

#137

COMPLETE

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Page 1: Candidate Information

**Q1**

Office You are Seeking

Senate - District 19

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**Q2**

Party

Democratic

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**Q3**

First Name

John

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**Q4**

Last Name

Clark

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**Q5**

Email

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**Q6**

Phone

808-755-9351

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**Q7**

Campaign Website

[www.Clark4Senate.com](http://www.Clark4Senate.com)

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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.

To aid Hawaii's recovery through the pandemic and its effect on our state, we need to at least try to see this life-changing event as an opportunity. Notwithstanding the tragic events of the first half of this year, Hawaii is facing a proverbial fork in the road.

Do we try to go back to doing things "the way we have always done them"?

Or, can we collaboratively create various courses of action that can (and will) redefine who we are as a state, as a people, and as a community of people who truly aloha aina. We have an opportunity to grow in familiarity with people across the socio-economic and political spectrums; we have an opportunity to re-learn how special of a place Hawaii was, is, and always will be. We have an opportunity to seek out, discover and apply new ideas.

The rising tide is said to lift all boats. With this concept in mind, the state should INVEST federal funds in strategic joint ventures (with commercial partners) that will allow and facilitate community development. The rail project has promised jobs and transit-oriented development, but its controversial cost overruns have overshadowed the massive project.

If we can use federal funds to build centralized community centers, we can begin to build hope, honor, and honest labor from within our respective communities. The Kapolei Second-City concept is sound. However, with thousands more homes planned for 'Ewa, Kapolei and the West side, developers need to (also) focus on how we can build self-sustaining communities.

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**Q9**

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

I have served on the 'Ewa Neighborhood Board for over five years. I current serve as the Chairperson of the Education Committee, and I also serve as the Chairperson the Economic Development Committee. In my role as Chairperson of these Committees, I have kept my eye on the pulse and pace of the development, the Department of Education, and their respective impacts on our community.

Very early in the timeline of the pandemic, I decided that I wanted to be continuous source of reliable information. Even before the pandemic, I was well-known for keeping the community informed on various community related activities, events, and impacts.

Through my early research in January, I believed this pandemic would have a devastating effect on our everyday lives. Despite being labelled an "alarmist" by some people, I continued to share facts, figures, and the far-reaching repercussions of decisions that were being made at the local, state, and national levels of government.

Most importantly, though, I decided to have a POSITIVE IMPACT on the community.

Yes, I participated in food drives and food giveaways.

But, through my nonprofit TeenBuilding USA, I also directed the planning and follow-through of the "Ewa Beach Honk & Wave" for the graduating class of 2020 for James Campbell High School on Saturday, May 16th (<https://www.hawaiinewsnow.com/2020/05/14/honk-wave-class/>). We also facilitated a "Honk & Wave" for the graduating class of 2020 for Kapolei High School on Sunday, May 24th.

Additionally, I sponsored a West Oahu "Essay & Short Story Creative Writing Contest" for all high schools in West Oahu. The three finalists will all receive a new laptop computer – just in time to attend school, socially distant, if necessary.

Lastly, I also started a positively skewed blog.

I knew these unprecedented times would usher in heightened levels of uncertainty and associated anxiety for many people. And, as an optimistic realist and a published author who loves to write, I created and shared a blog titled "40 Days and Two Little Words." My goal was to provide a small distraction for 40 continuous days. Residents in Hawaii were relatively successful in flattening the curve during the initial weeks of the pandemic. And while most people were focused on protecting our physical health, I wanted to also offer residents a healthy diversion to assist with maintaining a healthy, hopeful state of mind (<https://www.johnclarkiii.com/40-days-and-two-little-words.html>) .

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**Q10**

Respondent skipped this question

Additional thoughts/comments:

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**Q11**

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

As a former smoker, I firmly believe the act of quitting smoking is relatively simple. I smoked for approximately 14 years, beginning in my teen years. Accordingly, I believe I have “standing” to make such a bold statement. Moreover, it’s a proven fact that many people quit “cold turkey,” as it sometimes called. Yet, there are entire industries and products built up to support the myth that one needs other drugs and devices to stop smoking.

To be sure, increasing the price of cigarettes will undoubtedly make purchasing them cost prohibitive. However, in the final analysis, the government allowed and actively participated in the growth of the cigarette industry. Accordingly, the government should progressively increase its efforts to curb and suppress the growth of smoking, especially among teenagers.

To underscore and highlight the efforts that I have personally placed on making tobacco cessation a priority, please note that I authored a book titled, “I Quit Smoking Today.” The book is a “how-to-quit-smoking” guide and is widely online available and wherever books are sold.

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**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. | <b>Strongly Support</b> |
| Prohibit the sale of all flavored tobacco products, including menthol cigarettes and flavored e-liquids.      | <b>Strongly Support</b> |
| Restrict online sales of e-cigarettes to tobacco retailers only, in order to curb illegal sales to minors.    | <b>Strongly Support</b> |
| Increase the tobacco tax on cigarettes to help smokers quit and prevent new users from starting.              | <b>Strongly Support</b> |
| Funds from the tobacco settlement and tobacco taxes should fund tobacco prevention and cessation efforts.     | <b>Strongly Support</b> |

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**Q13**

**Respondent skipped this question**

Additional thoughts/comments:

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## 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?

On almost every major issue facing our state and country, there are four major factors that either facilitate or frustrate the solutions:

1. Early and periodic education (or the lack thereof)
2. Equitable distribution of public funds (i.e. corporate welfare versus social welfare)
3. Adequate accountability for people, factions, or corporations who are careless
4. Apathy for all of the above

To ensure food security for all of Hawaii's people, we need to start with an appreciation for Hawaii Revised Statutes Section 5-7.5; it's called the "Aloha Spirit" law, and it simply but eloquently states, "'Aloha' means mutual regard and affection and extends warmth in caring with no obligation in return. 'Aloha' is the essence of relationships in which each person is important to every other person for collective existence. 'Aloha' means to hear what is not said, to see what cannot be seen and to know the unknowable.

