

ELECTIONS 2012

Keys to the Candidates: Indiana General Assembly

League of Women Voters of Bloomington-Monroe County

October 4, 2012

SENATE DISTRICT 40

Mark Stoops, D

Reid Dallas, R, no reply

What are your qualifications for the office you are seeking?

STOOPS: Four years as Monroe County Commissioner and current president, eight years on the County Council. Proven voting record pursuing progressive initiatives and getting results — ElectMarkStoops.com.

Do you support Indiana's participation in the federal Affordable Health Care Act?

STOOPS: Absolutely yes. Currently Indiana only provides coverage for people up to 28% of the poverty level, which means everyone from 29% to 100% of the poverty level gets no healthcare coverage at all. This is a dismal record for our state and results in over one billion [dollars](#) in uninsured expense to taxpayers every year. Expanded Medicaid would allow us to provide quality healthcare to our citizens with incomes up to 138% of the poverty level (\$32,000 for a family of four). For residents with higher incomes the ACA provides a sliding scale reimbursement for the cost of health insurance.

How would you support public schools and higher education?

STOOPS: Cuts of over \$600 million to school budgets have resulted in fewer teachers and much larger class sizes. The state is now planning on grading schools A-F, on a curve. This means 1/3 of schools will automatically fail and be subject to state sanctioned take-over by private corporations, with very little oversight. Every year more schools will be placed in the lower end of the curve. Other legislation creates a "teacher mill", a private firm to provide inexpensive teachers for the private operators. We must reverse this legislation, restore [funding](#) for more teachers/lower class sizes. Also, vote for Glenda Ritz, Ritz4ed.com

HOUSE DISTRICT 46

Jim Mann II, D

Bob Heaton, R (no reply)

What are your qualifications for the office you are seeking?

MANN: As a government teacher, union representative, and baseball umpire, I have learned the importance of listening to people to find their needs and act accordingly.

Do you support Indiana's participation in the federal Affordable Health Care Act?

MANN: The John Gregg-Vi Simpson idea to create a hybrid health care exchange is an appropriate option to this issue. There is merit in permitting dependents to remain on their parents' insurance program until age 26. Also, insured Hoosiers will have access to regular care from their doctors which should reduce the number of people visiting hospital emergency rooms. I am concerned about the [financial](#) impact on small business owners.

How would you support public schools and higher education?

MANN: We need to allow for our teachers to teach and students to learn! The graduation rate of Edgewood High School was as high as 95% before experiencing funding cuts made by the Indiana Legislature and the governor. We must allow local school leaders to determine the most effective way to educate our children. Also, I support funding full-day kindergarten. One way to help higher education is to establish firm and constant plans and not change them throughout the implementation period.

HOUSE DISTRICT 60

Peggy Welch, D

Peggy Mayfield, R, no reply

What are your qualifications for the office you are seeking?

WELCH: State Representative: Ways and Means, Health, State Budget Committees. Practicing cancer nurse, IU Health Bloomington. College degrees in education and nursing. peggywelch.com for more information.

Do you support Indiana's participation in the federal Affordable Care Act?

WELCH: I support a program that: provides for cost-effective solutions to expand health insurance coverage for our approximately 900,000 uninsured Hoosiers; retains and attracts healthcare providers; includes personal responsibility in healthcare choices; and most importantly, improves healthcare outcomes for Hoosiers. There are many unanswered questions about ACA that are affecting Indiana's ability to make decisions regarding Medicaid expansion, type of healthcare exchange, and benefits to be included in insurance plans. [Cost](#) of implementation and operation will factor into decisions. Also, there are expected changes to ACA in the 2013 Congress.

How would you support public schools and higher education?

WELCH: My goal has been to create an environment in which students and teachers can be successful. I believe every child can learn and teachers are professionals. Equal resources for students must be provided to each school corporation. Varied educational tracks need to be offered to best serve the students' futures. High-stake tests need to be de-emphasized. Professional development should be restored. A preschool policy must be adopted and supported. Indiana needs to support quality and varied missions and appropriate adequate resources for our higher education institutions. I'm concerned Indiana is headed down a path of mediocrity to achieve standardized performance.

HOUSE DISTRICT 62

Jeff Sparks, D

Matthew Ubelhor, R, no reply.

What are your qualifications for the office you are seeking?

SPARKS: I have over 30 years public education experience. Twenty plus in Vocational Agriculture and 12 as a school principal. I also have taught graduate courses in Education since 1993.

Do you support Indiana's participation in the federal Affordable Care Act?

SPARKS: I do support the federal Affordable Health Care Plan. As a school administrator, I see daily the need of our children's access to quality, affordable healthcare. The financial burden of the uninsured is already being passed on

to the insured and those able to pay. I think every Hoosier should be concerned about the health and well-being of our children.

How would you support public schools and higher education?

SPARKS: I would fight for public monies going only to public schools. I would ask that every public school student in Indiana receive the same financial support from the state, regardless of their school, community or status. I would work to restore the respect and dignity of our public schools and teachers. And every Indiana student should be able to pursue their future through an expanded, balanced curriculum, not a test!