-bodied welfare recipients and give Social Security recipients the option of a “buy out” at age 62. Citizens who have contributed to Medicare and Social Security should be provided the promised benefits.

Transportation: What role should the federal government play in funding state and local transportation infrastructure? Be specific.

To best serve southern Minnesota, the federal government should ensure transportation dollars are dedicated to roads and bridges. And to the extent possible, transportation dollars should be sent directly to the states where our governor and legislators have a much better command of Minnesota’s transportation needs than Washington bureaucrats.

Economy: Assess the impact of the 2017 federal tax reform on the nation’s economy. What additional steps do you support to stimulate job growth?

The bill will create nearly 7,000 new jobs in Minnesota, and result in a long overdue tax cut of \$2,668 to a typical southern Minnesota family. The bill also contains a sensible reduction in the rate charged to Minnesota businesses, which pay among the highest corporate taxes in the world.

I also support reform of the federal regulatory process in order for the Congress to reclaim regulatory authority and take power from federal bureaucrats. I support legislation like the REINS Act and regulatory sunset provisions to enable Congress to control the implementation of major federal regulations, reduce the burden on Minnesota businesses and to spur additional economic growth

Immigration: Congress remains deadlocked on federal immigration reform. What should be the tenets of any immigration reform legislation? Do you support DACA?

I support border security and immigration reforms, including: building the proposed border wall; replacing chain migration with merit-based legal immigration; defunding sanctuary cities/states; ending the policy of “catch and release;” requiring the uniform application of E-Verify; and, establishing a verifiable work program to meet the needs of business and agriculture.

Foreign trade: The imposition of tariffs by President Trump has results in retaliation by foreign countries. Do you support the president's actions? Long term, will they help or hurt the U.S. economy?

I do not favor tariffs as they are lucrative for governments that impose them, but bring negative consequences to those impacted. However, the president's tough negotiations have been successful – witness the recent U.S.-Mexico Trade Agreement – and I will ensure he is working to improve our trade opportunities for all involved.

Other issues: Are there other issues you want to address?

I will work to be elected to serve on the U.S. House Agriculture Committee to help sustain farming and our rural economy. I am committed to additional tax reform, regulatory reform, ObamaCare repeal, work for welfare, reform of all federal agencies and energy independence in order to further spur economic growth and create high-wage jobs.

Briefly summarize your personal background and qualifications.

I was born in Blue Earth and grew up on the Hagedorn family grain and hog farm near Truman. After graduating from George Mason University with a degree in Government and Politics, I went to work as a congressional staffer to former U.S. Rep. Arlan Stangeland. I then worked in two U.S. Department of Treasury executive positions and have worked in various management capacities for businesses based in southern Minnesota.