

Wisconsin State Assembly Candidate Questionnaire - Districts 13 & 22

Candidates who participated:

13th Assembly District: Rob Hutton (R)

22nd Assembly District: Janel Brandtjen (R), Aaron Matteson (D)

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

13th Assembly District:

Rob Hutton (R): Flourishing. We are seeing historic private employment and the largest work force in our state's history. We need to continue to build on this momentum with additional tax reform and regulatory relief.

22nd Assembly District:

Janel Brandtjen (R): On the right track.

Aaron Matteson (D): Declining. The enormous and increasing wealth and education gap is not sustainable.

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

13th Assembly District:

Rob Hutton (R): Yes. Anytime we take money out of the private sector we reduce the investments being made in private sector innovation and expansion. Both of which lead to job creation.

22nd Assembly District:

Janel Brandtjen (R): Tax increases certainly affect job creation, when businesses make less, they cannot expand.

Aaron Matteson (D): Yes. If we don't fund those items that are necessary for business, they will go elsewhere and startups will not occur. E.G. transportation, skilled and educated laborers, a clean environment for employees etc.

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

13th Assembly District:

Rob Hutton (R): As a private sector business owner, I've lived and lead in the free enterprise system. My perspective as a job creator serves as my foundation for the reforms I've lead on in Madison to insure we give employers in Wisconsin a basis to succeed. This also attracts employers from outside Wisconsin, even those with the likes of Foxconn.

22nd District Assembly:

Janel Brandtjen (R): Business owner in the district 20 years, proud to have made it the last 8 years!

Aaron Matteson (D): I have over 25 years of executive experience in Finance and Accounting. I've lead several major acquisitions requiring extensive analyses. I've led Finance and Accounting departments all of my career. My work has required high level people and technical skills at which I've excelled. I have advanced degrees in Accounting, Finance and Economics.

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

13th Assembly District:

Rob Hutton (R): With my leadership in Madison WCBA has an ally for your members, many of whom are fellow business owners. I represent the needs and concerns for the business community WCBA advocates for.

22nd Assembly District:

Janel Brandtjen (R): I am committed to free markets, low taxes and strong public safety in our community.

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Aaron Matteson (D): I can bring a vast array of business experiences as well as advanced negotiating skills in my first elected office. Combining business, analytical and teaching experience has rounded me

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

13th Assembly District:

Rob Hutton (R): In Wisconsin government has reformed its approach to serving the tax payers. 10 years ago state government was an adversary of business and economic development. Today our state agencies are a willing adviser in the economic development success of our state. There is no better example of that than WEDC's role with Foxconn.

22nd Assembly District:

Janel Brandtjen (R): Does well? Improved? You know I'm a republican, right?

Aaron Matteson (D): Research. In the fields of medicine, finance, technology and many others, government funded research is performed better in the U.S. than any other country.

6. Do you support the intent and subsequent results of Act 10, which passed through the legislature in 2011?

13th Assembly District:

Rob Hutton (R): Yes

22nd Assembly District:

Janel Brandtjen (R): Yes

Aaron Matteson (D): Do not know. This is not a "Yes or No" question. The Menomonee Falls High School has saved money for the Village, retained a superior staff and met or exceeded outcomes standards. However, on a State level, we have a teacher shortage and some of the most needy schools are in jeopardy. If this ends up wasting young talent, then we will have negative outcomes.

7. Wisconsin is facing a major funding shortfall for transportation infrastructure. What are your ideas to address this issue to ensure that Wisconsin's infrastructure is maintained and we can show that the state is "open for business?"

13th Assembly District:

Rob Hutton (R): Wisconsin has made significant investments in our state highways the past 5 years. The completion of the Marquette and Zoo interchange are two prime examples. Investments in infrastructure should continue to be a priority to insure our state can support the logistics needs of our employment community statewide.

22nd Assembly District:

Janel Brandtjen (R): With the increases in growth and development in the state we should be able to balance the budget and properly fund transportation.

Aaron Matteson (D): Base the funding on usage. Or, more accurately, on causation of wear-and-tear. This can be done with gas taxes, wheel taxes and licensing. A free market demands that all costs are included in the costs of all products. If this is not the case, we are subsidizing (picking and choosing) business winners.

