

Candidate: Norlin Mommsen

Office Sought: Iowa House District 70

Questionnaire Responses:

Why should a business leader vote for you?

Being a business owner myself (farmer) I know all about the hardships faced by business owners. It can be very discouraging to work hard all year and find out the expenses outweigh the revenue. Many times, whether a business is profitable is in the hands of others.



What does a business-friendly tax environment look like for you?

There is a delicate balance between having taxes at the point that the government can provide adequate services and being a hindrance to a business's success. Taxes should be used to support a business and not act as an anchor.

What is your approach to regulation?

Regulation needs to be used sparingly. It should only be used to safeguard employees, the community and environment.

What would you do to support investment in amenities and recreation to support talent attraction and retention?

Having been the Chair of the Ag and Natural Resources subcommittee in the house, I know how important recreation opportunities are to the state. Many employees include these recreation opportunities as a necessity when looking for a place to live and stay and raise a family. This not only helps attract employees but also retains them.

How can you support workforce attraction and retention in the Quad Cities and Iowa?

Continue to support recreation opportunities through the DNR.

What else should voters know about you?

I support fair competition in the business community. The state needs to stay out of determining winners and losers whenever possible.

Candidate: Kay Pence

Office Sought: Iowa House District 70

Questionnaire Responses:

Why should a business leader vote for you?

I have MBA from St Ambrose and I am an honest, hard working problem solver. Iowa's rural areas in particular are losing population - especially young people. A small town mayor explained it this way, it's hard to attract business without workers, it's hard to attract workers without affordable housing and nobody wants to build housing without a market. Yet people love raising families in rural communities. We need to help small towns survive.



What does a business-friendly tax environment look like for you?

One that is fair and balanced for all constituents.

What is your approach to regulation?

Health and safety of constituents come first. Regulations should be easy to understand and to comply with.

What would you do to support investment in amenities and recreation to support talent attraction and retention?

Clean water and outdoor recreation are important to Iowans, that is why voters passed a constitutional amendment in 2010 to establish a trust fund to pay for it. Unfortunately it was to be funded with a fraction of the next sales tax increase which never happen. We could start by using some of our surplus funds to address these issues while we search for another permanent funding source.

How can you support workforce attraction and retention in the Quad Cities and Iowa?

See #6 and encourage safe affordable housing and strong public schools. Iowa used to be #1 in public education but we are moving toward the middle of the pack. IA is #2 in cancer rates and has the fastest growing rates of new cancers. If we can't start turning those 2 statistics around it will be increasingly difficult to find people who want to raise families here.

What else should voters know about you?

I have a strong commitment to community service, I'm a good listener and I have experience bring people together to solve problems.

Candidate: Daniel Gosa

Office Sought: Iowa House District 81

Questionnaire Responses:

Why should a business leader vote for you?

I am willing to sit down and have conversations and learn about the issues and educate myself.



What does a business-friendly tax environment look like for you?

I believe everyone should pay their fair share. We should have incentives in place to support small businesses to continue to grow.

What is your approach to regulation?

I would love to sit down with business leaders to find out what some of the concerns and suggestions are for regulations to educate myself on this issue.

What would you do to support investment in amenities and recreation to support talent attraction and retention?

I would love to have conversations on what we can do to better to attract and retain more people to our area.

How can you support workforce attraction and retention in the Quad Cities and Iowa?

I would continue to work with school districts and provide pathways to the many jobs in our area for students.

What else should voters know about you?

I am a very open, honest and transparent person I will be strong advocate and voice for our community

Candidate: Bobby Kaufmann

Office Sought: Iowa House District 82

Questionnaire Responses:

Why should a business leader vote for you?

As Chair of the Ways and Means Committee I am deeply committed to helping business owners. I have led the way in the State of Iowa when it comes to reducing taxation, reducing regulation, and growing our workforce.



What does a business-friendly tax environment look like to you?

Low taxation, fewer regulations, and a robust workforce

How will you support current and future economic development in the Quad Cities region?

I will support current and future economic development by listening to the needs of business leaders and delivering results.

What is your approach to regulation?

While there is certainly a need for some common-sense regulations, I have found that government is more often than not a burden rather than helpful when it comes to business regulation.

