

#101

COMPLETE

Collector: Email Invitation 1 (Email)
Started: Wednesday, June 17, 2020 9:31:48 PM
Last Modified: Saturday, July 11, 2020 10:45:17 PM
Time Spent: Over a week
First Name: Ed
Last Name: Justus
Email: justusforallcampaign@gmail.com
IP Address: 174.239.11.74

Page 1: Candidate Information

Q1

Office You are Seeking

Kauai County Councilmember

Q2

Party

Non-Partisan

Q3

First Name

Ed

Q4

Last Name

Justus

Q5

Email

justusforallcampaign@gmail.com

Q6

Phone

18086392520

Q7

Campaign Website

www.edjustusforall.com

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 shutting down of our "non-essential" economy due to COVID-19 revealed clearly how "essential" our "non-essential" businesses are. Nearly half of the State's tax revenue has evaporated, and unemployment is one of the highest in the country. What COVID-19 has revealed is how fragile and weak Hawaii is because it has become dependent on a tourism economy, and how unprepared Hawaii truly is for long-term emergencies from being so reliant on the mainland. Unlike so many other places in the nation, Hawaii is in one of the most advantageous spots in the world to reinvent itself and diversify its economy--not just to maintain balance and stability, but for the public safety of our residents. We have so much agricultural land that sits unused, especially on Kauai, and we must open up and incentivize this readily-available sector, also recognizing it as critical infrastructure. This would not only create new jobs (including supportive industries and new value-added businesses from the products produced), it would allow Hawaii to grow enough goods to provide for every person, with plenty to export for added profit. We can create our own internal economy, supported by government assistance (through the lens of public safety) to get this started, and fast. This isn't reinventing the wheel; New Zealand already did this decades ago, and we can follow in our Polynesian relatives' steps, using what works and adapting the rest to suit our specific needs. This is all possible.

Q9

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

My wife, Yuriko, and I have spent most of our efforts in keeping our bookstore afloat. The State deemed both libraries and bookstores "non-essential" (think about that for a moment). Nonetheless, we have done our part by following the rules and laws as written, including providing hand sanitizer for customers once we were "allowed" to reopen on May 7th, and so on. Keeping Kauai's only bookstore alive I think is a pretty important thing for our island. If we aren't there anymore, all you'd have left is Costco and Walmart for books, or buying online. The discovery and cultural experience of shopping in a bookstore would be gone. We have already lost our movie theater due to all of this.

Q10

Additional thoughts/comments:

To further support the reinvigoration of agriculture as a critical economy for Hawaii, there are certain older acts that were passed that must be repealed or rewritten to give Hawaii the trading latitude that it is. Geopolitically, Hawaii is in one of the most important areas in the world, and we can take better advantage of this.

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?

This is a really fine line to walk, and I do not have any specific policies on this issue, as it needs a much broader conversation on the pros and cons of the consequences of such legislation. We do have to keep in mind that people do have the freedom to use these substances, including in whatever flavor they want, so long as they are not considered illegal by the federal government. Technically, the State (or County) could write a law banning their use entirely, and would have the right to do so, and it would probably be effective in eliminating the use of tobacco or vaping altogether wherever it is enacted. This does come with a cost, because there are businesses that would be forced to close, and a loss of jobs, but likely an decrease in health issues related to its use. However, and no amount of "taxing" or "cost-increases" is ever going to stop addicts from using--instead they will prioritizing their money towards it at the cost of everything else. As it relates to youths, if the State (or County) wanted to implement far harsher penalties for selling to (or even giving to) minors, I would be in strong favor of that. Adults who participate in this behavior know it is wrong and if the penalty is severe enough, the vast majority won't even think about trying.

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. | Support |
| Prohibit the sale of all flavored tobacco products, including menthol cigarettes and flavored e-liquids. | Oppose |
| 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. | Oppose |
| Funds from the tobacco settlement and tobacco taxes should fund tobacco prevention and cessation efforts. | Strongly Support |
-

Q13

Additional thoughts/comments:

On Taxing E-Cigarettes: I agree, and it should be made fair and equal in nature to how regular tobacco items are tax, as not to favor one over the other.

On Increasing Tobacco Tax: In preventing "new users" or "encouraging users to quit", this is wholly ineffective. I have been a smoker in the past, and I was an underage smoker. I can tell you from experience that no one I knew who smoked or decided to smoke ever once considered "price" as a deciding factor. Instead, we paid whatever the cost was because "that was the cost" and reasons for using in the first place came from outside pressure and the societal imagery that glorified smoking and substance abuse as "rebellious" or "being different", etc. I decided to quit because I wanted to feel better--and ultimately self-decision is the only true effective way for someone to break the addictive cycle. Otherwise, increasing the tobacco tax is only a way to take in more money for the government that is not clearly earmarked toward stopping its use. This is no different than the "sugar" tax a few years prior. Taxing it will not prevent use, unless you make it intentionally cost-prohibitive, and I am referring to "seriously" prohibitive--like \$100 a pack. I would also support a ban of smoking/vaping anywhere in public--that it could only be in the privacy of your home. Even in a moving vehicle is still using on public property.