In exercising their power on behalf of the people and in fulfillment of their responsibilities, obligations and service to the people, the legislature, governor, lieutenant governor, executive officers of each department, the chief justice, associate justices, and judges of the appellate, circuit, and district courts may contemplate and reside with the life force and give consideration to the 'Aloha Spirit'"

As a Kama'āina, I am awestruck by the power of this statement codified into Hawaiian law.

After serving our nation's Navy for over 30 years (almost half of it in Hawaii), and living most of my life within the Pacific Rim, I placed roots here in Hawaii specifically because of the Hawaiian Spirit. I believe it is incumbent upon the leaders of the state to ensure food security for all of Hawaii's people. We can achieve this by:

1. Ensuring early and periodic education about crops, the ocean, and how to malama both;
2. Continued distribution of public funds to ensure no child or family goes hungry;
3. Increased accountability for people, factions, or corporations who are careless;
4. Applying HRS 5-7.5 and employing empathy for people when they need it most.

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## 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?

Seeking a public/private partnership that allows contractors to install traffic-light cameras. However, history has proven that there should be SIGNIFICANT oversight of the procurement process for this far-reaching program.

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**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**

**Respondent skipped this question**

Additional thoughts/comments:

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:

I believe the resultant studies on the fluoridation of community water supplies can be used to support opposing positions. Moreover, when humans drink water, they rarely wash the water all over their teeth before swallowing it. Accordingly, communities should consider the cost/benefit analysis of what fluoride can do to the human bone structure – as an equally important measure of what it can possibly do for human teeth (especially when fluoride treatments can be provided separately, inside or outside of a dentist's office).

Page 6: Alcohol Regulations

**Q20**

Please indicate your position on the following policies:

- |   |                         |
|---|-------------------------|
| Increase in alcohol taxes.  | <b>Oppose</b>           |
| Repeal of the alcohol takeout laws that allow people to buy and take home liquor-based mixed drinks from restaurants.                       | <b>Strongly Oppose</b>  |
| Repeal of alcohol delivery laws that allow restaurants to deliver beer and liquor-based mixed drinks to people's homes.                     | <b>Strongly Oppose</b>  |
| Increase in enforcement that helps ensure that youth do not access alcohol through existing laws allowing for alcohol takeout and delivery. | <b>Strongly Support</b> |
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**Q21**

**Respondent skipped this question**

Additional thoughts/comments:

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Page 7: Marijuana Regulations

**Q22**

Please indicate your position on the following policies:

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

**Q23**

**Respondent skipped this question**

Additional thoughts/comments:

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Page 8: Economic Justice

**Q24**

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

Quite simply, we need to raise the state's minimum wage. Though some workers already make more than the minimum wage, in terms of "real dollars," adjusted for inflation, people are literally making less money per hour than workers did 20 years ago. The value of money has not kept pace with the cost of living. Accordingly, I plan to press hard for an education program that explains and educates the public about this maddening fact. In concert with the explanation and education plan, I will seek collaboration on how best to increase the minimum wage in Hawaii.

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**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?

During the industrial revolution, many of our wealthy forefathers stood by as hundreds of thousands of men, women, and children were left on their own to deal with the unscrupulous titans of industry.

At the end of the day, we are our brother's keeper. And the rising tide lifts all boats.

These are not platitudes; these are also facts regarding the commercial marketplace.

And regardless of how benevolent corporate interests say they are... irrespective of how giving they appear, there are things that have to be managed not by the market but by public policy.

Establishing AND MAINTAINING a previously agreed-upon inventory of "affordable housing" and maintaining an effective minimum wage are two examples of good public policy.

In the final analysis, together, we can do better.

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**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**

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**Q27**

Additional thoughts/comments:

**REGARDING THE MINIMUM WAGE:**

In 1967, the minimum wage was \$1.40, which was equal to half of the average hourly earnings in the commercial sector (\$2.81).

After peaking at 54% of the commercial-sector earnings average in 1968, the federally mandated national minimum wage has steadily declined and now sits at a paltry 36% of the average hourly earnings in the commercial sector (\$7.25 versus \$20.31 as of November 2013).

So, what we have here is a failure to communicate.

We have failed to communicate the importance of a "community of interests." We all have a vested interest in ensuring a common core of standards within this great state and nation of ours.

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At the end of the day, we are our brother's keeper. And the rising tide lifts all boats.

These are not platitudes.

These are also facts regarding the commercial marketplace.

And regardless of how benevolent corporate interests say they are... irrespective of how giving they appear, there are things that have to be managed not by the market but by public policy.

Establishing AND MAINTAINING an effective minimum wage is a very good example of such a policy.

And this fact is the overall prevailing reason for at least revisiting the current level of the federally mandated minimum wage... and perhaps continue increasing the minimum wage in Hawaii beyond the \$10.10 per hour.

**REGARDING PAID FAMILY LEAVE:**

Though a statewide Paid Family Leave Program, which would allow up to 12 weeks for employees to provide care for a sick (or new) relative sounds like a good plan (in theory). In real-world situations, most employers (especially small businesses) simply cannot afford to lose personnel for such an extended timeframe. Accordingly, I believe a timeframe shorter than that period could work – or, if the type of work can be performed at home, a work-at-home model (with a gradual return to the workplace) could potentially be a win/win for the employer and employee.

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