

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

I ran for office to help protect the American dream by jumpstarting our economy and protecting our constitutional rights. I am proud of the work we did in congress to reduce burdensome regulations and pass the biggest tax cut in decades. All of this has led to historic economic growth, and I am running for Congress to continue this trajectory and build upon the work we have started.

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.

When it comes to foreign affairs the priority must always be what is in the best interest of the American people, and I appreciate that the President has made this his priority. It is important that our allies invest in their own defense and do not solely rely on the strength of the U.S, and the President rightly highlighted deficiencies in our NATO partners. While, we must be skeptical and vigilant when having discussions with North Koreans, I hope that the current talks will lead to a more stable Korean peninsula. That being said, after over 50 years of failed policy towards Cuba we should begin opening up trade and increase American access to Cuba which in turn will help both the American people and the Cuban people.

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

It will take efforts and partnerships at the federal, state, and community level to address our country's opioid epidemic. Key in this is treating opioid addictions like medical issue, and not a criminal one. That is why I have advocated for legislation that encourages the use of drug courts and treatment programs for low level non-violent drug offenders. I also introduced legislation that would bring together employers, labor, medical professional and others to help develop best practices for places of work to help address opioid abuse that may affect their employees. Moreover, my colleagues and I just recently passed the SUPPORT for Patients and Communities Act, which is the most comprehensive action against a drug crisis in history. This bill supports initiatives to improve treatment, recovery, and prevention as well as efforts to protect our communities.

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?

We need to do better at preparing our kids for the 21st century economy. Some of the most common feedback I get from business owners is that those graduating lack the skills they need to fill the jobs that are open. That is why I have worked hard to increase Career and Technical Education (CTE) opportunities. I authored an amendment to promote dual enrollment, so that high school students can get a head start on their careers by taking college CTE courses. This amendment was included in the CTE bill that was recently signed into law this past July. We can also increase partnerships between our education systems and our businesses to ensure we are preparing our students with the skills our businesses need.

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

In order to research and invest in clean energy and in order to reduce the CO2 emissions of systems in any industry you need to have prosperity and capital. According to the World Bank, CO2 emissions per person have risen at a staggering pace until 2011 when they relatively flat-lined. Meanwhile, the U.S. has consistently decreased its per capita production since 1973. While the rest of the world is increasing their production, as a society, the U.S. has the will-power, public drive, and financial ability to find alternatives. It is the growing economies throughout the Middle East & Northern Africa, Latin America & Caribbean, and South Asia regions that are seeing exponential carbon emission growth. I do not mention this as a notion of finger pointing, but rather to show that unless you have a growing economy and the means by which to invest in clean air you cannot have a fully functioning and well off society.

I have met with rural, co-op, public, private, large, small, and homegrown energy producers from Minnesota and across the country. It is clear they all agree we cannot rush our system into relying solely on renewable energy. Without power sources like nuclear, coal, and the rise of natural gas our society would not function. We do not have the technological ability to store mass quantities of energy at high efficiencies. We need to continue to invest in these areas and as technology changes market forces will drive adoption. Additionally, this ensures that we do not see sweeping changes to our industrial landscape but gradual change, allowing our workforce to develop along with it.

It is the government's responsibility to remove impediments to advanced clean energy generation or cleaner emission technologies. We can be certain approvals, testing, certification, and licensing happen in an appropriate manner. To that end, one of the last major pieces of legislation I voted on was a bill my committee helped produce. *America's Water Infrastructure Act of 2018* included an entire title on energy with a focus on the production of energy through the movement of water. In the language we allow for expedited permitting of hydropower projects and review the qualifications of new and existing facilities. The movement of water is entirely carbon free. I am encouraged by the strides we have made as a country to prioritize life in a clean environment and am confident this endeavor will continue.

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?

First, I believe we must keep our promise to our seniors and those approaching retirement. Then we can look at what reforms need to be made to ensure the programs remain solvent for future generations. We also have to protect these programs for those it was meant to help. Medicare for All would destroy Medicare as we know it. Doctors would have to face an immediate cut of roughly 40 percent for the treatment of patients, and in turn patients would face rationing of care. Moreover, it would actually be illegal for employers to offer private health insurance benefits and competition from the private sector to provide health insurance would be illegal. Medicare for All will just further hurt the solvency of Medicare and threaten the program for seniors.

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

Maintaining our country's transportation and infrastructure system is a partnership between the federal, state, and local entities. The federal government plays an integral role in maintaining our infrastructure. For instance, the Mississippi River runs along the length of the Second District, and federal entities like the Army Corp of Engineers plays an integral role in maintaining the river which is a vital thoroughfare for our businesses and vital to our economy. The same can be said for our rail systems and highways.

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?

Tax reform has had an immediate and significantly positive impact on our economy. Minnesota's unemployment rate dropped below 3%, wages are rising, small business optimism is at record highs, and we saw for the first time in years 4% economic growth. It is clear our economy is back on the right track. This growth is not just due to tax reform, it's also thanks to the burdensome regulations we have repealed. This work will continue as we work to repeal these unneeded regulations that hurt our businesses, farmers, and communities.

With all this growth, and with businesses hiring we also need to improve our labor participation rate. We have more job openings than unemployed people in Minnesota, yet our labor participation rate is 70%, we can do better at getting these individuals back into the labor force to help our businesses grow more. We in the House also recently passed Tax 2.0 to continue to reform and better our tax code.

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

I'm disappointed that Congress has not yet come to a consensus to begin to address our nation's immigration issues, but I believe we can come to a compromise that will enable Congress to make progress in reforming our immigration system. I supported legislation that would address the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) situation while also advancing reforms that address the causes of problem, protect our national security, and ensure a fair system for all individuals who want to immigrate here. I have also long been a cosponsor of the ENLIST Act, which would allow undocumented immigrants who came here as children serve in the military and be granted legal permanent residency. These bills can serve as a basis to get to a compromise we can get signed into law.

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?

Expanding access to foreign markets and ensuring our producers can compete on a level playing field is critical for the long-term success of American manufacturing and agriculture. While ongoing negotiations have led to short-term uncertainty, I am confident we can make progress. NAFTA needed to be updated to reflect technologic advances, and I am pleased to see the progress we have made with Mexico and hope we can make advances with Canada as well. I was also glad to see the recent progress with our trade relations with South Korea.

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

Since coming to congress one of the most rewarding areas to work on has been criminal justice reform. We have over federalized our criminal code, misguided mandatory minimums have

taken away the ability of judges to take individual circumstances into account, and we don't do nearly enough to reduce recidivism. My Juvenile Justice Reform Act was my first piece of legislation to pass the House, and since then I have continued my bipartisan work on criminal justice reform by joining my friend Congressman Bobby Scott (D-VA) in introducing the SAFE Justice Act which comprehensively reforms our justice system.

Briefly summarize your personal background and qualifications.

Prior to running for office, I spent more than two decades as a talk show radio host.

On the air, I was known for an independent streak – critical of the status quo in Washington and St. Paul. Now I have taken my independent voice to Washington working with colleagues on both sides of the aisle and standing up to Republican colleagues and leadership in both parties when necessary.

I was elected to Congress in 2016 to fill the seat left by retiring Congressman John Kline. I am currently in my 2nd year serving the people of Minnesota's 2nd Congressional District and is currently running for re-election. Since taking office, I have served on the House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee, the Budget Committee, and the Education and Workforce Committee.

In his first term, I have led the charge on reforming our criminal justice and juvenile justice systems, reining in the Met Council, and increasing funding for Career and Technical Education.

I am married to his wife Leigh, and they have two daughters - Lindsey and Lauren.