What would you do to support investment in amenities and recreation to support talent attraction and retention?

Amenities and recreation are pivotal to attracting employees so I again would listen to leaders and workers to learn what they need and then deliver on those asks.

How can you support workforce attraction and retention in the Quad Cities and Iowa?

I would use the same approach described in questions 3 & 5.

What else should voters know about you?

I am results and common-sense driven. I have spent my career in the Legislature delivering on promises and working across the aisle for bipartisan solutions. I will continue that work if given the chance to serve for two more years.

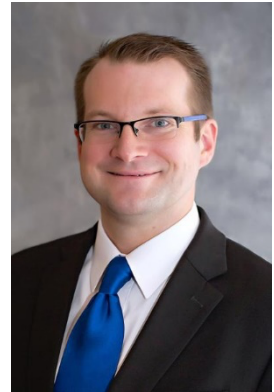
Candidate: Phil Wiese

Office Sought: Iowa House District 82

Questionnaire Responses:

Why should a business leader vote for you?

As a rural Democrat with firsthand experience running a farm, a Maid-Rite and other businesses, I understand the challenges facing hardworking Iowans. I'm committed to creating an environment where businesses can thrive while also ensuring fair wages and opportunities for workers. My approach balances pro-growth policies with community well-being, focusing on economic development that benefits both businesses and employees.



What does a business-friendly tax environment look like for you?

A business-friendly tax environment is one that is fair, predictable, and encourages growth. We must focus on targeted tax incentives for small and medium-sized businesses that create jobs close to home. My goal is to keep taxes manageable, ensuring we have the resources needed to invest in education, infrastructure, and other critical areas that support long-term economic growth. Together, we can create a tax system that works for everyone and fosters a thriving economy.

What is your approach to regulation?

I believe in smart, effective regulation that protects consumers and workers without unnecessarily burdening businesses. My approach is to regularly review regulations and listen to constituents' concerns, working to eliminate those that are outdated or ineffective, while ensuring that necessary regulations are clear and consistently enforced. I support providing resources to help small businesses navigate regulatory requirements. The goal is to maintain high standards while fostering an environment where businesses can innovate and grow.

What would you do to support investment in amenities and recreation to support talent attraction and retention?

Investing in quality of life is crucial for attracting and retaining talent. I support initiatives to enhance our parks, like Wildcat Den State Park, as well as trails and other recreational facilities. We should also invest in cultural attractions and support local arts and culture programs. Additionally, I want to improve broadband access across our district, which is essential for both businesses and quality of life. By partnering with local communities and leveraging state resources, we can create vibrant spaces that make our area an attractive place to live and work.

How can you support workforce attraction and retention in the Quad Cities and Iowa?

To attract and retain a skilled workforce, we need a multi-faceted approach. We can start by supporting our public education system, from K-12 through higher education and vocational training, to ensure we're preparing workers for the jobs of today and tomorrow. We can also encourage partnerships between businesses and educational institutions to create apprenticeship and internship programs. We can support policies that promote work-life balance, such as accessible childcare and family leave, investing in infrastructure and public transportation to make commuting easier, and creating an inclusive environment that welcomes diversity, making our region attractive to a broad range of talented individuals. By focusing on these areas, we can make Iowa a prime destination for skilled workers and their families.

What else should voters know about you?

I'm a rural democrat and a sixth-generation farmer who lives outside of Blue Grass. I hunt, fish, and love our way of life. I'm running for Iowa House District 82 because I believe we are too divided. I will bring back the dignity we deserve.

Candidate: Gary Mohr

Office Sought: Iowa House District 93

Questionnaire Responses:

Why should a business leader vote for you?

I have 8 years experience in this job and serve as the House Appropriations committee. This committee sets the annual state budget for the state of Iowa and determines where money should be increased or decreased. It is important for the Quad Cities to have a state legislator Chair this committee.



What does a business-friendly tax environment look like for you?

We have reduced personal income taxes, eliminated retirement income taxes and reduced corporate taxes in Iowa each of the past several years. This allows our companies and our tax paying citizens to keep more of their money in their pockets. This gives them more spendable money and helps create jobs. It is my hope to continue to reduce these taxes by holding the line on state expenses.

