



VOTER GUIDE 2018

As the voice of business for the Grand Junction area, the Grand Junction Chamber of Commerce has worked to represent business and promote economic growth since 1884. The election will be held on Tuesday, November 6th, 2018. Below please find the positions of the candidates and positions of the Chamber.

LOCAL AND STATEWIDE BALLOT MEASURES

AMENDMENT X:

Amendment X will remove the definition of 'industrial hemp' from the Colorado Constitution and place the definition in federal or state law.

Chamber's Position: Vote YES. Shifting the definition of industrial hemp to state law will allow Colorado's hemp industry to remain competitive with other states as the regulatory landscape evolves for this crop. Having the definition remain in the Colorado Constitution makes revision difficult, which will harm hemp producers as the market evolves

AMENDMENT Y & AMENDMENT Z:

Amendment Y will transfer the authority to draw congressional district maps from the state legislature to a newly created nonpartisan independent Congressional redistricting commission.

Amendment Z will transfer the authority to draw state legislative district maps from the state legislature to a newly created nonpartisan independent legislative redistricting commission.

Chamber's Position: Vote YES. These measures limit the role of partisan politics in the congressional and state legislative redistricting process by transferring redistricting from the legislature to an independent nonpartisan commission. The measure provides structure to the redistricting process by using clear, ordered, and fair criteria in the drawing of districts.

AMENDMENT 73:

Amendment 73 will increase funding for preschool through twelfth grade (P-12) public

education by approximately \$866 million-\$1.5 billion. This increase in funding will be financed by raising the individual income tax rate for individuals with taxable incomes over \$150,000, as well as increasing the state corporate income tax rate. However, Amendment 73 will reduce the assessment rate for property taxes levied by school districts for residential properties, and significantly reduce the assessment rate for nonresidential properties.

Chamber's Position: Vote NO. Though we strongly support a well-funded and effective PreK-12 system as a Chamber, this proposal raises multiple concerns because it places the burden of funding education on the backs of our smallest businesses, threatening their ability to succeed, and locks that burden into our state's constitution. By increasing corporate income tax by 30%, this amendment will take Colorado from having one of the lowest income tax rates to the eighth highest in the nation, which will be a disincentive for attracting new companies to Colorado.

PROPOSITION 110:

Proposition 110 will authorize the state to borrow up to \$6 billion in bonds *and* increase the sales and use tax rate from 2.9% to 3.52% to increase funding for transportation projects.

Chamber Position: Vote YES. While there are concerns about how this will impact local governments' ability to raise sales tax in the future it still offers more funding for transportation projects at all levels. With 40% of the funding going to local governments for their projects and most of the tax being paid in the

front range metro areas it is probably a safe bet that Grand Junction and Mesa County will gain more than they pay from the distribution formula.

PROPOSITION 111:

Proposition 111 will limit the finances charge for payday loans and broaden what constitutes unfair or deceptive trade practices for payday lending.

Chamber Position: Vote YES. Proposition 111 lessens the current average APR from 129% on payday loans, to 36%, allowing individuals to repay the original loan instead of getting caught in a debt cycle. Proposition 111 would result in smaller financing chargers paid by payday borrowers, which would allow them to spend marginally more money on goods and services.

PROPOSITION 112:

Proposition 112 will require that all 'new' (including reentry of an oil or gas well previously plugged or abandoned) oil and natural gas development to be located at least 2,500 feet from occupied structures, water sources, and areas designated as vulnerable.

Chamber Position: Vote NO. This measure eliminates new oil and gas development on most non-federal land in Colorado. About 85% of Colorado's non-federal land would be prohibited from development with the required 2,500foot setback. Oil and natural gas development is vital to Colorado's economy, generating an estimated \$10.9 billion in value in 2017. Passage of this measure would result in the loss of over 147,000 jobs and over \$700 million dollars for Colorado's K-12 education system

BALLOT ISSUE 1A:

Ballot Issue 1A will exempt state grants from Mesa County's TABOR revenue cap.

Chamber Position: Vote YES. Federal grants are already exempt from the Tabor limit and state grants have already been subject to the state Tabor limit. Nonprofits like Mind Springs Hospital and Homeward Bound are currently

not able to access grant funds to help build capacity to assist citizens in crisis in our county because of this cap. Therefore, these funds, paid into the state by Mesa County residents, are allocated to other areas of the state. This is a very limited and targeted measure that does not result in a total exemption from Tabor for the county.

