

United States Congressional Candidate Questionnaire – District 5

Candidates who participated: Tom Palzewicz (D), Jennifer Vipond (R)

1. Do you believe the state of our free enterprise system is currently flourishing, on the right track, neutral, being threatened or declining?

Tom Palzewicz (D): Being threatened. When large corporations force cities and states to come up with large incentive packages using public funds, that is not free enterprise, it's crony capitalism. The 40-year incumbent in my district hasn't pushed back on this, and it's time for change. If governments are going to invest in economic development, they should be investing in small businesses & entrepreneurs who need help getting off the ground, not well established companies that seek subsidies to increase their profit margin.

Jennifer Vipond (R): Being threatened. We were on the right track after the tax cuts but the uncertainty surrounding the tariffs is threatening that improvement. Retaliatory tariffs are making our products less attractive to foreign markets at a time when China is poised to step in and fill the void. We risk losing important markets. By lowering prices to preserve a customer base we are essentially paying our own tariffs. This is not sustainable. This trade war is not the answer to trade deficits.

2. Do you believe that tax increases affect job creation? Why or why not?

Tom Palzewicz (D): Tax rates can potentially have an effect on job creation. Job creation is built off of shared resources, and these shared resources need to be paid for by the entities using them. Education, Infrastructure and Health Care are examples of shared resources. The key is to collaborate with all stakeholders and find the appropriate tax rates.

Jennifer Vipond (R): Yes. I have spoken to many business owners in the area who have expanded and/or increased their workforce with the savings brought about by the tax cuts. This is particularly true for small businesses. Increasing taxes results in restriction of this growth as businesses lose the capital they need to invest in expansion.

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3. Explain how your background will help you to be a successful elected official, representing a broad range of interests and competing demands.

Tom Palzewicz (D): My 6 years in the Navy & 4 on a submarine, 15 years in risk management for banks and 14 years as a small business owner helping other businesses grow has taught me servant leadership, economic understanding & the value of collaboration. I believe these are the skills needed to achieve bipartisan policies that benefit all businesses and residents.

Jennifer Vipond (R): Physicians are trained in evaluating data and weighing risk/benefits of every action. I have spent 27 years serving patients from all socioeconomic levels. From homeless families to Fortune 500 CEOs. I understand how economic success impacts our communities and how decisions that hurt our economy can have negative implications for generations.

4. Why should members of the Waukesha County Business Alliance vote for you?

Tom Palzewicz (D): As a member of the WCBA and facilitator for Leadership Waukesha, I feel uniquely positioned to understand the issues that regional businesses face. I'll work with everyone to find common ground and smart answers. I'm a pro-business Democrat, because we need thriving businesses, smart environmental policies, and stronger wage growth.

Jennifer Vipond (R): I will energetically represent their interests and will work to develop solutions that will benefit Waukesha County. I have close ties within the community and have a vested interest in maintaining a strong business climate so that the families of Waukesha County can thrive. We need strong businesses to give people the opportunity to succeed.

5. What is one thing that you believe government either does well, or has improved upon?

Tom Palzewicz (D): Municipalities continue to maintain infrastructure despite shrinking local control & less resources. Our schools are adapting to sustain the quality of education as technology rapidly evolves & our fire and police keep protecting us all. We need our federal gov. to have better priorities while improving organization and lowering bureaucratic costs.

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Jennifer Vipond (R): The K-12 education system in Waukesha County is very good. The school districts are good at responding to the changing needs of the community. Our government also does a good job of taking care of our elderly through social security and Medicare. Both of these programs need tweaking but overall they protect an otherwise vulnerable population.

6. What would you do to control rising health care costs? Be specific.

Tom Palzewicz (D): Universal coverage is the first step to drive down healthcare costs. Uncoupling coverage from employment is key to increased entrepreneurship & job mobility. A more proactive model and more accountability will bring America's healthcare costs more in line with other developed countries and lower the cost impact of our aging population.

Jennifer Vipond (R): By partnering payers and providers we can make treatment protocols that offer the best outcomes at the lowest price. With payment bundling, expanded HSAs and price transparency we can cut overuse, inefficient care and excess administrative costs. Population health models in Community Centers reduce cost by over 25%. This is a primary focus.

7. What role should the education system play on preparing students for the workforce?

Tom Palzewicz (D): Education is one of the most important services that our government provides and ensures that everyone in our society has an opportunity to reach their full potential. Not every child is best suited for a four-year institution and our education system should take into account every potential career path including entrepreneurship and the trades.

Jennifer Vipond (R): We have a shortage of skilled workers and a surplus of high school graduates without future plans. I have met with many area school superintendents to analyze our dual enrollment programs and to explore what can be done at a federal level to promote these programs. Expanding workforce development in the schools is a primary goal of my campaign.

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8. What role should the federal government play in maintaining and developing transportation infrastructure in the United States?

Tom Palzewicz (D): Robust commerce is predicated on its ability to utilize a well-funded & evolving transportation infrastructure. As an essential component to economic development, this system requires a national, cooperative mechanism like our government for oversight & organization as well as for sharing the cost among all who benefit from it as a shared resource.

Jennifer Vipond (R): The federal government needs to fund the Highway Trust Fund in order to guarantee sustainable funding for long term projects. Federal permitting processes should be streamlined. Raising the cap on the Passenger Facility Charge will fund airport improvements. The US Army Corps of Engineers should be given contract authority for projects.

9. What immigration reforms, if any, would you support?

Tom Palzewicz (D): Many businesses in our region rely on consistent immigration for labor. Fixing our outdated immigration system, while protecting the dignity and rights of migrants, can be accomplished. I support reinstating DACA and providing immigrants within our country an easier path to citizenship and I oppose any policy that separates children from families.

Jennifer Vipond (R): The primary immigration issue affecting District 5 at this time is the lack of year-round agricultural visas for our dairy workers therefore I support the extension of the H2-A visas. Also improved border security, expedited asylum processing avoiding separation of families, and a pathway to green card for DACA with limited family migration.