

MNA Political Questions – Congress | Ian Todd

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

My top priority is ending the corrupting influence of unlimited corporate campaign contributions through a constitutional amendment. I'm running because I still have faith in our system of government, but I know many of our current representatives are too far removed from our suffering and our problems to do anything about them. I'm running because American Oligarchs are successfully buying power in our democracy, and the only way to stop them is by voting out everyone who takes the payments with people who won't.

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.

I think real time grades for presidents say more about the grader than the president, but Trump's trade wars, animosity towards our allies, withdrawal from important peace and environmental deals, and increase in military strikes are all mistakes that harm our country.

I do, however, believe the president's approach to North Korea may yield positive results. However, I wish he came properly prepared to diplomatic meetings.

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

We need to decriminalize the use of opioids and other illegal drugs in order to provide medical assistance and support for addiction. This also has the effect of freeing funds and relieving some of the burden on our justice system. Rehabilitation has a better success rate at helping patients than prison sentences.

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?

The most important role the federal government can play for graduates is to ensure their financial burdens from education are manageable and their options are not restricted. Education needs to work for all students in the country, for that reason, we must address how we pay for federal mandates and how we close achievement gaps.

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

No. We need to invest more into renewable options for our energy needs and remove federal subsidies from fossil fuel industries.

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?

We need to strengthen Social Security by removing the payroll cap and save millions for Medicare by allowing the program to negotiate drug prices. I also support Medicare for All. The problem with our

debt is not Federal entitlements; these eminently popular programs stayed solvent for decades and have saved millions of lives. Our debt is fueled by irresponsible tax cuts over several decades, perpetual war, and countless increases to our military spending driven by defense lobbyists without concern for how to pay for it.

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

The federal government must continue providing adequate funding for national infrastructure needs. This means proper funding for roads and bridges as well as funding for the electrical grid and access to internet. We should also reinstate the state and local tax deductions so local governments looking to expand local infrastructure through tax increases aren't placing the tax burden solely on local residents.

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?

We have low unemployment, but no real wage growth. This is problematic, as our minimum wage has not kept up with inflation, and in order to make ends meet, minimum wage will not cut it. I support an increase to the federal minimum wage, and the implementation of single payer healthcare to provide American workers the disposable income necessary to support their local economies. The tax cuts were not for working Americans, so we remain unassisted by them.

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

We need better, clearer, less expensive, and available paths to citizenship. Most undocumented immigrants living in America would be willing to go through the naturalization process if it were available to them. The current administration has shown that inhumane treatment of immigrants solves none of our nation's problems, so I propose the humane approach. Also, DACA recipients should be given an express pass to citizenship if they desire it; America is often their only home.

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?

The trade war started by the president is not good for our nation in the short term or the long term. There are trade disputes that warranted action, but blanket tariffs are a not the proper response to trade deficits.

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

We need a concrete plan of how to withdraw from the wars we have been waging for nearly two decades. We have every responsibility to help nations destabilized by our actions, but perhaps the most important aspect of achieving peace would be to strategically withdraw our troops and armaments and consider selling only defensive weapon systems to our allies.

Briefly summarize your personal background and qualifications

I am an Air Force veteran. I served as a Geospatial Intelligence Analyst and learned a great deal about our foreign policy and how we conduct war. I've also been directly involved in the wasteful practices of use-it-or-lose-it budgets that are everywhere in the military and government agencies. My experience has shown me explicit examples of how we can save money and have a more functional government and military.