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**COMPLETE**

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**Q1** What is your name and Candidate Committee name?

**First and Last Name:** Richard Jones  
**House/Senate District:** House District 24  
**Preferred Email:** richardjoneshouse24@gmail.com

**Q2** What is the role of state government in healthcare issues in Wyoming? Describe your top three priorities for improving the healthcare delivery system in the state?

1. **Supporting care in underserved rural communities**
2. **Encouraging policies and strategies that lower health care spending.**
3. **Have a unified state-wide substance abuse and suicide prevention program instead of the piecemeal county run programs recently adopted.**

**Q3** Wyoming's tobacco tax rate of \$.60 per pack ranks 8th lowest in the nation. The national average is \$1.72 per pack. Given the state's declining revenue and Wyoming's low tobacco tax, is increasing the tobacco tax a subject you feel worthy of consideration in the coming biennium? If you do support the tax increase is it primarily based in an interest to generate state revenue or as a method to de-incentivize tobacco use, or both?

**Yes I support increasing the tobacco tax.**

Please Explain:

de-incentivize use. It's known that barriers to access decrease use, especially for youth. Since tobacco is a legal product without an easy illegal supply, extra costs will be a disincentive to some users. In addition, I'd support a tax on nicotine delivery systems such as vape pens for the same reason.

**Q4** Physicians in Wyoming are required to attend continuing medical education (CME) to maintain their licensure in the State. Many physicians are now also taking part in maintenance of certification (MOC) programs to maintain board certification. MOC programs include more stringent continuing education requirements often at a higher cost, and generally involve high-stakes testing in order to maintain certifications. Wyoming physicians support continuing education requirements, but oppose mandates to maintain board certification. Do you support tying a physician's employment, reimbursement, or licensure to their participation in MOC activities?

Please explain.:

I don't have enough information on this issue to have an opinion.

**Q5** With 32 percent of Wyoming's population being covered by public payers (Medicare, Medicaid, CHIP, Federal programs, etc), and current projected budget shortfalls, how would you prioritize reimbursement to physicians? Please explain.

To retain or recruit top quality physicians they must be fairly compensated. Budgets cannot be built on the backs of the physicians so reimbursements should be a priority.

**Q6** WMS supports physician-led healthcare teams with each licensed provider practicing at the top of their scope. Do you support licensed healthcare professionals expanding their scope of practice or increasing the specific tasks they can perform, such as psychologists prescribing or optometrists performing eye surgery, through rule making or legislation without proof of adequate expanded education, training and curriculum changes?

**No, healthcare providers should only expand scope of practice when done through increased education, curriculum changes in training programs and stringent testing to determine proficiency.**

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Please explain:

Legislators nor the public are professionals and aren't the best equipped to judge competency.

**Q7** The demand for mental health services in Wyoming is on the rise with involuntary hospitalizations increasing at alarming rates. Suicide also remains a concern with Wyoming ranking as the fourth-highest state in the nation. Between the increase in demand for state mental health services and recent overages in the state budget for Title 25 costs, what do you believe can be done to positively impact these trends?

Wy defunded the state-wide Prevention Management Organization that for the past 6 years provided substance abuse and suicide prevention strategies to all counties in favor of returning to the old system of giving funds to counties to implement various programs as they see fit, without standardization of proper evaluation. This was done for political reasons not related to the effectiveness of the PMO. Less bang for the buck now.

**Q8** Would you support legislation to resolve the professional liability crisis in Wyoming? Specifically, would you support a cap on non-economic damages? Would you support other remedies such as adoption of the English rule, no-fault medical liability insurance or other such reforms?

I support investigating all avenues to bringing meaningful liability reform to the state including capping non-economic damages.

**Agree**

I do not support any efforts to bring liability reform to the state as I do not see there is a current need or crisis.

**Disagree**

Please explain:

I need to know more about the issue to comment.

**Q9** WMS advocates for physicians to practice evidence-based medicine grounded in the latest research and safety standards. WMS opposes any legislation that attempts to unnecessarily insert government within the relationship between physicians and their patients as it hinders the ability for doctors to administer the most recent, evidence based, practices in medicine. Do you oppose legislation that unnecessarily inserts government between a physician and a patient?

**Yes, I oppose state legislation that inserts government between a physician and a patient.**

**Q10** Do you support expanding Medicaid to provide state-based insurance to uninsured Wyomingites for 10% of the cost to the State of Wyoming?

Please explain:

Don't know. I'd have to see the numbers and the seen and unseen consequences of this proposal.

**Q11** Please send me additional information about the following topics:

Medicaid expansion. Physician liability issues. Physician reimbursement issue. MOC program.

**Q12** Does your candidate committee accept Political Action Committee (PAC) contributions?

Yes.