

**Anchorage Tea Party
Alaska State Legislature Candidate Questionnaire 2012**

You may use as much space as you like for your responses, including additional pages. Your responses will be posted on our website, and hard copies will be made available to attendees at our June 25, 2012 candidate forum.

Candidate Name Elizabeth (Liz) Vazquez House or Senate District J (West Anchorage)

1. Give your opinion on a rotating legislative session to be held in each of the three largest cities in Alaska. What are your ideas for providing Alaska citizens' better access to the legislature?

Alaska is the only state that has no road access to its capital, Juneau. Alaskans need more access to their capital and I support the Governor's proposed Juneau Access Road. If this proposal fails, the capital needs to be moved. Having rotating legislative sessions would be very costly. Legislative committee hearings/meetings can be held in different towns and cities in Alaska.

2. What must Alaska do to increase our oil-related revenues?

Two initiatives will increase oil production. First, build roads to resources (R2R). For example a short road to Umiat would facilitate oil production. Second, apply exploration and production incentives to stimulate these activities, as was done for the Cook Inlet area. Because of these incentives, we have the following companies engaged in Cook Inlet: Apache, Cook Inlet Energy, Armstrong, Hilcorp and Buccaneer. At the present time Alaska has the highest oil production taxes in North America (excluding the Cook Inlet). ACES needs to be modified so that Alaska is competitive.

3. What is your position on "Loser Pays" tort reform legislation for Alaska?

Court Rule 82 already requires the losing party in a civil case to pay a percentage of attorney fees and payment of court costs pursuant to Court Rule 79. One effective way of minimizing trials would be to require all civil cases to have a settlement conference before trial. Settlement conferences settle approximately 80% of cases. Tort cases filed in Federal Court are decided by Judges and have no jury trials.

4. What is the one most important thing we can do to improve education in Alaska and how will you facilitate that?

First, hold all schools accountable to standards and ensure that public schools have standard-based education. Second, provide for more school choice, including implementing a voucher system and

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encouraging the elimination of long waiting lists for alternative programs. A dual system already exists with regard to colleges and universities; an individual has the choice to attend a private or public college/university.

5. Give examples of capital budget projects you favor spending state monies on.

Infrastructure that will bring long term prosperity to Alaska, such as roads to resources. It is important to have the state leverage its assets and not provide all of the funding. Instead, public-private partnerships need to be formed to provide the funding for these essential projects. The DeLong Mountain Transportation project is a good example of this type of partnering that benefit both the state and private sector.

6. Do you believe this year's state operating budget is too high, just right, or too low? If too high, name three programs in which you would make cuts. If too low, list the areas which need more spending.

At the present time our state budget requires \$100 per barrel to break even and next year it will require \$105 per barrel to break even and avoid a budget deficit. At the same time, the pipeline, which provides 90% of state revenues, is declining by approximately 6% per year. This is not sustainable and several actions must be taken by the legislature. State spending needs to held down and reduced, more oil needs to be produced and the economy needs to be aggressively diversified.

7. What is your interpretation of the Tenth Amendment of the United States Constitution and how it relates to states' rights? Give specific examples relating to Alaska.

This amendment restricts the activities of the Federal government. At the present time, Alaska has been the victim of overreaching by the US Department of Interior, the EPA and other federal agencies. There are numerous examples of this, including the fact that the Federal government owns approximately 60% of our state. In addition, the federal government has taken over the management of fish and game in many areas of our state.

8. Name four things Alaska can and should do to reduce health care costs.

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9. Increase the number of providers, including expanding the WAMI program and the UAA nursing program. In addition, refuse to implement Obamacare which will increase costs. Encourage our Federal delegation and congress to pass legislation that will 1. increase competition among insurance companies by allowing them to cross state lines, 2. allow individuals, regardless of their employment, to carry with them their health care savings accounts. With regard to Medicaid beneficiaries, require an affordable co-payment for medical services.

10. Do you support the current processes for Alaska judicial appointments and retentions? Why or why not?

I do not support the current process for selecting judges. It can be a popularity contest among the members of the Alaska Bar. The retention system is fine but could probably be improved.

11. List any restrictions you personally will have (or have) on contributions to your campaign such as a dollar cap, accepting contributions from public-sector or private unions, PACs, etc. Please provide details and justification.

I will not accept contributions from public sector unions or their PACS because the Legislation approves their union contracts. Therefore, it is a conflict of interest to accept money from them. Contributions will be accepted as long as they are legally compliant.

E. Vazquez

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