BALLOT ISSUE 2A:

Ballot Issue 2A will increase the City of Grand Junction's lodging tax by 3%. Funding would be allocated as follows: 1% to improve air service, .75% to fund the Greater Grand Junction Sports Commission and 1.25% to aid in destination marketing for Grand Junction

Chamber's Position: Vote YES. Lodging tax is not a tax on residents. Visitors pay the tax and the resulting revenue will provide local citizens with more options for air service, more sporting events to participate in or watch (such as JUCO) and help drive more visitors to area hotels because of the enhanced marketing Visit GJ will be able to do. That will create jobs and add to the 7,000 employees in the hospitality industry already employed in Mesa County

STATE LEGISLATURE:

- 1. What makes you uniquely qualified to represent our area in the Colorado General Assembly?***
- 2. What piece(s) of legislation will you introduce or co-sponsor to help grow the Mesa County economy?***
- 3. What can the legislature do to foster greater collaboration and resource allocation for workforce development programming?***
- 4. How would you streamline state government regulations and processes to benefit small businesses?***

HOUSE DISTRICT 54



MATT SOPER (R)

1. I'm uniquely qualified to represent House District 54 in that I'm the only candidate in the race who was born and raised in HD54 and is a

fourth generation West Slope native. I picked Olathe Sweet Sweet Corn to pay my way through Mesa State College. I earned the prestigious Wayne Aspinall Award and graduated debt free. For graduate school, I earned a British law degree and a degree in Public International law from the University of Edinburgh in Scotland and an American law degree focused on Intellectual Property from the University of New Hampshire. I've had three successful businesses, the current one, Oxford Strategies, LLC, is a legal research firm I formed in 2007. Civically, I have experience serving on city council, I was appointed by the Governor to serve on the Judicial Nominating Commission, and have served on CMU's Board of Trustees, Delta Museum's Board of Trustees, Chair of Delta's Historic Preservation Board. I care deeply about our community and have dedicated my life to service and helping others, which is why I am an active volunteer at the Abraham Connection Homeless Shelter, Fort Uncompahgre, and the Seventh-day Adventist community service program. When elected to the State Legislature, I'll be the only Colorado Mesa University alumnus in either the House or Senate. I will also be the first ever Seventh-day Adventist in history to serve in the legislature and the first person in 54 years elected out of Delta. I care deeply about the people, land, and history, and want to be the best representative for House District 54. Government meddling, both Federal and State, which unfairly impacts the free market. Lack of fast and reliable high-capacity internet for the rural parts of Mesa and Delta Counties. "Brain drain" and need for more talented workforce. I will continue to fight for limited government, infrastructure improvements, and will work with

CU and CMU to bolster and grow their joint engineering program.

2. I plan on introducing legislation to fund the Colorado Water Plan. Mesa County businesses will directly benefit in times of drought, as the ability to store, conserve, and deliver water more efficiently will contribute to greater in-stream flows which benefit the outdoor recreation industry, but also ensure if a call is placed on the Colorado River, that Grand Valley municipalities, businesses, industries, and agri-business / farms, have the water they need to stay afloat during hard times. The skills gap between prospective employees and the requirements of an employer are troubling. One piece of legislation I intend to introduce is an expansion of the BEST Program to help K-12 schools bring back wood shop, metal shop, home economics, auto mechanics, etc. Not every high school graduate is destined for college and the ability for kids to be exposed to practical skills prior to graduation will help close the skills gap. I would also like to help expand the Western Colorado Community College and the Technical College of the Rockies by helping those institutions secure critical funding needed to help train the workers of today and tomorrow.

3. The future of business is here and it is the legislature's duty to ensure resources are allocated to programming which ensures workforce development matches needs of employers. I feel often times there is a disconnect between Denver and the West Slope. I plan on working with the Chamber to facilitate an active and ongoing dialogue on the needs of the Grand Valley and convey that message to Front Range legislators. From helping negotiate Referendum C and D as an aide to State Senator Ron Teck to selecting judges as a gubernatorial appointee to the judicial nominating commission or negotiating research projects and fees in an industry that feels saturated, I have the skills and talents to be an effective advocate for the West Slope Business community.