What is your approach to regulation?

I am in favor of necessary regulation for the common good but oppose duplicative and unnecessary regulation that costs money and jobs.

What would you do to support investment in amenities and recreation to support talent attraction and retention?

I have approved and supported an increase of millions of dollars in programs to support talent attraction and retention. We need to have amenities that attract new citizens to our state and gives our current citizens reasons to stay here. Jobs are only one reason people move or stay here.

How can you support workforce attraction and retention in the Quad Cities and Iowa?

Once again, I have approved millions of dollars increase to enhance worker attraction and retention in Iowa and will continue to do so.

What else should voters know about you?

I have lived here for approximately 40 years, served on the Bettendorf City Council, Quad Cities Chamber of Commerce Board, Riverboat Development Authority Chairman of the Board. Also, I

served as a Higher Education Administrator and was appointed by Governor Branstad to the Iowa Public Information Board.

Candidate: Mindy Smith-Pace

Office Sought: Iowa House District 93

Questionnaire Responses:

Why should a business leader vote for you?

I believe businesses are an important part of our community. I am a person who is well educated and experienced but who also cares deeply for our community. I will always include businesses in my decisions and make sure their voices are heard along with all the other organizations in our community. We are stronger together.



What does a business-friendly tax environment look like for you?

A business friendly tax environment would provide business owners with a reliable and collaborative environment to work within. I am concerned with Iowa's budgeting after several new laws have been passed in previous legislative session. The budget may be changing and the state may have less of a surplus due to unlimited funds being used for items like the voucher program. As a legislator I will be looking at the budget responsibly while creating laws to make sure Iowa continues to have a balanced budget and supports businesses.

What is your approach to regulation?

Regulation of businesses can be positive. It provides a stable business environment, ensures quality, encourages innovation and promotes competition. It also makes sure people feel comfortable enough and can trust businesses. There are however a few negative things and if elected I would focus on finding ways for businesses to overcome some of the barriers created by regulation so they are not over regulated. Some areas to investigate might be how regulations increase operational costs or are time consuming. Perhaps we can work on streamlining processes and paperwork to help with this. We can also look into the challenges regulation causes especially to small businesses and how the state can encourage and support the small businesses instead. Small businesses can really help the economy so we need to make sure the state is as supportive as it can be.

What would you do to support investment in amenities and recreation to support talent attraction and retention?

In first district the options for amenities and recreation have been growing by leaps and bounds. We need to focus on making sure not just to continue to support these growing areas in our district but also to work with organizations such as the Visit Quad Cities, the Chamber and more to advertise the amazing options in our community. We should also find ways to work with places like the

hospitals, Rock Island Arsenal and John Deere to make sure they are sharing our recreation options when they recruit and hire people to work in our area.

How can you support workforce attraction and retention in the Quad Cities and Iowa?

We need to continue to make Iowa and the Quad Cities a great place to raise families and to live comfortably. We must work harder on increasing our place in education. Iowa needs to focus on making our public schools the best in the nation and accessible to everyone. We need to make women's healthcare in Iowa a priority. The new reproductive freedom laws are causing problems in retaining and recruiting new doctors in what is already considered a desert in women's healthcare. Iowa needs to make sure when continuing to improve our state and making new laws we consider how all our actions affect recruitment and retention of people in our state. I also think we must consider what we have around us and look into transportation such as the commuter trains to Chicago or other places, We could also encourage the state to have grants available to create more places for entertainment and recreation as needed. Last of all we need to continue to support our area as the best of both worlds, small towns but big town shopping, dining and entertainment at our fingertips.

What else should voters know about you?

I have a master's degree in public policy and non profit management which means I understand the needs of small businesses as non profits are very similar. I also have worked on many strategic business plans for non profits which shows my skill at working on solutions for many of the mentioned problems facing our area and businesses. I believe I can be supportive and useful if elected by using some of my talents from the strategic planning and organizational management skills I have learned and used to help non profits.

Candidate: Mike Vondran

Office Sought: Iowa House District 94

Questionnaire Responses:

Why should a business leader vote for you?

