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Page 1

Q1 What is your name and Candidate Committee name?

First and Last Name: Ray Peterson
Candidate Committee: Ray Peterson for Senate
House/Senate District: Senate District 19
Preferred Email: ray@officeshopinc.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. **Provide citizens with options for health insurance**
2. **Ensure good access to providers**
3. **Continue looking at health care coverage plans that would benefit our citizens.**

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:

Both, to provide the incentive to quit as well as help our state meet financial obligations of treating patients whos suffer from conditions caused by smoking.

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?

No, physician board certification should not be allowed to be tied to state licensure, employment, hospital privileging, and/or reimbursement.

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Please explain.:

This type of requirement would further weaken our state in attracting providers.

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.

It should be a top priority. By opening up health insurance markets, our citizens would have more choices to be able to select a plan that they could afford. I do know that throwing more money at Medicaid is not the answer as it only provides more incentive for the nonpayers to continue to not pay and the cost shifting to those that do only inflates the total health care costs. Free Market principals and competition would help in offering affordable plans to a large number of our citizens.

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?

Yes, healthcare providers should be able to expand the scope of their practice through rule making and legislative changes.

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Please explain:

To a degree. We need to ensure, by some means, the proficiencies of our medical professionals and offer some protection to our citizens and the services they receive.

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?

By fully implementing the gate keeping process into the hearing process of Title 25 individuals and improving communications between all parties involved, I'm confident that our costs would be reduced as well as the patients being hospitalized or detained. A non-bias hearing officer is a must in this process. By utilizing convalescent leave in a coordinated way would also help in keeping beds open and costs down.

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 capping non-economic damages

Agree

I do not support capping non-economic damages

Disagree

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

Agree

I support investigating alternative means to achieving liability reform but do not support capping non-economic damages.

Disagree

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:

Yes, we need to put caps on these law suits as well as install measures to make those that file these law suits more accountable if they fail to prove their case. It would help weed out the frivolous cases, if they were made to pay all costs if they lose.

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?

No,

Please explain:

Not under the current federal requirements to expand Medicaid. It remains a losing proposition for Wyoming. If Wyoming were able to submit a plan that would be successful and affordable and the feds would accept the plan, then yes I would be in favor of such an effort. As of now the gate is too broad and includes many who should not qualify for the services. Expanding this broken system would only worsen the problem while putting more of our state revenues at risk.

Q11 Please send me additional information about the following topics:

None at this time.