

2020 ELECTION QUESTIONS – CONGRESS / SENATE – LEWIS

Top priority: If elected, what is your top priority for the 2021 Congress? Why are you running for office?

Every year, politicians of both parties come to you and say “this is the most important election of our lifetime.” I’m running for the United States Senate because 2020 truly is the most important. This election has become a referendum on our American values and way of life. When a mainstream political party and its standard bearers are pushing to defund the police, it’s safe to say that something is dangerously wrong and Minnesotans need a voice who will stand up and fight for them and protect them. Not only will I fund the police and punish those who don’t, I stand in favor of putting Minnesota and American jobs first, at the expense of globalist policies of the past (like NAFTA) that shipped jobs overseas and hurt our farmers. We must hold China accountable for exporting the Coronavirus and ensure American corporations stop outsourcing jobs there. I will also protect the tax cuts I helped enact in the 115th Congress. We must also protect our Constitution and appoint and confirm jurists to our federal courts who will protect the freedom of speech and assembly, the 2nd Amendment, and protect against radicals who support late term and even post birth abortion.

Economy: How do you grade the federal government’s response to the pandemic? Are additional measures necessary to spur the economy? If so, what?

Between the China travel ban (which Democrats opposed and decried as xenophobic) and actions taken to shore up medical supplies and resources to “flatten the curve,” the Administration’s approach has proven effective. Having seen a drastic reduction in cases and mortality rates, it’s time to fully reopen our economy.

I was all in on “15 days to slow the spread” and its initial extension so that our health care infrastructure could shore up and “flatten the curve.” I have been proposing since April that we lift once and for all this economic lockdown that has plagued and derailed what had previously been the best economy on record, thanks to the tax cuts I helped pass in Congress. Americans indeed need more relief from the fallout surrounding COVID and the lockdown, such as SBA loan forgiveness which I support and my opponent opposes, based on her latest “NO” vote on COVID relief bills.

Police reform: Police reform has become center stage since the George Floyd death and has prompted calls for legislative action at all levels of government. What actions do you support at the federal level?

I know firsthand from marrying a St. Paul police officer that nobody dislikes a bad cop more than a good cop. But to paint with a broad brush and label an entire profession as “rotten to the root” as Ilhan Omar did (who my opponent enthusiastically endorsed), is not only wrong, it’s dangerous. Bad cops must be held accountable--that’s why I spoke out in favor of Senator Tim Scott’s and Congressman Pete Stauber’s reform bill, the “JUSTICE Act” while Senator Tina Smith voted against it. But we owe it to the men and women who risk their lives to keep us safe,

to stand behind them and support them, and I do. That's why I'm proud to have been endorsed by the Minnesota Fraternal Order of Police and the Minnesota Police and Peace Officers Association.

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 Trump Doctrine of "America First" is precisely what the American people have been looking for in the post-Cold War era. We protect our allies abroad while disentangling our nation from foreign conflicts that have no direct national security threat to the United States. Trump won in large part by running against globalism and nation building. He has fulfilled that promise and I support that. It's the difference between a republic and an empire.

Health care: Do you support the expansion of Association Health Plans?

I support Association Health Plans which enable small businesses and the self-employed to compete with larger groups by forming their own pools. I also am proud of my efforts in Congress to reform ACA and lower premiums, deductibles, and drug costs.

We now have two competing visions of what direction health care in America should take. A market-based system of private medicine with a safety net, or a heedless slide into a single-payer government run system.

Democrats now insist the only way to fix the skyrocketing premiums and deductibles that have been foisted upon us by Obamacare (which conservatives like me warned would happen) is to embrace a single payer style healthcare system such as "Medicare For All." Plans such as those supported by my opponent Tina Smith could force up to 50 rural Minnesota hospitals to close.

Lest you believe that more government is the answer to the issue of healthcare, ask Canada and Europe how their care rationing and months-long waiting lists are working out for their citizens.

Education: COVID-19 has had a profound effect on the demands for and delivery of education. What role should the federal government play in ensuring that U.S. graduates can compete in the global economy?

We are leaving an entire generation of kids behind as we continue to keep millions of them out of school with this never-ending, one size fits all lockdown. It's imperative that we get our kids back in school safely, and I would fight for that as U.S. Senator. On the other hand, my opponent Tina Smith has blocked COVID relief bills three times. The most recent iteration of COVID relief that she blocked in the Senate contained money to help get kids safely back in school.

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

Under President Trump, for the first time, the United States of America is a net energy exporter. In order to promote homegrown energy, we need only continue the pro-growth, pro-energy policies promoted by the President and myself when I served in the 115th Congress. I would hate to see this progress reversed because we gave in to the short-sighted whims of radicals pushing proposals like the Green New Deal. I don't believe in hamstringing our economy and putting us at a competitive disadvantage relative to other nations who have no intention of meaningfully reducing emissions.

