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Page 1: Introduction

**Q1** Please provide your name.

Darryl S. Wilson

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**Q2** Why are you running for State Legislature?

I am running for State Legislature because I want to make a difference, bring common sense, bring fresh ideas, resolve party line conflicts, and make our community and State a better place for our children.

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**Q3** What do you believe is the most important issue related to growing business in Billings and what are your suggestions for addressing that issue?

I do not think our City and County governments are truly focused on improving infrastructure. There are too many islands within the City controlled by the County. The City continues to allow sprawling growth.

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**Q4** In the 2017 Legislative Session, local option authority was supported by the Billings Chamber, City of Billings, Big Sky Economic Development, Downtown Billings Partnership, and numerous other organizations across the state. Under what conditions would you vote for a local option authority bill?

I would vote to allow any local community the opportunity to vote on any type of tax it sees fit to improve their town. (This should not be addressed in Helena by State government as it is a local issue.)

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**Q5** Tax Increment Finance (TIF) districts are an important economic development tool for our community. How will you work to ensure one of local government's most useful funding mechanisms is preserved?

(TIFs) have done a lot to improve our community. They are probably one of many ways to encourage development in our changing neighborhoods. I would support keeping the current funding in place.

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## Legislative Candidate Questionnaire

**Q6** In 2016, Yellowstone County hoteliers remitted \$3.5 million in facility use taxes to the state. That year our regional Convention & Visitors Bureau, which markets and promotes our area as a travel destination, received \$350,000 (just 10%) from the state to market and promote tourism in our area. Will you work with the Billings Chamber and lodging partners to ensure more money is returned to the areas generating lodging tax revenue? (Y/N)

**Yes,**

You may provide additional context if appropriate.:

This a no brainer! I would support this but at least 80% revenue generated must be returned to the County for which the tax revenue was generated of that 80% returned. I would require at least 20-25% of that local tax be put back into local parks, trails, the visitor's center, local museums, Zoo Montana, etc.

**Q7** MSU Billings is an essential economic driver for our community and surrounding area. Not only does MSU Billings provide educational opportunity for Montanans, it also assists with workforce development, an increasingly important challenge facing our community. How will you help to ensure MSU Billings receives adequate funding for facility updates?

MSU-Billings needs to have discussion with our trade unions and local businesses to identify needs for an educated workforce, i.e., electricians, plumbers, nurses, etc. Then the universities need to devise a curriculum that educates and trains for these skills.

**Q8** The Billings Chamber, City of Billings, Big Sky Economic Development, Downtown Billings Partnership, and other community partners, are working with Hammes Co. on the development of One Big Sky Center, comprised of two development districts and anchored by a regional convention center. If a state funding source were identified and developed, under what conditions would you support the inclusion of state monies in the funding mix for a regional convention center in Billings?

The biggest problem I have with supporting One Big Sky Center is the proposed area identified which includes the medical corridor, which is already developed. The corridor should be downtown then east to the Metra between 1st Avenue North and 4th Avenue North.

**Q9** Sixteen percent of Billings workers are employed in the healthcare arena resulting in a total direct and indirect economic output of \$2.6 billion annually. Do you believe that cutting state reimbursement to hospitals, clinics and other healthcare providers is a way to address state budget shortfalls? (Y, N)

**No,**

You may provide additional context if appropriate.:

The problem with our healthcare is the (bureaucratic) paperwork, which needs to be streamlined. It does not matter how much funding is provided if this part is not corrected.

**Q10** Throughout the legislative interim and November 2017 Special Session the re-evaluation of Montana's funding mechanisms was a topic of discussion. What are your thoughts on the need to identify new revenue sources to address a shifting economy and our infrastructure needs?

The reappraisal that just happened in Yellowstone County increased most homeowner taxes by 20%. This is not the answer. We must look at a USER tax to provide additional revenue.

## Legislative Candidate Questionnaire

**Q11** Billings, and the greater Yellowstone County area, has the largest legislative delegation in the state and there is great potential to work together toward regional specific initiatives. How do you plan to work with all members of the Yellowstone County area delegation for the betterment of our business community during the 2019 Legislative Session?

I have spent the last 30 years in development, acquisition, appraisal, etc. The only way things happen is through negotiation and compromise to get things accomplished.

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Page 3: Finalizing Questionnaire

**Q12** If you have not sent the Billings Chamber a high-res image you would like us to use, please upload a photo here. **Respondent skipped this question**

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