As a small business owner for 35 years, I bring firsthand experience and a genuine understanding of our challenges. My background equips me to be a strong and proactive advocate for business needs, to foster collaboration and push for innovative solutions. By voting for me, you will support a passionate colleague who is focused on driving growth, innovation, and overall community success, ensuring the voices of business are heard and valued.



What does a business-friendly tax environment look like for you?

We will continue our work to expand on our current business friendly environment with highly competitive tax rates, simplified regulations, strong incentives for startups, and support for workforce development with innovative ideas and vision such as Iowa's "Future Ready Registered Apprentice Development Program". Focus on creating a stable business atmosphere for growth, attracting investment and encouraging greater innovation, benefiting both business and community.

What is your approach to regulation?

My approach to regulation in Iowa emphasizes reducing unnecessary red tape, promoting transparency at all levels, and building a pro-business environment. I will advocate for smart regulations that protect consumers without stifling innovation. Through collaboration with business leaders, we can create policies that stimulate growth and ensure Iowa remains a competitive place for business and entrepreneurship.

What would you do to support investment in amenities and recreation to support talent attraction and retention?

I will always be an advocate for amenities that enrich our communities. Developments and projects that enhance our quality of life are an essential part of attraction and retention. Partnering with local leaders and business, I will be a proponent of initiatives that support and grow our community. These investments play a strong role in fostering a vibrant environment where families want to live and work.

How can you support workforce attraction and retention in the Quad Cities and Iowa?

I will continue my work, focusing on creating a supportive environment by promoting job training, and partnerships with local educational institutions. Again, the Future Ready Iowa Apprenticeship Program is a great example of such a partnership. Enhancing quality of life through smart investments in amenities and increasing affordable housing options, will make our communities more appealing too. Additionally, I will be a strong voice of business, ensuring they can grow strong and offer competitive wages. Working together, focused on building a strong community, we will attract and retain skilled workers we need more effectively.

What else should voters know about you?

My experiences as a small business owner for the past 35 years along with my community organizing and advocacy have equipped me with a deep understanding of constituents needs. Serving in leadership roles with numerous community boards over the years, Junior Achievement, Mississippi Valley Fair Board, QC Chamber, Greater Davenport Redevelopment board, and as Founder of The HAVlife Foundation, has strengthened my commitment to community service. My service as an elected member in the Iowa House has provided me with greater insight into the legislative process and the importance of collaboration. These experiences when combined have honed my communication skills, fostered empathy, and instilled a passion for creating policies that positively impact our communities.

Candidate: Tracy Jones

Office Sought: Iowa House District 94

Questionnaire Responses:



Why should a business leader vote for you?

I want to restore fiscal and governmental balance to the State of Iowa. The Republicans running our state government have been willing to sacrifice everything to achieve ever greater tax cuts. They are paying for it by gutting the budgets for essential services. When the government abandons its responsibility to maintain physical infrastructure and social services, every citizen will eventually pay the price. It hits the poor hardest and first, but the damage eventually spreads to everyone. Tax dollars must be spent responsibly, but there are some things we do need to pay for. What good is a tax cut when our mental health infrastructure collapses, crime skyrockets, and our children suffer? A good business leader cares about their community and their customers. A business can't succeed if people can't afford their products or move out of state to someplace they think is better for their families.

What does a business-friendly tax environment look like to you?

It looks like a balanced tax environment where everyone and every corporation pays their fair share. Businesses are vital parts of our State and everyone is better off when businesses thrive.

How will you support current and future economic development in the Quad Cities region?

We need to make the QCA (and the State of Iowa generally) a place where workers and customers want to live. We used to have the best schools in the country and that made people want to raise their families here. Young people don't want to stay in or come to Iowa like they used to. We need to restore our public education to best-in-the-nation status.

We need to build affordable housing, create good paying jobs and invest in our infrastructure.

What is your approach to regulation?

This question is so broad that it is very difficult to answer meaningfully. I certainly appreciate it when the government stays out of our lives (e.g., in the area of reproductive choice), but there are times when the government has to regulate (e.g. worker safety, child labor laws, water quality, etc.) Regulation should be limited to what is necessary.

What would you do to support investment in amenities and recreation to support talent attraction and retention?

