

REVIEWED

My name is Geoff Stephenson, and I am a candidate for the Idaho House of Representatives, District 16.

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SECRETARY OF STATE  
STATE OF IDAHO

In total I have lived in Idaho for about 28 years, having spent some time living and going to school in other states. My family on both sides have been Idahoans well before Idaho was a state, since at least 1873. I have 4 children ages 13, 16, 18, and 20. I am divorced, but I hope you will not hold that against me. I am veteran of the 1991 Gulf War, having served in Saudi Arabia. I have also served in the Idaho, Utah, and Washington National Guard.

#### EDUCATION

Bachelor of Arts Film Studies University of Utah  
Bachelor of Arts Anthropology University of Utah  
Juris Doctor University of Idaho

#### ISSUES

1. Expungement - to provide an easy to follow procedure for non-violent offenders to have their criminal records sealed on a state and federal level. Many of our neighboring states have procedures in place that allow people who have made mistakes, but have repented and shown a track record of law-abiding behavior, to be forgiven by the state that charged them, and the federal government fully recognizes these laws, and seals the record at the federal level. This allows Idahoans to have a second chance at a better life.

2. Marijuana legalization - to eliminate the violent black market of the marijuana industry in Idaho, to prevent minors from obtaining marijuana, to regulate and tax the marijuana industry in Idaho, and to ensure the highest quality and variety of Idaho marijuana by keeping individual marijuana operations small and prohibiting monopolies. It is important that when we legalize marijuana, we do not replace one cartel with another. We should make it achievable for any Idaho entrepreneur to get into the business, not just wealthy corporations, in fact I believe we should discourage large monied interests from setting up shop in Idaho, in order to keep variety and quality at high levels. To that end, I have the following rough draft suggestions for Idaho's marijuana law:

Adults 21 and older may possess for personal use raw or processed marijuana in any amount and may cultivate up to five flowering plants at a time for their personal use. They cannot sell any amount, but can give away up to 1/4 ounce of flowers per day to any adult 21 and over.

One license, called a Marijuana License, allows production, processing, and sales, which can all take place at the same or different locations. License holders may sell any amount to other license holders, and up to one ounce of flowers, any amount of seeds, and (amount of processed marijuana) per day to adults 21 and over.

Marijuana License is personal, nontransferable, and you can only have one.

License holder is top level and cannot partner or have a business association with any other license holder, or any person other than a spouse. License holder must

pass a background check, cannot have felony conviction for violent crime or theft or fraud. License fee is low - \$200 annually. No capital requirements.

Employees of license holder must be registered (no fee) with the state, and are agents of the license holder.

Annual sales up to 1 million dollars taxed at 25% - over 1 million taxed at 92%.

Taxes paid go into the General Fund. (Large corporate interests will not take over Idaho as they will in other states.)

All marijuana produced by license holders must be organically grown and tested for quality and potency. The state (health? agriculture? which agency?) may inspect premises at any reasonable time to ensure sanitary conditions and compliance with this law, and may suspend license until problems are corrected, or revoke license if problems cannot be corrected.

Activities under the influence of marijuana which were illegal prior to this law remain illegal, e.g. driving a motor vehicle.

3. Standing firmly against conservative nonsense, which means keeping church and state as separate as possible, rejecting calls to take over federal public lands, and refusing to support laws which are so obviously unconstitutional on their face that Idaho taxpayers are expected to spend 2 million dollars a year defending them. More about this below.

4. Medicaid. It is unconscionable that Idaho lawmakers and the Governor have sacrificed Idahoan's lives in their fight against Obamacare. These Idahoans who have died have died in vain, because of a most callous failure to simply accept the 100% of funding for this expansion they could have received in the first years of the program, and which even now President Obama wants to extend through 2017 at least. Even at its most expensive to the state, this part of medicaid will be funded at 90%, and the 10% we would be responsible for would be much less than the money hospitals spend when this population cannot pay its emergency room visits. When the Federal government stops paying a full 100%, we can take the other 10% from the general fund, which will be overflowing with new tax revenue from the sale of marijuana, assuming my proposal to legalize this plant has been made law. Idahoans who fall into this gap and who will die without medical care may even consider committing criminal acts, to obtain in prison the health care which we deny to them while they remain good free citizens.

5. Education. No one I know is satisfied with the amount of money Idaho spends on education. This is a bipartisan issue, but the money simply has not been available. Legalizing and taxing marijuana at a rate of 25% on sales up to 1 million dollars and 92% on amounts over 1 million will fill the coffers of the general fund. I support bonuses to all teachers who do their job, which is to show measurable improvement in their student's knowledge and skills. I would support any effort to bring a Medical School to Idaho, which would bring more needed doctors to this state. Idaho High School graduates do not often see a path to a good career if they stay in Idaho, and we lose those with great talent and ambition to other, larger states with more economic opportunity. This is not an easy problem to fix, and

lawmakers should work together to propose all ideas that might help.

6. The relationship between the federal and state and local governments. The United States of America, the federal government, is the supreme sovereign of our republic. The Constitution we all claim to love makes that very clear. Our government is meant to be of the people, by the people, and for the people. This does not mean mob rule, where the majority decides what rights the people have. The government's first job is to provide for the protection of the people and their unalienable natural rights, such as the right to marry, and the right to free speech, and the right to bear arms.

We have a uniquely valuable and productive natural garden in Idaho, much of which is maintained by the taxes of every U.S. citizen. There is no good reason that I have seen to ask the federal government to give these public lands to the state. Making it easier to poison and pillage the land for private profit for a few is not even close to a good enough reason.

The state is wrong to hinder or pre-empt actions on local levels which local governments believe are good for their citizens, especially when that pre-emption is meant to keep wages cruelly low, or to frustrate any attempt to mitigate climate change or pollution. It is not a general rule, however, that the state should not use this power.

7. Teaching from the Bible in public schools. I strongly oppose any effort to teach any religious doctrine in our K-12 public schools, not just because we are certain to be sued if we do that, but because Idaho has a long and proud history of separation of church and state, which is a very good idea. I am a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and I love many religions, but we do not need to teach it in our schools. Comparative religion classes in public colleges should be supported, as we are teaching adults who want to learn, but again, teaching the Bible as history to K-12 students is a mistake of biblical proportions.

8. I am a strong supporter of the right to bear arms, and I support the new concealed carry law. However, I would also support laws requiring universal background checks on purchasers of guns, and on ammunition, which is illegal to own if you have committed crimes which have led to the loss of your 2nd Amendment rights. I support magazine capacity limits and bans on armor-piercing ammunition as well.

9. Idaho's part time legislature is too part-time. Our population is growing, the world around us is much more complex than it was, and the people of Idaho are getting very little value for the tiny window we allow for doing this vital work every year. At the very least, the timeframe for legislative business should be extended by 2 weeks, to allow enough time for consideration and debate of issues that should be addressed.

Thank you very much for reading my views on these issues, and please vote for me if you feel like I do.

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