4. As a small business owner, I know that government regulations are the one expense that costs a business, but does not yield a return. There is a litany of state regulations which need to be reviewed by the legislature. Reviewing and repealing negative impacting regulations will

have a direct positive effect on small business. There is no silver bullet' for helping our small businesses. If there was, the solution would have already been achieved by now. There are several ideas I hope to achieve, one would be to lift the monetary cap for allowing a solo-trader in an LLC to argue pro se in small claims court. Often the attorney's fees in small claims court is more than the amount in question and this is used as a lever for forcing a settlement. Healthcare costs have gone through the roof, with individuals in the Grand Valley paying anywhere from \$600 to \$1,200 per month for health insurance. This is a staggering cost, especially if the small business has employees. I plan on addressing the rising costs by reorganizing the Cabinet to have one health chief which merges eligibility, regulation, and delivery into one department, using one computer system. Eliminating the redundancies is a first step. The second step is to bring insurance, hospitals, pharma, and doctors into one room and ask the industries to come up with a plan for cost transparency. The treat would be a legislative mandated cost transparency. This should reduce some costs for the consumer as well. Lastly, broadband and improved roads are needed to help business grow. The delay in broadband has cost rural Colorado and the new economy is evermore a telecommuting economy. Nothing like working from DC in Fruita! Roads are key to getting goods in and out. I'd like to see a state-wide transportation plan that looks to develop an alternate truck route to I-70. US 50 is one idea. The rationale is that snow storms, high volumes of traffic, construction, wrecks, etc. means goods are waiting in transit. The delay, according to one study, costs over \$1 million per hour. We can do better in Colorado.

The Chamber endorses Matt Soper.



THEA CHASE (I)

1. I have lived in the Grand Valley for the better part of 25 years arriving here with my family in 1993 as the Executive Director of the Business Incubator Center where I served for 13 years, then as an Assistant Professor in Management and Entrepreneurship

at Colorado Mesa University. I currently serve as Director of the Southwest Innovation Corridor an effort to connect resources and build capacity in the southwest region of the state to support entrepreneurs and small businesses. I raised my kids here in SD51 schools and have participated in numerous boards including Hilltop, Mesa Land Trust, Healthcare Development Council and for the past four years as a Town Trustee in Palisade. I have extensive experience in rural economic and business development working with hundreds of our local companies and entrepreneurs from the idea stage through startup, launch and growth working side by side with these companies through their challenges and successes. My business experience combined with broad exposure to the myriad of issues facing our region gives me a unique background and network to connect with constituents and organizations to best serve our community.

2. My approach to economic development is to protect and grow. Grow - Looking forward to supporting industries that provide living wages for families, rural Colorado has the opportunity to be home for more technology companies. I propose to establish a 25% set aside of Advanced Industries grant funds and fund technical assistance for companies starting and growing in tech fields. With the state SBDC network "T" designation the Office of Economic Development and International Trade (OEDIT) can be tasked to work directly with Colleges, Universities, Community Colleges, Technical Colleges, K-12, non-profits and citizenry to provide education and technical assistance in technology development and commercialization.

Protect - Form a task force to address the challenge of transition of small businesses to next generation. As baby boomers look toward retirement there are not the entrepreneurs willing to step up and take over these companies. This poses a threat to jobs and innovation in rural areas. The task force should consider recommendations for entrepreneurial training in the trades, additional support for business planning, transition structure and the ability to finance purchase of businesses.

3. Workforce development is an issue for K-12, secondary and non-traditional segments. My

approach is to just do it by forming programs requiring alliances. We can focus on investments in applied learning opportunities and connect with Industry such as Career-wise apprenticeships and the Young Entrepreneurs Academy. I propose we look at a Colorado Internship portal for students in technical schools, Colleges and Universities. And an Invest in Success program for nontraditional students with a shared approach to funding - 1/3 state, 1/3 employer, 1/3 employee. Workforce Development is a partnership with industry and education and the legislature has the opportunity to facilitate success. Workforce Centers can take it to the next level by considering themselves liaisons in communities to work directly with employers to locate and train their workforce. We can evaluate who uses and how existing programs are used and challenge programs to be more effective. We can continue to analyze barriers for existing workers to attain higher paying jobs - education and certificate programs - cost and accessibility, childcare, etc. facilitate multi-agency collaboration to conquer barriers.

4. Dedicate 1 FTE to be the point person for all things regulatory that small businesses would encounter. Locate the position in OEDIT and have them be a resource for small businesses to navigate the regulatory process - through registrations, certifications, employee reporting, taxation and incentives. Utilize a proactive approach to gaining comprehensive insights and map the customers (small business) journey. Make recommendations to the Governor, Agencies and potentially the Legislature (if policy changes at this level are required) to streamline, eliminate and/or move processes in order to abide by regulatory intent while reducing burdens on small businesses.