On Prohibiting Sale of Flavors: This isn't going to stop people from using, including minors. Having been an underage user, I know firsthand and through countless second-hand, "feeling it" was always infinitely more important than "flavor". If flavor was the true gateway access, youth substance abuse would have only just started recently.

On Restricting Online Access: I 100% agree with this. Tobacco and nicotine are controlled substances, and access to them should only be made available to physical dealers, so that there is an effective verification process to ensure only adults are purchasing.

On Funds from Tobacco Taxes and Settlements: I agree 100%. The last thing we need is higher taxes that get directly dumped into the general fund instead of funneled to the areas that are related directly.

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?

If we revitalize our agricultural sector, recognizing it as critical infrastructure, we can grow enough food to feed all of Hawaii easily. We have a year-round growing season, fertile soils, plentiful rainfall, and varied micro-climates. This step alone ensures food security, because we wouldn't have to be reliant on the fragile stream of mainland and international imports as heavily. The added benefit is that the food is fresher and therefore healthier for the body.

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?

It is a great goal, but the only real way to reach "zero" is through legislation requiring all vehicles to be self-driving (computer operated). I am not convinced of the capability of the technology yet, but it is promising. It is likely something we will see in our lifetime. However, there will end up being a vigorous debate over the "right" of someone to be able to drive their vehicle. Those against it will say "public safety" demands it.

Until then, the County has participate in making less traffic issues by opening up bypass roads to allow traffic to flow better. This has the benefit of reducing road rage which is caused by people being waylaid by traffic jams and congested roadways.

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. **Support**

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

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

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. **Support**

Q17

Additional thoughts/comments:

On Supporting Agriculture: 100%. The government must do much more, and recognize how critically important our agriculture is not just for our health, but because of our geographic isolation. If we are cut off due to a worse plague or even political instability on the mainland, our supplies will not last us long, and we must take all measure to make sure our residents are provided for.

On SNAP: I would rather see food stamp programs only be allowed for basic food ingredients, fresh veggies and fruits, and things that are actually healthy. I have known people who used these programs to buy some of the most unhealthiest things imaginable, and yet it counts as "food". What we eat affects how we think and how we feel. If we as a society are paying for these programs, we should ensure that those using them are actually gaining real nutrition from it.

On the "Sugar Tax": Taxing sugar will not stop people from using sugar. Sugar is a drug, too. It affects the mind like many other substances do (look up the definition of "drug"). I used to be very fat, 250 pounds. I lost 70 pounds because I decided to, and really, that is the only way people actually make weight loss a reality.

On "Sugar Tax" Obesity Programs: Again, having been fat, and known others who were fat, I cannot think of a single person who was "assisted" by the government in losing weight. I am concerned that this could easily be more tax dollars used towards expanding government agencies instead of focusing on our critical services. If we are serious about taxing "sugar", then make it go to something that matters, like helping farmers grow crops and getting those healthy items out to our residents easier. That will make far more difference in people's health.

On Physical Education:

If it is happening in Elementary and High School, it should be fair and happen in Middle School as well. Also, middle school is a critical time when young people's bodies are changing rapidly, including increased eating habits. This is when obesity really begins to set in for many people. If healthy activity is not encouraged by this time, it is even harder to get it going by high school.

On Red Light Cameras: I agree with this, however, it should be handled like it is in the UK--cameras taking photos of the backs of the vehicles and not the front. The reason why is there ended up being a surge in domestic violence because photos were being sent home to vehicle owners, and the spouse of the red-light runner was sometimes finding out there was another person in the car with the driver, such as an affair participant. For people's personal privacy, this would be a good measure. My wife told me about this one and I think it is a good idea. The role of government should be to enforce the law, not open up opportunities for more issues to develop.

Page 5: Oral Health

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:

On Medicaid Dental: Totally support this. Seniors already have lowered immune systems, and the condition of our teeth and gums is critically important in maintaining health. People can die from a tooth infection, considering how close it is to the brain.

On Fluoridation: This is a misnomer. If fluoridation of water was effective, dentists would be out of business. The reason is also is ineffective that not all "fluorides" are the same. "Calcium fluoride" is what our bodies use to build teeth. "Sodium fluoride" is a toxic chemical. Nearly all municipalities that are "fluoridating" their water are using "sodium fluoride" because it is far less expensive than "calcium fluoride". One is poison. The other is not. Additionally, by fluoridating, we would be robbing the people of making the choice for themselves and their families, since all water purification systems do not remove fluoride. Kauai County in the late 90s or early 2000s had this discussion, and the information provided was invaluable in causing Kauai to make the decision to not fluoridate the water. There are far better ways to help people take care of their teeth, but this is not one of them.

