

2022
MFPE Legislative Candidate Interview Instrument



CONFIDENTIAL

Only the MFPE interview team, staff, and PAC Board will see the full interview responses of candidates. They will not be published online or otherwise made generally public.

Process: MFPE’s candidate endorsement process is member-led. Candidates meet with a local endorsement team, which then forwards their endorsement recommendation to MFPE’s statewide PAC Board for final consideration. Candidates will be notified at the conclusion of this process whether they have received an endorsement or not.

Note: Interview team, please double check the auto-filled information below for each candidate.

Name of Candidate _____

Legislative District _____

Party Affiliation _____

Campaign Email Address _____

Mailing Address _____

Website Address _____

Facebook Page _____

Home Phone _____

Cell Phone _____

Recent MFPE Voting Record(s) _____

Previous MFPE Endorsement(s) _____

Interview Team Members (Name, Local) _____
(absolutely no fewer than 3)

Date and Time of Interview _____

Recommendation _____
(Recommend – Not Recommend – No Recommendation)

MFPE

*NOTE: Member Interviewers will introduce themselves, their profession, and their local union affiliation.

- 1. What do you know about the Montana Federation of Public Employees?
- 2. Are you or have you ever been a member of a union? If so, what union?
- 3. Do you have family members that are union members and/or work in public service? If so, what unions and/or where do they work?

Legislative Priorities

- 4. Please list your top three legislative priorities: _____

State Employee Pay

Circle Response

- 5. Will you support the base pay increase MFPE negotiates with the governor? Yes No

By statute MFPE and the governor’s office bargain a base pay increase in public employee pay to be included in the governor’s proposed biennial budget. The legislature must ratify the negotiated agreement for it to become law. If ratified, the base pay increase accrues to all state and university employees, members and nonmembers alike.

Privatization

- 6. Do you support privatization of state programs and services? Yes No

MFPE opposes privatization of state programs and services.

- 6a. If YES, what state programs and services would you privatize?

Funding Public Services

- 7. Do you support maintaining inflationary increases in public school funding? Yes No

Pursuant to a supreme court decision upholding Article 10.1 of our state’s constitution, legislatures from 2005 and after have defined and attempted to create a formula for the funding of a basic system of free quality elementary and secondary public schools. One element of the formula requires the legislature to fund annual inflationary increases in state funding components for school districts.

MFPE supports the k-12 school funding formula the legislature has established over the last 16 years.

- 8. Do you support adequately funding government programs and services? Yes No

MFPE supports adequately funding government services including public education, health, and corrections. MFPE supports tax policy that raises enough revenue to fund the public services on which Montanans rely.

9. Will you oppose CI-121 to cap residential property taxes? Yes No

CI-121 imposes a residential property tax cap of 1% of total assessed value for all taxing jurisdictions. As witnessed in other states, the measure would drastically impact the ability of Montana public schools and local governments to adequately fund public services. MFPE, alongside the MT AFL-CIO, Montana Chamber of Commerce, Montana Farmers Bureau, Montana Farmer Union, Montana Association of Realtors, Montana Infrastructure Coalition, Montana League of Cities and Towns, and others, strongly opposes any tax policy that defunds public services and the employees who provide them.

Public Employee Defined Benefit Retirement Pension Plans

10. Do you support public employee defined benefit retirement pension plans? Yes No

The vast majority of public employees in Montana are in one of 8 defined benefit retirement plans that guarantee a pension for life and survivor benefits. MFPE supports Montana's public employee retirement pension plans. We will vigorously resist all legislative attempts to subvert or end those plans and push public employees into defined contribution plans such as 401ks.

Collective Bargaining

11. Do you support so-called "right to work" legislation that would (1) eliminate payroll deduction of union dues, (2) repeal exclusive representation, (3) repeal union membership authorization periods, (4) require periodic union recertification, or (5) otherwise restrict a worker's ability to join a union? Yes No

In June 2018, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that public employee unions could no longer charge non-members a fee for union services. But the court did not rule against payroll deduction of union dues, exclusive representation, union membership protocols, and certification. MFPE opposes all further attempts to interfere in or even destroy the union movement.

Postsecondary Education

12. Do you support increases in funding to our Montana University System and community colleges to provide quality, affordable postsecondary education and training for Montana resident students? Yes No

MFPE supports ongoing state funding increases for Montana's two- and four-year colleges and universities to assure that Montana's skilled labor force continues to grow without saddling our students with increasing debt.

Endorsement

13. How do you plan to win your race (including the primary, if applicable?)

14. If offered, will you accept an MFPE endorsement? Yes No

Final Comments

Upon completion of the interview, the interview team shall prepare ONE comprehensive report and submit it MFPE's Political Director, Lauren Caldwell, and Political Organizer, Sam Telling: lcaldwell@mfpe.org, stelling@mfpe.org.