



2020 General Election Candidate Questionnaire

Candidate Name: Clayton Tucker

Office Sought: Texas Senate District 24

Political Affiliation: Democrat

Candidate's Website (if applicable): www.tuckerfortexas.com

Why are you running for this position?

I've watched my family play by the rules, do everything right, run the family ranch, and yet can't afford healthcare, can't afford education, and are barely making it by. And I know they're not alone in this. Before the pandemic, there were nearly 3.7 million uninsured adults with over 700,000 uninsured children. Many more folks have healthcare but are too scared to use it due to fear of hidden costs. Even for folks that do have good healthcare, almost everyone is being overcharged. Our broken system hurts our communities further by causing our property taxes to rise. For instance, expanding Medicaid will bring \$10 billion in federal funds to the state (it's from our own taxes, so it's literally our money), AS WELL AS it will allow for counties to reduce their property taxes since Medicaid will pay for indigent healthcare services. Some counties could see property taxes drop by 2-6%. I find our broken healthcare system unacceptable and am running to fix our healthcare woes. While full access to good healthcare was my driving issue, boosting wind and solar energy production, ensuring broadband is treated as a utility, protecting our water, ensuring all working Texans are making a living wage, protecting and enhancing our education system, and ensuring fair justice for all folks have risen to equal priority as I've talked with people in my district this last year.

What do you believe are the three most critical issues facing the State of Texas and why?

Healthcare is one of the largest issues. Health is the foundation of freedom. Rural hospitals are closing, there are massive numbers of uninsured children and adults in our community, and almost everyone is being overcharged by insurance corporations. The state is not properly funding public schools, which is a major issue for me personally as a former teacher. Education is empowerment and is the key to mobility. Public education is an absolute must to achieve and maintain this social and economic mobility. Protecting our water and environment is also critically important. I come from a ranching family; my grandpa always said, "if you destroy your land, water, or air, you're next." We have pipeline corporations like Kinder Morgan and quarries draining our aquifers, poisoning our water; all the while chipping away at local control, destroying property values, and harming human health. The state of Texas, however, has a lot of two things: sun and wind. I am wanting to expand our wind and solar energy production (with all materials being manufactured in Texas, ideally) both in rural areas and urban areas. I want to see strong tax incentives for solar installation on private and public buildings. This will bring both savings for consumers and good-paying jobs.

What do you believe are the three most critical issues facing your district and why?

SD-24 is a pretty good representation of Texas. It's a combination of urban, suburban, rural, areas with high-military populations, economically prosperous areas and economically depressed ones, and nearly everything in-between. As such, my responses for question 10 remain true (copied from above): Healthcare is one of the largest issues. Health is the foundation of freedom. Rural hospitals are closing, there are massive numbers of uninsured children and adults in our community, and almost everyone is being overcharged by insurance corporations. The state is not properly funding public schools, which is a major issue for me personally as a former teacher. Education is empowerment and is the key to mobility. Public education is an absolute must to achieve and maintain this social and economic mobility. Protecting our water and environment is also critically important. I come from a ranching family; my grandpa always said, "if you destroy your land, water, or air, you're next." We have pipeline corporations like Kinder Morgan and quarries draining our aquifers, poisoning our water; all the while chipping away at local control, destroying property values, and harming human health. The state of Texas, however, has a lot of two things: sun and wind. I am wanting to expand our wind and solar energy production (with all materials being manufactured in Texas, ideally) both in rural areas and urban areas. I want to see strong tax incentives for solar installation on private and public buildings. This will bring both savings for consumers and good-paying jobs.

If elected, what other items would you like to accomplish while in office?

I want to see massive investments in Internet services, especially in rural areas. The pandemic has likely caused a permanent shift in the way people work, particularly with the jobs that can be done at home. This will require some considerable investments, which the government should work to facilitate via low-interest loans. I also want to start treating cannabis similarly to alcohol and tobacco. It's time for Texas to end the cannabis prohibition. If a county wants to be a "dry county" then that's absolutely their right. Otherwise, let businesses sell it.

What do you believe is the role of the state in overseeing cities and counties, especially in regard to land use (zoning, permitting, etc)?

My rule of thumb is always lean towards local control in nearly all matters. Please note that, when I say local control, I don't mean anarchy and I don't mean allowing for local monopolization. I support sensible oversight in terms of protecting the right of local residents and leaders to make decisions for their communities, protecting water and other shared resources, and any oversights that prevent monopolization.

Cities and Counties are authorized by the state to create a number of citizen-led boards and commissions. One of these boards is the Board of Adjustment, whose two primary objectives are to review and hear appeals to certain land-use decisions and make determinations for a variance to the code. In the past several years, it has become much more difficult for property owners to be granted variances due to the lack of clarity surrounding the term "hardship." Would you support legislation to provide better clarity in the Board of Adjustment variance process to make it more predictable?

Yes

Additional Comments (Optional)

Some of our most valued treasures in Texas are the many historic sites and structures across our state. In Texas, cities are authorized by the state to designate structures as historic, including without landowner consent (requires a supermajority). However, when a historic district (multiple properties) is being formed, there is no remedy for an individual property owner to oppose being pulled into the historic district. In most instances if an individual property owner opposes being designated historic as part of a district it only requires a majority vote to create the district. Would you support legislation that defines a clear process for property owners to oppose being included in a historic district?

I would be open to supporting legislation that better defines a clear process for property owners to oppose being included in a historic district.

What is your position on Project Connect?

I strongly support mass transit, especially for growing cities like Austin. While it is a considerable investment that will take time to pay off, it will clear up traffic and will overall benefit people. I of course, however, want to ensure Project Connect is done in a smart way that respects property owners and communities to the greatest extent possible.

What other measures would you support to improve current and future mobility throughout our region?

Ideally, I would like to see high-speed rail for the Texas Triangle, though that will take some financial help from the Federal Government.

Do you support the expansion and improvement of major roadways and highways in our region such as IH-35, US 183, and 360?

Yes

Why or why not? (Explanation of Position)