

## **Legislative District 6 Republican Committee Vetting and Rating Program**

January 1, 2024

The LD6RC has developed a process of informing local voters about candidates running for office. We have found that some candidates who subscribe to be Republicans do not necessarily hold strong Republican values. Furthermore, Precinct Committeemen are frequently asked for information about candidates and issues. The Precinct Committeemen's job is to know their constituents and to keep them informed about candidates and ballot measures.

For this reason, the LD6RC has implemented a vetting and rating program whereby candidates are rated by the Precinct Committeemen.

### **Candidates Rating Criteria**

We will be searching for and rating men and women of good character, virtue and integrity, and who will uphold the Idaho Republican Platform and traditional values.

The LD6RC encourages candidates to participate in this process and other opportunities to present themselves to the voters such as forums, town halls, social media, speaking before the LD6RC and "Meet and Greets."

### **Recommended Candidates Process:**

1. Fill out LD6RC Candidate Questionnaire
2. Return the completed questionnaire to Debra Idso at [idahogopl6@gmail.com](mailto:idahogopl6@gmail.com).
3. Interviewed by Precinct Committeemen
4. Send a headshot photo to [idahogopl6@gmail.com](mailto:idahogopl6@gmail.com). List your name and office.
5. File Candidate Petitions by March 15<sup>th</sup> at 5 pm. March 14<sup>th</sup> recommended. Questionnaires will be posted on LD6RC website [www.idgopl6.org](http://www.idgopl6.org) March 15.
6. Special LD6RC meeting for Recommending Candidates in March.
7. Withdrawal date is March 29<sup>th</sup>.
8. Walk precincts, speak at Republican clubs, and campaign until May 21<sup>st</sup>.
9. May 22<sup>nd</sup> celebrate your victory.

### **Important Dates:**

March 15<sup>th</sup> filing deadline 5 pm.

March 29<sup>th</sup> withdrawal deadline 5 pm.

May 6<sup>th</sup> early voting to May 17<sup>th</sup>.

May 21<sup>st</sup> Election Day

### **Please answer the following questions:**

Full Name: Colton Tyler Bennett

Address: 625 S. Blaine Street, Moscow ID 83843

Age: 24 Phone Number: 208-892-9004

How long have you been a registered Republican? More than 7 years (since the day I turned 18)

The following questions are intended to provide a view into the candidate's character, values, political philosophy, personal experience, leadership style and will be used to evaluate fitness for office by the Legislative District 6 Republican Committee (LD6RC) membership.

The LD6RC welcomes all points of view as we believe in healthy, productive discussions, informed solutions, and we encourage you to answer them honestly and completely.

### **Experience, Leadership and Service**

1. Do you have experience as an elected official or in government service and if so, what was your position and key accomplishments?

*Yes. Prior to my military service I served as a Firefighter/EMT for about a year in northern Kentucky. During that time I was elected to the Mason County Soil and Water Board (A non-partisan office), we managed about \$100,000 of taxpayer money and saw a net return for our farmers of \$8 for every \$1 we managed. I ultimately resigned from this position because, at 19, I felt unqualified to hold political office while others (like my father) had served their country so bravely. So I enlisted in the Army. I have served 4 years in the United States Army as a Combat Medic. During my time in military service I deployed overseas and was promoted to the rank of Sergeant at the age of 22. I continue to serve as a US Army Reservist.*

2. Describe your duty as related to the office you are running for and how your leadership style will be employed to influence others and achieve success.

*Should I be elected my primary duty will be to provide leadership to protect, safeguard, and advance the rights of my constituents. I model my leadership style after what I learned in the military and what my faith teaches me. My military service taught me that "leaders eat last", that is, leaders put the needs of those they lead first. My faith teaches me that leaders ought to be servants. In one of His final acts before His crucifixion Christ washed his disciple's feet. I believe that if politicians had half of this humility and desire to serve, our nation it would be better for it. Servant leadership is contagious and has the ability to win the hearts and minds of those around you. Building relationships with those you serve with is also key, while still maintaining your loyalty to your constituents.*

3. What does success look like for this position and what measures, or key performance indicators should your voters use to evaluate your performance?

