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Page 1: Candidate Information

Q1

Office You are Seeking

Representative State House District 12

Q2

Party

Democrat

Q3

First Name

Simon

Q4

Last Name

Russell

Q5

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Q7

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Page 2: COVID-19 Response and Recovery

Q8

What steps do you think our state and/or counties should take to aid this recovery? Some examples could include how you think federal funds should be spent, diversifying the state's economy, etc.

The state of Hawaii must take a comprehensive approach to save as many good paying jobs and possible, and do everything in its power to keep money flowing in this economy.

Hawaii must invest in education to grow the next generation of critical thinkers, and to do this it must take better care of the DoE workforce. We must invest in food and energy security, as well as a new agriculture industry of fiber to replace imported building materials, so that we can grow our own building supplies, and keep building materials dollars in this economy.

Hawaii must re-open very carefully with regards to tourism, and be prepared for a second wave.

Q9

Please share some of the efforts you have led or participated in response to COVID-19.

As a father of 4 I have been homeschooling with my wife, and am currently feeling very grateful for the work that gets dedicated to children's beneficial learning outcomes. As the President of my children's elementary school PTA, I am involved in supporting a needs assessment to determine what parents, teachers and students will be needing to support positive learning outcomes for our keiki in the next school year.

Additionally, as a farmer and food security advocate, I am heavily engaged in moving a robust food security agenda forward at the state and county level.

Q10

Additional thoughts/comments:

This is one of the most historically challenging economic and health catastrophes to ever have occurred in Hawaii and America. There is no precedent. We must come together as one 'Ohana and solve this problem. Blame and finger pointing will not help. WE must become inter-dependent, and more secure in our food and energy production.

We must create a circular economy that regenerates the resources we have, and supports a resilient future in the face of the many challenges that are coming our way. As an island people, we have no choice but to work together and to get ourselves out of this crisis.

We will need Local NGO's, County, State and Federal government support, and I believe that I am qualified to work together with our Maui Delegation to the State Legislature and the Hawaii Congressional Delegation to chart a course to restored health and economic recovery.

Page 3: Tobacco and E-Cigarette Regulations

Q11

What policies do you think the state and/or counties should enact to reduce tobacco and e-cigarette use?

Treatment and education, with higher taxes on tobacco products to discourage consumption.

Q12

Please indicate your position on the following policies:

- | | |
|---|-------------------------|
| Apply a tobacco tax to e-cigarettes, such as a percentage of the wholesale cost or taxing e-liquid by volume. | Strongly Support |
| Prohibit the sale of all flavored tobacco products, including menthol cigarettes and flavored e-liquids. | Strongly Support |
| Restrict online sales of e-cigarettes to tobacco retailers only, in order to curb illegal sales to minors. | Strongly Support |
| Increase the tobacco tax on cigarettes to help smokers quit and prevent new users from starting. | Strongly Support |
| Funds from the tobacco settlement and tobacco taxes should fund tobacco prevention and cessation efforts. | Strongly Support |
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Q13

Additional thoughts/comments:

Tobacco kills, my father was a smoker and died of cancer

Page 4: Healthy Eating + Active Living

Q14

What steps do you think the state and/or counties should take to ensure food security for all of Hawaii's people, and to significantly increase food self-sufficiency for our state?

States and county land use regulations in the agriculture district need to be more strictly interpreted and enforced. Too many gentleman's estates are driving up the cost of land and displacing producers, making food self sufficiency nearly impossible. Abuse of the low land tax rate and cheap water must stop.

Additionally, the word "Agriculture" must be defined in state law and county code, as long as there is no clear definition of agriculture, abuse wil continue, and agriculture lands will be treated as a commodity, rather than our breadbasket.

Once farmers can afford to live here by the thousands, and there is support for family agriculture (like the constitution mandates), Hawaii will be approaching food security and food self sufficiency. WE have a long way to go though, and there is great resistance to this line of thought at the state and county level, as there is a lot of money to be made selling parcels in Hawaii's agriculture district.

Q15

In 2019, Hawai'i made a commitment to adopt Vision Zero, an initiative to eliminate all traffic fatalities and severe injuries, while increasing safe, healthy, equitable mobility for all. What policies and infrastructure changes should the state and/or counties make to achieve this goal?

Driving is probably the most dangerous activity people in our state do. As long as drunk and careless drivers are causing death on our highways Hawaii will be far from the Vision Zero Goal. I think stiffer criminal penalties for speeding, DUI and reckless driving should be implemented to realize Vision Zero goals and objectives. Perhaps a three strikes component which after the third citation for DUI or reckless endangerment license is revoked for 5 -10 years.