The QCA is a wonderful community with activities available for individuals and families pretty much every day of the week. It's just one of the many things I love about living here.

If we want to attract and retain talent we need to deal with fundamental issues like quality public education, affordable childcare and housing, human rights, worker safety, and the cost of college tuition.

Our community is diverse, friendly and a wonderful place to live. We need to keep moving forward to provide the infrastructure that makes relocating here attractive for everyone.

How can you support workforce attraction and retention in the Quad Cities and Iowa?

You do it the same way you attract and retain talent: you make our State and our community someplace people actually want to live. We need to restore our public schools and address housing costs, affordable childcare, college tuition, worker safety and rights, human rights, and our mental health infrastructure. People who feel supported and secure will want to settle down here.

What else should voters know about you?

I'm a lifelong resident of the Quad Cities area. I love being active within our community and volunteering with local organizations. I'm currently a Big Sister through the Big Brothers/Big Sisters Program and am also a member of Royal Neighbors. I'm energetic and excited to discover new ways to help our community.

Candidate: Ken Croken

Office Sought: Iowa House District 97

Questionnaire Responses:

Why should a business leader vote for you?

My government experience as current member of the Iowa General Assembly, Scott County Supervisor, Davenport Public Library president, chief marketing and government relations officer at Genesis Health System, U.S. Congressional staffer, lawyer and marketing consultant combined with subject matter expertise reflected in my work as marketing consultant and adjunct faculty at St. Ambrose University business school and other institutions of higher education reflect my business savvy and ability to collaborate.



What does a business-friendly tax environment look like for you?

A business-friendly tax environment is one that encourages investment and business growth. But, it is more than lower taxes. It is a tax structure that delivers value to the business community by helping create supportive infrastructure, transportation and logistics, amenities, schools and healthcare that help attract and retain a skilled workforce, partnerships with strong local colleges as well as tax incentives: and a community liaison, like the QC Chamber, to ensure local officials value and support new and existing businesses.

What is your approach to regulation?

My approach to regulation is to use it sparingly. Above all, regulations should be relevant or significant to the situation.. Examples of "relevant and significant" regulations might include the protection of people, the environment, data, and more.

What would you do to support investment in amenities and recreation to support talent attraction and retention?

As state representative I will continue to champion state support of public education, healthcare, parks and recreation, libraries, culture, sports, entertainment, safe streets and emergency services, social services and other quality-of-life investments that make the QCA an even more attractive place to live and work.. I have a long history of success in this arena both personally, professionally and as a community volunteer with the Downtown Davenport Partnership and other business and community organizations.

How can you support workforce attraction and retention in the Quad Cities and Iowa?

In addition to efforts outlined above, I will continue my efforts to help make the Quad Cities a more "welcoming" community for LGBTQ community as well as communities of color and others.

What else should voters know about you?

I recognize that Iowa is among the 10 slowest growing state economies in the nation and that we need new, more creative approaches to grow our regional population in order to expand the workforce and our business base. I also am fully engaged on plans to expand the supply of lower the cost of housing in order to accommodate a growing population

Candidate: Josue Rodriguez

Office Sought: Iowa House District 97

Questionnaire Responses:

Why should a business leader vote for you?

A business leader should vote for me because I bring a unique blend of leadership experience and a vision for growth. We must focus on growing our cities and making our QCA a desirable place to live. I also understand the challenges that businesses face in today's economic climate. I will not penalize you for your hard work and success.



What does a business-friendly tax environment look like for you?

A business-friendly tax environment is a place where there is a simplified tax code. This allows businesses to focus on growth rather than navigating complicated regulations. This also ensures more transparency, fairness, and ease of doing business.

What is your approach to regulation?

Regulation is important but it must have a balanced approach. Bad actors should be punished but most of our business owners want to improve and better our community. We must work together to achieve this goal. We should not pass regulations that kill job growth or kill innovation, hurting local economies and families.

What would you do to support investment in amenities and recreation to support talent attraction and retention?

[Candidate did not provide an answer to this question]

How can you support workforce attraction and retention in the Quad Cities and Iowa?