HOUSE DISTRICT **55**

JANICE RICH (R)

1. My past experience in the private sector, includes not only working as a legal secretary and court clerk for the U.S. Magistrate, but also working for former State

Legislator, Jim Robb, when he represented HD54. He impressed upon me the important work that gets done in the Colorado House of Representatives. Several years later when I was running my own business support and secretarial service, I worked with my good friend, former State Representative, Gayle Berry, when she represented HD 55. I believe my experience in the private sector, together with my present experience in local government (Mesa County Clerk & Recorder 2003-2010; and Mesa County Treasurer 2011-present), plus serving on legislative committees for both offices I have held, has prepared me to represent Grand Junction, to represent Mesa County in the Colorado House of Representatives.

2. I want to promote economic opportunities, protect our Western Slope water, and preserve common sense energy development. I would look to the Chamber, its members, together various individuals and other organizations within Grand Junction exploring issues for businesses and families. As a potential legislator, I would welcome the opportunity to move forward with economic ideas that are important to Grand Junction, to Mesa County. I believe we should consider changing the economic plan targeting those funds that should be spent on the Western Slope. We want decent, good jobs. We can be innovative and bold, and we can find answers together.

3. The federal dollars for workforce development are often restricted and targeted. We could work on greater collaboration with the Governor's office to get strong Western Slope people on the various boards to make these decisions, to fight for our share of the allocations.

4. Zero-based budgeting as a rotating review of departments every five years would be a good start. I would like to see what is- and is not-working. I believe the State requires outreach to businesses to hear the impact of new rules. The legislature also looks at new rules to determine overstep. Colorado is one of the few states that requires this review. This is a good check and balance. Having worked during very tough economic times in Mesa County government, I took the time necessary to research the statutory requirements, review job descriptions, determine

best practices, and find efficiencies throughout the office. Each year as Treasurer, I come in under budget. With a very efficient staff, in 2017 the Mesa County Treasurer's office came in 25% under budget. Take a challenge and turn it into an opportunity. It can be done.

The Chamber endorses Janice Rich.



TANYA TRAVIS (D)

1. My determination to protect the health and wellbeing of our children and grand-children so that they experience the same gifts of a middle-class lifestyle that I have experienced; My science education and work history. One of my first jobs after earning my Bachelor of Science in Occupational Therapy was with the Grand Junction Regional Center and District 51 schools. OTs enable an individual to lead an independent life in the least restrictive environment. This is excellent training for policy development; My willingness to suspend judgement, rise above it and use the expertise and resources that are available to solve complex problems.

2. Drought changes everything. Water legislation to fund the Colorado Water Plan will take priority. This directly will protect valuable Western Slope economies of agriculture, ranching, outdoor recreation, tourism and all water users (all of us). The Mesa County economy will grow when middle class incomes include affordable healthcare. I will work with all stakeholders. We deserve transparency with medical bills, and no surprise out-of-network expenses. I will consider legislative recommendations of the Interim committee regarding education funding for more equitable distribution across the state. I will learn details of D51 finances.

3. Become familiar with the Colorado Blueprint, a bottom up economic plan through the Workforce Development Council of Colorado. This is funding for our Mesa County Workforce Center. "This is a one-stop shop designed to serve needs of businesses and job seekers to promote economic development and vitality. These are no-cost services that include assessments, workshops, recruitment assistance, business services and

much more. Address deficient CO State funding for CMU and their dual model of the university and a career and technical training skill program through Western Colorado Community College.

4. I will need to hear from specific Mesa County businesses to get their feedback on what they find most burdensome, confusing or contradictory.

SENATE DISTRICT 7



RAY SCOTT (R)

1. I grew up in Rifle, Colorado a small town where principles and values were instilled. Working on farms and ranches with my family were keys to understanding just how important individual freedom and hard work can mold a desire to serve others. I began my work career with Conoco as a terminal manager and later with Williams Energy in Colorado and New Mexico. I always had a desire to own his own business. I have founded several businesses in the energy sector, land development, logistics, sports, software, and home construction. I built and sold companies that had extreme success on the one hand and great learning opportunities on the other. These experiences helped develop a wide variety of knowledge of how government can interfere and, in some cases, destroy the American dream. I currently represent Colorado Senate District 7 in Mesa County and I have now for four years. Prior to my service in the Colorado State Senate I served four years as a Colorado House Representative for Mesa County's HD54 and HD55. My peers elected me, as Assistant Majority Leader of the Colorado State Senate, which assures Mesa County is in the legislative process. I am the Chair of the Select Committee on Energy and the Environment, and serve on the Agriculture, National Resources and Energy Legislative Council Transportation committees as well. I also sit on the Board of Directors for the National Energy Council a consortium of legislators from the thirteen energy-producing states developing regional energy policy. In addition, I sit on the Council of State Governments Agriculture, water and energy committee.

