

2020 ELECTION QUESTIONS – CONGRESS / Jim Hagedorn

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

- My focus is continuing my work to promote the interests of southern Minnesotans by sustaining our farmers, supporting small businesses, and maintaining our fine rural hospitals. Our nation is truly at a crossroads. First District residents can count on me to vote as a conservative and defend the United States and our American way of life.

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

- Our federal response has been strong, ranging from the president's shutdown on China travel to Vice President's Task Force working cooperatively with all 50 states. I've personally worked to streamline FDA regulations for Mayo Clinic's plasma trial, expand telemedicine across state lines, fully fund our fine rural hospitals through the CARES Act, pushed the President to invoke the Defense Production Act to reopen meat-packing plants, enact the successful Paycheck Protection Program, and joined with New Hampshire Democrat Chris Pappas to gain expanded use of the Employee Retention Tax Credit to help our small businesses and employees.

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 am a cosponsor of the JUSTICE Act, introduced by my colleague and friend from Minnesota, Congressman Pete Stauber, a retired police officer. This bill offers commonsense ways to enhance safety, transparency and training while continuing to fight for justice, law and order. I also support President Trump's recent executive order that takes the first steps toward enhancing the safety of our communities and police officers. This executive order will help promote best practices for officers across the country and will establish means for police departments to share information about and respond to incidents of excessive force. I will continue supporting our law enforcement officers at the congressional level and defending the rule of law.

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.

- President Trump has been doing a remarkable job handling diplomatic relations and U.S. foreign policy. As an example, the significance of his breakthrough with Israel

and the UAE cannot be overstated. Prior to this agreement, the UAE refused to even acknowledge the existence of Israel as a sovereign nation. The Trump administration's leadership and diplomacy has helped deliver the most significant step towards peace in the Middle East in decades. I will continue to work with like-minded congressional colleagues and President Trump to push bipartisan proposals and to implement these commonsense solutions to build a U.S. military and foreign policy of Peace through Strength.

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

- Association Health Plans are a tool that can be helpful in controlling the high cost of health care due to the inherent failures of Obamacare that has caused premiums in the small business marketplace to skyrocket. In addition to Association Health Plans, I support price transparency, helping families create tax free medical savings accounts, and the "one-price, one pill" pharmaceutical reforms recently enacted by the President to hold down the cost of prescription drugs.

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 continue to rebound much stronger and faster than the "experts" predicted. If only Blue state governors, like ours, would get out of the way and enable small businesses to fully open and truly empower local school districts to decide about in-person classes, the economy would be that much stronger with high-wage jobs.

A strong economy with a robust job market is the best thing government can do to assist U.S. graduates. President Trump and Republicans built the strongest economy in U.S. history with record-low unemployment. That was just seven months ago. We did it once and we will do it again, and get there with the proven pro-growth policies of less regulation, tax reform, U.S. energy independence and trade deals like USMCA that are good for America's farmers and workers.

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

- Free market forces are playing an important role in incentivizing U.S. companies and industries to reduce carbon emissions. The federal government should implement an "all of the above" approach to promote homegrown energy, combined with construction of the refineries, distribution points and pipelines needed to efficiently utilize America's

vast energy resources. I am committed to implementing a bold energy policy to achieve U.S. self-sufficiency, which is critical to revitalizing our nation's economy, creating high-wage manufacturing jobs and placing downward pressure on the cost of living. I am an unapologetic proponent of bold national policies to foster private sector development of all available U.S. energy resources, including the development of technologies to more efficiently utilize and promote renewable energy platforms.

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

- The federal government should continue to be a funding partner with state, county and local units of government to undertake critical transportation infrastructure. I have been committed to helping secure the \$25 million federal BUILD grant to facilitate the completion of the Highway 14 Corridor from Nicollet to New Ulm. Recently, I've discussed the Highway 14 project with USDOT officials, and I will continue to press the case.

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

- I support a merit-based system of immigration to meet the employment and other needs of our nation. Further, I have called for a refugee program timeout in order to fully determine the best way to help those in need from around the globe, while also protecting American citizens from those who subscribe to religious ideology and supremacy. I also support creation of a work program to enable people to freely flow to and from the United States for work and also build up credits towards citizenship. Our plan is commonsense and would reassert our nation's sovereignty, protect U.S. taxpayers, defend the interests of American workers and reduce crime.

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

- A critically important element of supporting grain and livestock farmers, agri-businesses and our rural economy is to maintain and expand global markets. The President has instituted a much-needed course correction in the trade arena. I am proud of my work to make sure American farmers and manufacturers have fair access to markets and that we pass trade deals such as the USMCA (United States/Canada/Mexico), China Phase One, Japan, and many others to allow for the expansion of U.S. exports, especially our quality Southern Minnesota agricultural and manufactured products.

I support the President's end-goal of opening up new markets for our farmers and businesses and leveling the playing field with China, Mexico, Canada and other nations.

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

Briefly summarize your personal background and qualifications.

- Jim Hagedorn currently represents Minnesota's First Congressional District in the U.S. House of Representatives. He serves on the House Agriculture Committee and the Small Business Committee.

Born in Blue Earth to parents Thomas, a grain and livestock farmer, and Kathleen, Jim grew up on a Truman farm where he developed a firsthand understanding of farming and by helping to work the land, walk the bean fields, feed the hogs and maintain the property.

After Jim graduated from George Mason University, he went on to work for former Minnesota Congressman Arlan Stangeland, the U.S. Department of the Treasury, and the Bureau of Engraving and Printing before his election to congress.