Q16

Please indicate your position on the following policies:

We must significantly increase public investment in food systems workforce development, including programs such as farm to school, agriculture and food systems education (PreK-12 and higher education), and farmer training programs. **Strongly Support**

The state should continue to invest in a Double Up Food Bucks program, which doubles the value of SNAP benefits when buying fresh, locally grown produce at participating retailers. **Strongly Support**

Enact a one-cent per-ounce fee on sugar-sweetened beverages. **Strongly Support**

Use revenue from a sugar-sweetened beverage fee for obesity prevention programs. **Strongly Support**

Make health and physical education (PE) courses a curriculum requirement, rather than an option, for middle school students. PE is currently a requirement for elementary and high school students. **Strongly Support**

Implement a red light camera program to deter red-light running and help curb traffic fatalities and injuries. **Strongly Support**

Q17

Additional thoughts/comments:

Increased support for PE programs in school are a must, as well as support for after school sports. Hawaii must eliminate the childhood obesity epidemic in our state. Strong support for the Farm to School initiative is a must, so that our youth can be inspired to have more fresh fruit and vegetables in their diets.

Q18

Please indicate your position on the following policies:

Reinstate coverage of preventative dental benefits for Adult Medicaid participants. **Strongly Support**

Fluoridation of community water supplies is an effective way to prevent tooth decay. **Strongly Oppose**

Q19

Additional thoughts/comments:

I have not seen evidence that water fluoridation is a better solution for tooth decay than proper oral hygiene. Neither my wife or my children nor I have ever had a cavity, and never had fluoride in my water.

We all brush twice a day and floss.

Page 6: Alcohol Regulations

Q20

Please indicate your position on the following policies:

Increase in alcohol taxes. **Strongly Support**

Repeal of the alcohol takeout laws that allow people to buy and take home liquor-based mixed drinks from restaurants. **Oppose**

Repeal of alcohol delivery laws that allow restaurants to deliver beer and liquor-based mixed drinks to people's homes. **Oppose**

Increase in enforcement that helps ensure that youth do not access alcohol through existing laws allowing for alcohol takeout and delivery. **Strongly Support**

Q21

Additional thoughts/comments:

Alcohol is a poison, but as long as it is legal, I think taxation and strict enforcement of current law is a good way to regulate it.

Page 7: Marijuana Regulations

Q22

Please indicate your position on the following policies:

- | | |
|---|-------------------------|
| Do you support legalizing recreational marijuana sales in Hawai'i? | Strongly Support |
| If recreational marijuana is formally proposed by the state, how strongly would you support that marijuana be regulated by the Department of Health? | Oppose |
| If recreational marijuana is formally proposed by the state, how strongly would you support that the price of marijuana be regulated? | Oppose |
| If recreational marijuana is formally proposed by the state, how strongly would you support that the promotion and advertisement of marijuana sales be regulated? | Strongly Support |
| If recreational marijuana is formally proposed by the state, how strongly would you support that marijuana potency be regulated? | Strongly Oppose |
| If recreational marijuana is formally proposed by the state, how strongly would you support that the number and placement of marijuana outlets be regulated? | Strongly Support |
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Q23

Additional thoughts/comments:

- I do not encourage marijuana use.
My thoughts on legal Marijuana are that it needs to be grown by farmers in all of its forms (hemp, marijuana etc...)to help them make ends meet. in it's unrefined and flower forms should be deregulated.
- The multiple and extreme levels of regulation of Hemp Cannabis and Marijuana are problematic to farmers, which will only help the black market and ensure local people and family farmers do not benefit economically from this lucrative and relatively harmless crop.
- It is my understanding that once the price of marijuana drops to low levels, it will eliminate the profit incentive that motivates drug dealers, and fro people who need to get high on drugs, it will begin to replace the use of drugs like alcohol, methamphetamine and other truly dangerous drugs.
- When Marijuana mortalities are compared to those from other drugs including pharmaceuticals, it becomes obvious that this substance called marijuana poses very little threat to our community.
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Page 8: Economic Justice

Q24

What are your immediate plans to help make Hawai'i more affordable for its residents?

- Lower cost of living for local people be making state lands available for construction of low income housing.
-

Q25

What is the role of government in addressing housing affordability issues and what would you do to encourage the production of more affordable homes for Hawai'i residents?

It is the role of government to help people who are unable to help themselves. Rent for a three bedroom house has tripled since I graduated high school, yet wages have not kept up. I will support a \$17 minimum wage, as well as government housing projects that will pay for themselves and give low cost housing opportunities to local people, starting with teachers and other government workers, as government entities can give "preference" to their workforce when building housing for them. We must keep our professional workforce here if we are to have a sustainable and resilient future,

Q26

Please indicate your position on the following policies:

Increase the state's minimum wage in a series of annual steps to a living wage of \$17 per hour. **Strongly Support**

Create a statewide Paid Family Leave Program, which would allow up to 12 weeks for employees to provide care for a newborn, bond with a new child, or care for a family member with a serious health condition. **Strongly Support**

Q27

Additional thoughts/comments:

We must care better for and support our work force on all the levels that it needs, as well as our youth, disabled and the elderly. This is the hallmark of a civilized society, which I know we all aspire to.