2. At the State Capitol, I work diligently to reduce job-killing regulations that stifle growth, oppose new taxes on Colorado's middle-class families, and fight to prioritize funding for safer roads and bridges in our state. I am a fierce supporter of all above energy development. These industries are the backbone of Mesa County and thousands of good paying jobs all over Western Colorado. I have also been a fail-safe defender for the people of Colorado against the far-left progressive policy that hurts the very people government is supposed to protect. Often those policies stifle economic growth for the starting and middle class. I take my role very seriously to protect those folks who sent me to represent their lively hoods in every vote I make in our state's Golden Dome.

3. By fostering relationships in the business community and keeping lines of communication open anything is possible. It's really about listening to the needs of the community. As a legislator I don't always have the power to fix it all but I can listen to the need and or the problem and get people in touch with the right folks. Our business community is one amazing body of folks who really love our community and are ready to fill in when government can't. Our education/ workforce development is always finding new ways to meet the needs of the employers in Mesa County. Just by having the conversation we accomplish a lot that sometimes government can fill in that role effectively.

4. It may sound cliché but government is like a huge slow-moving ship, it's great for big things like protecting individual rights and protecting its citizens abroad. When that big ship starts taking on regulations for small business it becomes overwhelming burdensome. Small business need flexibility and quick responses, all of which a big government ship will never be quick, agile and flexible. Small business needs a speed boat or a jet ski, tiny and fast so it can meet the needs of people it's customers quickly. My job as a State Legislator is to make sure small business are protected by government not burden by it. I do that with every vote and every bill I sponsor.

The Chamber endorses Ray Scott.

CHRIS KENNEDY (D)



1. As a former Marine, a small business owner, a telecommunication professional and now working in the non-profit space I have a unique and varied history that has provided the opportunity to develop experience across many disciplines. My current service on the Grand Junction City Council also provides a unique perspective on the many issues that face Mesa County and the west slope. Being able to work to consensus to move forward many issues and projects over the last three years has proven my ability to get things done.

2. I will work on any legislation that provides opportunity for west slope businesses to compete with Front Range economies. Specifically, I will work to level per student state funding of public schools, Fiber optic infrastructure for rural Colorado and investments in technology that will help lower the costs of health care delivery throughout the state.

3. Programs that help our workforce retain and develop new skill sets are essential in ensuring we have a local workforce with the skills necessary as we transition into an economy that requires highly skilled, technically proficient workers. Working with local and regional stakeholders to identify those needs and help create new or augment existing programs in partnership with education, business and government is necessary.

4. By ensuring a mechanism for consistent evaluation, review and audit of existing regulations that measures effectiveness, budgetary responsibility and operational integrity. And then working to adjust, repeal or strengthen as necessary.

ELECTION DAY IS TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 2018

To update your voter registration please visit

www.govotecolorado.com

Or visit the Mesa County Elections Office at:

200 S. Spruce Street

Grand Junction, CO 81501

(970)-244-1662

Voter Service and Polling Centers:

Open Monday, October 22nd through Tuesday, November 6th

8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday

Saturday 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. ELECTION DAY

Mesa County Central Services- 200 S. Spruce Street, Room 40, Grand Junction

Clifton Hall- 126 2nd Street, Clifton

Mesa County Fairgrounds - 2785 Highway 50, Grand Junction

Open Friday, November 2nd through Tuesday, November 6th

8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday

Saturday 9:00 a.m. to 1 p.m.

7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. ELECTION DAY

Colorado Mesa University- 1100 North Avenue, Grand Junction

Fruita Civic Center - 325 E Aspen Ave., Fruita

Goodwill Retail Center- 630 24 1/2 Rd., Grand Junction

Mail Ballot Drop Off Locations:

**OPEN 24 HOURS ALL DAYS! Thursday, October 15th
through 7:00 p.m. on ELECTION DAY, November 6th**

Grand Valley Transit, West Transfer Facility- 612 24 1/2 Rd., Grand Junction

Department of Human Services- 510 29 1/2 Rd., Grand Junction

Mesa County Central Services- 200 S. Spruce Street, Grand Junction

Fruita Civic Center- 325 E Aspen Ave., Fruita

PeachTree Shopping Center- 3225 I-70 Business Loop, Clifton

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Electronic version of this GJACC Voter Guide can be viewed by visiting www.gjchamber.org.