We need to invest in our workforce via trade schools, local colleges, or businesses. Creating incentives that produce a strong and skilled workforce that will attract businesses. I will support the Registered Apprenticeship programs that help develop the skills necessary for Iowa workers to prosper and be competitive in their industries.

What else should voters know about you?

I grew up in a first-generation immigrant family in Queens, New York, and I understand the struggles of working-class Americans. Raised in public housing, I learned how to persevere through difficult

times, and I am blessed to live the American dream. Today, this dream is under threat, and it is my mission to ensure that every Iowan has the opportunity to achieve it once again. By supporting small businesses, attracting talented employees, and enhancing their skills, we can reclaim this American dream and prosper together.

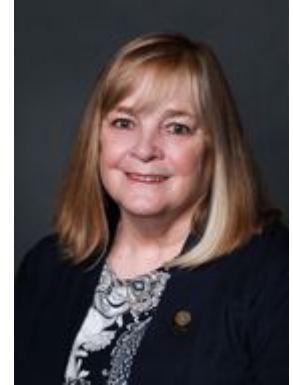
Candidate: Monica C. Kurth

Office Sought: Iowa House District 98

Questionnaire Responses:

Why should a business leader vote for you?

Business leaders should vote me because I am a conscientious elected representative who studies bills carefully and am concerned about making our state a great place to live, raise families, and experience economic opportunities.



What does a business-friendly tax environment look like for you?

A business friendly environment must look at the full menu of needs. It includes fair taxation, careful TIF regulations, workforce enhancement, clean environment with necessary regulation, and properly funded education opportunities.

What is your approach to regulation?

Regulation is necessary but regulations need to be continuously examined to ensure that they haven't out-lived their usefulness. Worker protections should be non-negotiable. Environmental protections are essential because we really are in a climate crisis. I've been fortunate to visit companies who are doing an amazing job of protecting environment and are forward thinking.

What would you do to support investment in amenities and recreation to support talent attraction and retention?

We have a major problem bringing people into our state and keeping our young people here! Divisive laws are certainly part of the problem, but we have also decided as a state that tax cuts are more important than the necessary investment into our parks, recreation, and the kind of amenities that would bring and keep people here. Years ago, families came here for fantastic education and clean environment. Meanwhile, a 3/8 cent sales tax was passed by a strong majority of Iowa voters years ago now but has never been collected. This was meant for our environment, parks, trails, rivers and lakes. These natural resources are our treasure but we are not taking adequate care of them.

How can you support workforce attraction and retention in the Quad Cities and Iowa?

In addition to needs for recreation and other amenities, we also need to make sure that our education is back at the top of the country again (funding) We need to make sure that there's adequate housing and certainly the state can be part of that need. Our regional climate needs to be

welcoming to all and this means our decision making should reflect inclusion and encourage diversity. Healthcare is certainly an important concern for families at all levels. And maternal health issues are, of course, at the top of many families lists. We need to move away from the divisive laws passed in the last several sessions. We are better than that.

What else should voters know about you?

I have lived almost all my life here in Iowa. I am optimistic that there are many ways that we can improve this state of ours. I am dedicated to working to make that happen.

Candidate: Nathan Ramker

Office Sought: Iowa House District 98

Questionnaire Responses:

Why should a business leader vote for you?

Having successfully run a few businesses for the last 30 years, I have gained extensive experience and insight into effective business management and growth strategies.



What does a business-friendly tax environment look like to you?

Small businesses and local single-family corporations should have better breaks and fewer regulations than big corporations so they can compete with large corporations.

How will you support current and future economic development in the Quad Cities region?

Give tax breaks to new businesses and existing businesses. We can make it up by sales tax and income tax from the employees that work there and new members to the community because the businesses are open.

What is your approach to regulation?

I think we should have fewer unnecessary regulations so our local businesses can compete with big corporations.

What would you do to support investment in amenities and recreation to support talent attraction and retention?

[Candidate did not provide an answer to this question]

How can you support workforce attraction and retention in the Quad Cities and Iowa?

Lower income taxes and property taxes so people want to stay living here in Iowa.

What else should voters know about you?

I believe in common sense and conservative values too. Supporting any programs that bring inflation and cost-of-living down is crucial. I'm for anything that will help lower income and property taxes for everyone.