8. If elected, what are the top 3 priorities you will have in Madison? Be specific.

13th Assembly District:

Rob Hutton (R): Corporate and Individual tax reform. Workforce development. Emphasis on skilled trades. Criminal justice reform to insure we have safe communities for residents and employers.

22nd Assembly District:

Janel Brandtjen (R): Get rid of Minimum Markup Laws, Re-Instute High Risk Pool Insurance - to cut insurance costs, Mandatory Sentence Laws, and Pro-Life agenda

Aaron Matteson (D): Education. Affordable and quality education through post-secondary schools. This is not an expense it is an investment. Clean environment. This is key to Wisconsin's economy and an attraction to business. Startups. We cannot force the same wage requirements and regulations on very small businesses that we do on large ones.

9. What will you do, specifically, to encourage and support economic development in this district and around the state?

13th Assembly District:

Rob Hutton (R): As Wisconsin continues to address our current tax burden and invest in our available workforce we will continue to retain and attract employers who want to expand and move to Wisconsin. I will be working on legislation for both of those areas to introduce next session. We also need to expand our tax credits for early investors for startups.

22nd Assembly District

Janel Brandtjen (R): Cut Corporate taxes

Aaron Matteson (D): Educate all residents to the extent of their capabilities to create a skilled labor pool. Court high technology companies to hire them. Coordinate with regional states instead of playing off of each other. Reduce regulations on small companies and startups. Take full advantage of our university outreach to understand and remove impediments.

10. Knowing that many out-of-state residents who receive higher education in Wisconsin leave, what can the state do better to keep, and employ, those individuals after graduation?

13th Assembly District:

Rob Hutton (R): Wisconsin is going from brain drain state to a brain gain state. Developments in many industries from high tech (Foxconn) to the mining industry in northern Wisconsin are providing real career paths for our young people. With those opportunities we are seeing more young people stay and come back to Wisconsin to work and raise their families.

22nd Assembly District:

Janel Brandtjen (R): Reduce red tape, cut taxes and create an environment where businesses are attracted to WI

Aaron Matteson (D): Research the reasons. These people are accessible. Formulate a solution that is State-wide. Implement it quickly and objectively. There is no one answer. Wages are part of it, but there are undoubtedly cultural drivers as well.

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11. What policies would you pursue, if any, to ensure that our education institutions continue to meet the needs of our state?

13th Assembly District:

Rob Hutton (R): We need to continue reforming and investing on our K-12 and Secondary Education system. Investments in programs like Fast Forward are introducing young people to Wisconsin industries. We need to continue to streamline our education system to get young people into the job market sooner, and with less student debt. I support three year degrees.

22nd Assembly District:

Janel Brandtjen (R): Education in the next 10 years will be dramatically different. If the schools don't keep up, they will be replaced with certification process. The free market will determine what schools keep up and what schools, fold into other programs.

Aaron Matteson (D): The laws that set the requirements for school programs have not been changed since the 1980's. This needs to be addressed immediately by the Department of Public Instruction and The Legislature with outcomes, not re-elections, in mind.

12. What specifically would you do to increase the labor participation rate among able-bodied adults in the state?

13th Assembly District:

Rob Hutton (R): With 150,000+ job openings in Wisconsin all able bodied adults should be working. We passed important welfare reform last session to require more working hours for those receiving assistance, along with additional job training to prepare them for the job market. Monitoring and modifying those reforms to insure their success will be critical.

22nd Assembly District:

Janel Brandtjen (R): I co-authored 8 Welfare reform bills, I am committed to creating paths for economic change.

Aaron Matteson (D): If an able-bodied person is not in school they probably should be working. If day care makes it uneconomical to work, we should help those affected by subsidizing quality child care.

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13. What is your opinion on the performance of the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) and do you support economic incentives such as tax credits to assist business expansion within the state?

13th Assembly District:

Rob Hutton (R): As a current WEDC board member I will avoid any potential conflict by not commenting on this question. I trust you will find that appropriate.

22nd Assembly District:

Janel Brandtjen (R): Mixed, WEDC certainly played a role in helping manage the Foxconn deal, but I do have long concerns about how much growth and power they should have in the future.

Aaron Matteson (D): WEDC is a great idea that has not been executed flawlessly. Several initiatives were okayed and not followed up upon causing highly visible failures. This needs people with business acumen and, specifically, acquisition type of skills.