That's not to say our nation's energy policy should be heedless of concern pertaining to emissions and the environment. We need to continue to foster the surge we've seen in clean fracking. I have been a vocal and forceful advocate for the Enbridge Line 3 replacement pipeline which would create 8,600 jobs in Minnesota and generate more than \$19 million dollars in local property tax revenue. And yet, Minnesota Democrats throw hurdle after hurdle in its way, which is surprising considering the pipeline is so old and dilapidated that it can only operate at 50% capacity.

Protecting our land, water, and air and supporting our job creators and businesses are not mutually exclusive. Take the Minnesota Iron Range for example. Some of the strongest environmentalists I know are also some of the most vocal proponents of new copper and nickel mining. We must lend more trust to businesses and individuals to be good stewards of the land.

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

After serving on the House Infrastructure Committee in the 115th Congress, I understand we need to rebuild our infrastructure, especially the Highway Trust Fund. We also must do it in a way that is fiscally responsible, cutting unnecessary expenditures (such as massive light rail projects) across the country and implementing programs such as an Asset Recycling Fund, which could deliver upwards of \$1 trillion of new infrastructure at a fraction of the cost. Under a program like this, with initial funding of just \$100 billion, the federal government could incentivize state and local governments to sell off or lease underperforming assets by offering a bonus to any unit of government on a first come, first serve basis. The only condition: all revenue from the sale or lease of government property must be used to build new infrastructure, whether roads, sewers or bridges.

Immigration: Immigration reform continues to languish at the federal level. What should be the principles of any legislation?

As Jack Kemp once said, we have to close the back door of illegal immigration to open the front door of legal immigration. And that's why I supported the two Goodlatte bills which fixed the DREAMer situation once and for all, the Flores consent decree, and expanded work visas in exchange for controlling immigration. I also support finishing the wall.

Foreign trade: Do you support the president's actions on international trade? Long term, will they help or hurt the U.S. economy?

Whether it's China Phase 1 or the USMCA, I was proud to work with the President in Congress on scrapping decades-old bad trade deals that hollowed out the middle class, hurt our farmers, and all but destroyed American manufacturing. Democrats like my opponent needlessly delayed the USMCA's passage, and sadly Minnesota's middle class families, manufacturers and farmers are paying the price.

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

I still believe there is far more good about America than bad. I believe there is no challenge the United States of America can not meet and face while still holding true to our values and principles.

Senator Smith on the other hand sides with the radical defund the police movement and says the role that police play in society is "dangerously wrong." She would sooner throw her lot in with the Green New Dealers than stand in support of new logging, pipelines, and safe/responsible mines in the Northland. I helped President Trump cut taxes and regulations, Tina stands with Joe Biden and Kamala Harris who have pledged to increase our taxes by \$4 trillion dollars. I have fought for fairer trade deals that will help our farmers and manufacturers. I will also get tough on China, while Senator Smith continues to raise campaign money from corporations that outsource jobs there. I support confirming judges who believe in life, the Second Amendment, and protecting freedom of speech. Senator Smith does not.

Briefly summarize your personal background and qualifications.

Senator Smith and I come from very different backgrounds and walks of life. I spent a lot of my early years working for the family business. We owned a machine shop and I spent a lot of time on the road selling automotive aftermarket parts. When my dad retired I took over the family business, later going into broadcasting and enjoying a long and successful career as a radio host discussing public affairs and hearing folks' concerns each and every day .

Senator Smith has spent her career as a corporate executive, a former Vice President of Planned Parenthood, and has been a politician for the last 14 years. I believe I have more real world experience and therefore a better perspective with which to help govern than Tina Smith does.

If we are to use the metric of bills passed by Congress and signed into law by the President, the 115th Congress, of which I was a part, was one of the most productive sessions of Congress in our nation's history. I was proud to have helped pass historic tax cuts through the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, I authored and sponsored landmark bipartisan juvenile justice reform, and I co-sponsored and passed a bill providing historic levels of support to Career and Technical Education. Too many young folks (and their parents) are going into debt to fund four year degrees that sometimes provide little utility. Growing the middle class means we need to provide

more resources and encourage people to go into farming and the trades, and ensure they are able to thrive doing so.

As a husband and the loving father of two daughters who are now all grown up and out of the house, I want to be a force for order and for good in the midst of all the chaos and turmoil that is unfolding in our state and country. I believe that starts with immediately confirming a new Supreme Court justice. I want to leave Minnesota and the United States a better state and nation than I found it, for your kids and grandkids and mine. I would be honored to have your support.