*Should I prevail in this election, voters ought to use these three questions to judge my performance:*

1. Did he keep his oath? 2. Did he keep his word? 3. Is he the same man we sent to Boise?

*Success, for me, will be YES answers to each of these questions. No elected official that fails to keep his oath, lies to his constituents, or comes back a compromised man should ever be returned to office.*

4. What Community Activities are you engaged or associated with (non-profit organizations, clubs, churches, boards, commissions, etc.,) where you have been of service to others. Have you held leadership roles in any of these organizations?

*After my military service I joined my wife (Sydney) here in Moscow. As a former Army Medic I have always felt a call toward healthcare so I volunteer many of my off days at the local emergency room stocking rooms, changing sheets, and helping patients. I have also tried to consistently donate blood at*

*the Vitalent in Lewiston. In addition to community service my wife and I are members at Trinity Reformed Church in Moscow. I also serve as a Vice-Chair of the Latah GOP Central Committee, Chair of the Party Organization Committee, and a member of the Party Caucus Planning Committee.*

### **Civics and Government**

5. Where do our rights as Citizens of the United States come from and under what conditions can government infringe on or suspend them?

*Our rights come from God Almighty. Our founders referred to these rights as “Inalienable” in the Declaration, meaning they cannot be taken away. Our rights do not come from a government, a king, or a governor. The Constitution enshrines these God-given rights and serves as shackles to the hands of tyrants who would seek to infringe on them.*

6. Regarding Interpretation of the United States Constitution, do you consider yourself an originalist or prescribe to it as a living document? Please explain.

*I am strictly an originalist. I see Justice Scalia as the best representative of my view on the Constitution. It is a lie to call the Constitution a ‘living’ or ‘organic’ document and all jurists who hold such views ought to be disqualified. If I am given the privilege to serve in the Legislature I will bring attention to this issue by putting strict scrutiny on the Governor’s judicial appointments.*

7. What is the purpose of government in a Constitutional Republic and if elected how will you perform your duties based on this “purpose?”

*The purpose of any just government is to secure the rights of men. Our Declaration prescribes that “to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed”. Anytime a government becomes destructive toward the rights of men, or ceases to derive its power from the consent of the governed, you and I have a right and duty to alter such a government. A Constitutional Republic provides us with restraint on government abuse (the Constitution) and a means to hold them accountable (the Republic). If elected my simple question of every piece of legislation before me will be this: Does this safeguard the people’s rights? The answer to that question will determine my vote.*

8. When does life begin and at what point does the government have a duty to protect it?

*Life begins at the moment of conception and the government has a duty to protect it immediately, from that moment onward. Any candidate’s answer that does not emphatically include “conception” and “Immediately” should be instantly disqualified from Republican consideration when there is a true pro-life candidate such as myself.*

9. Describe your views on the 2nd Amendment and what, if any limitations of this right do you support?

*I fully support the Second Amendment. The second part of this question is incompatible with the text of the 2nd Amendment. The 2nd Amendment says that the right to keep and bear arms “shall not be infringed”. If a politician says they support the 2nd Amendment and then tells you what limitations he supports he clearly doesn’t support the 2nd Amendment. I support the repeal of all Idaho gun Restrictions, as well as all federal restrictions, and an amendment to the Idaho Constitution to*

*strengthen our right to bear arms (the current Constitution is weak on this matter). Further, if a politician says they support the 2nd Amendment because they 'like to hunt', they clearly don't understand the purpose of it. Our founders enshrined our right to keep and bear arms so that we could keep tyrants at bay.*

**Transparency and Accountability**

10. Do you have any criminal convictions, ever filed for bankruptcy, have any active or unresolved tax liens, any conflicts of interest (personal or professional) that may jeopardize your candidacy or compromise you if elected?

*No. I have not had (nor do I have) any of these events, circumstances, or occurrences.*

11. Describe how you will make yourself available to your constituents and vote as their representative, adhering to the values and answers you have provided in this questionnaire.

*When not in session I will hold town halls across the district, attend community events, send out a newsletter, and continue to use social media to stay in touch and connect with my constituents. I will value their voice and recognize my role is to serve them, not myself. I will not, however, allow a fear of losing re-election, or the lopsided numbers of a targeted email campaign, to compromise my position. I will do what is right. I will uphold the Constitution and defend the freedom of our state no matter the cost. I trust my principles will earn my constituents respect and trust, but if not I will not compromise my values.*

**Feedback from the Candidate**

Please use the text box below to provide feedback or questions you may have for the LD6RCC Candidates Evaluation and Vetting team you are working with.

*These questions are very well thought out. I appreciate the District's hard work in this regard.*