Page 6: Alcohol Regulations

Q20

Please indicate your position on the following policies:

- | | |
|---|-------------------------|
| Increase in alcohol taxes. | Strongly Oppose |
| Repeal of the alcohol takeout laws that allow people to buy and take home liquor-based mixed drinks from restaurants. | Strongly Oppose |
| Repeal of alcohol delivery laws that allow restaurants to deliver beer and liquor-based mixed drinks to people's homes. | Support |
| 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:

On Increasing Alcohol Tax: Increasing the cost of alcohol will not stop people from drinking or being alcoholics. Alcoholism is a mental health condition, and legislating against it or increasing the cost of it will not help people who suffer from this problem. Instead, like I said before with increasing the prices of tobacco, they will still spend their money on their vice at the cost of everything else in their life.

On Repeal of Alcohol Takeaway from Restaurants: I do not agree, because the only difference between buying alcohol or mixed drinks at a grocery store versus at a restaurant is that the restaurant will charge you five to ten times the price. At least there is a person who must be identified when the pick-up happens, so someone is being carded.

On Repeal of Alcohol Delivery from Restaurant Laws: I only partly support this because it does not make sense for restaurants to take the cost risk in delivering alcohol to someone's home when they have not yet confirmed the person's identity and age. What happens when they get there and the person isn't old enough? Do they say, "No, sorry," and return to the restaurant with the drinks? This leave a potential loophole open for minors to take advantage of, and that is the only reason I am supporting it. Otherwise, if there was a surefire way to confirm the age and identity of the recipient, then restaurants could be allowed. I would instead of "repealing" would try to "amend" the laws to ensure proper safeguards are in place. Otherwise, a straight repeal will in no way stop alcoholics from using.

On Preventing Youth Access: As I said before, I totally support creating enforcement methods that prevent legal loopholes from creating access to minors.

Page 7: Marijuana Regulations

Q22

Please indicate your position on the following policies:

Do you support legalizing recreational marijuana sales in Hawai'i?	Strongly Oppose
If recreational marijuana is formally proposed by the state, how strongly would you support that marijuana be regulated by the Department of Health?	Strongly Support
If recreational marijuana is formally proposed by the state, how strongly would you support that the price of marijuana be regulated?	Strongly Support
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 Support
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

Q23

Additional thoughts/comments:

On Legalizing Marijuana Statewide: As it stands now, any state that has legalized recreational use of marijuana is in violation of federal law, as the federal government still recognizes it as an illegal drug. Even though it may be legal in those particular states, what is produced there does not stay there—it gets illegally exported to the rest of the states, which has the side-effect of creating criminal enterprises, which has horrible downstream consequences such as gang violence, murders, prostitution, and underage drug-use, as all drugs do. Because of this, I do not support the legalization of on the state level. However, if the federal government were to legalize it, then I would support the growing of cannabis for export because it would be a regulated legal operation that would not have the criminal side effects.

On If the State Approves Recreational Marijuana:

If they decide to violate federal law, then it is my sincerest hope that they regulate it to the greatest extent possible. I would propose that marijuana could ONLY be used in the privacy of someone's home, not in public places, moving vehicles, or even outside someone's home because there is a proven intoxicating effect generated by secondhand marijuana smoke, and people could be affected without their approval. Also, dispensaries and "outlets" should be located next to police stations, just to keep them on their toes.

Page 8: Economic Justice

Q24

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

"Lower-priced" housing comes in many forms, not just the County building houses and being temporary co-owner. We can open up more affordable housing by adding new language in the County Zoning Ordinance which would allow property owners to build new smaller units on their property specifically for residential rental. Also, we can increase the TVR tax rate to match that of Resorts to incentivize them to change their tourist rental units into residential units, again adding more availability. Also, we must make a higher property tax rate for high-value homes and for non-resident owners of property. If they can afford to pay for these residences, they can afford to pay a higher tax rate that will help the rest of our residents with opportunities for more affordable housing. This is something that is already successfully exists on Oahu, and we can do the same here. This in turn would allow us to create lower residential tax rates for most our residents on Kauai.

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?

Hawaii has a particularly important role to play in the creation of "lower-priced" housing, considering the limited land available and high-value of land. The County of Kauai has taken on projects where they are temporary part-owner of housing developments in order to offer a lower cost to the purchaser of a home. However, I think the County should permanently remain co-owner instead of temporary, so that we can ensure that these houses are not sold after 10 years and then become part of the dreaded "house-flipping" trend that has contributed to driving up prices. This would ensure that these places stay always "lower-priced" houses. Additionally, even if the County paid more for the land and construction, it does not have to break even--it can offer prices lower than it paid for. The reason why is it can afford to absorb the loss since it is acting in the interest of a public good.

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. **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. **Support**

Q27

Additional thoughts/comments:

On Increasing the Wage: Having had employees, I generally paid \$20 an hour. Hawaii is expensive to live and anything less makes it difficult. However, instead of having to constantly "increase" the minimum wage, we should instead set a fair rate as of today, and then make it subject to inflation of the dollar and adjusted to the cost of living. This is completely doable, then we don't have to make people suffer through the changes--make the changes automatic for them.

On Statewide Family Leave: I do support this, and more so locally than through the federal level, since the federal government was designed to serve limited functions and the States and municipalities wider functions. With the State in dire economic situations right now, I don't know if it is feasible to do, but we should find "non-essential" services to cut to fund an "essential" service like this.
