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Respondent

1 Anonymous

24:32

Time to complete

1. Name & office you are seeking *

Ellie Boldman

- 2. The 2023 Legislature passed several bills to encourage housing development by revising land use laws (subdivision), reducing regulatory barriers, and streamlining processes.
 - SB 382 – Montana Land Use Planning Act.
 - SB 131 – Revise exempt subdivision review timelines.
 - HB 211 – Revise local subdivision review process.

What are your opinions of the legislation listed? What specific policy changes would you recommend/support to further encourage housing development in our community? *

This is my second session being appointed to the Governor's Housing Task Force. Housing development in rural, urban, and Tribal Montana is my #1 priority. I voted for all three of the above land use policy bills, and I was a co-sponsor of SB382, the Land Use Planning Act. We accomplished a lot last session but there is a lot more to do.

- 3. Missoula is an employment anchor in western Montana, but a quarter of Missoula’s workforce lives outside Missoula County. The 2019 Missoula County Housing Action Plan states, “Underlying high housing costs is an undersupply of around 2,400 housing units in Missoula County”.

What specific policies would you pursue to address the community’s workforce housing deficit and ongoing needs? *

The City of Missoula has not done enough address the regulatory barriers delaying private sector efforts to build housing. There zoning reform efforts have not been implemented quickly enough and I believe they are ignoring some of the mandates of the 2023 legislative session. There will be both carrot and stick solutions by lawmakers to remedy this. We also must address property taxes, which is the elephant in the room for overall housing and infrastructure needs.

- 4. During past few years as home prices have soared, rental rates have seen a similar trend. Locally some people have voiced concerns that short-term rentals are reducing available rental units and increasing rental rates.

What is your opinion on short-term rental regulation? *

I totally oppose the notion that short term rentals are the ills to our housing shortages. The evidence simply doesn't show that they are the substantive problem. I strongly believe that Montanans have individual property rights that allow for them freedom to benefit from short term rentals.

5. Montana policymakers must address the disconnect between growth in our communities and inadequate infrastructure.

What legislative changes would you support or propose to help communities invest in infrastructure to keep up with the demands of growing local economies and populations? *

Local option sales tax for tourist services (rental cars, etc.)

6. Property taxes are the primary funding source for local government services and infrastructure and help to fund public services, infrastructure, and education. Increasing mill levies and increasing property value assessments have left many property owners demanding relief.

What policies would you support to provide permanent property tax relief to Montana homeowners? *

The Governor and Republican legislators ignored a November 2022 warning from the governor's Montana Revenue Department that if lawmakers didn't reduce the residential property tax rate of 1.35 percent to 0.94 percent that state residential property tax revenue would skyrocket because of the \$60-billion increase in residential valuation determined in the state's two-year reappraisal cycle. The failure to cut the residential property tax rate and other action taken by Republican lawmakers also resulted in a huge SHIFT in property taxes from large corporations and businesses onto the backs of homeowners, renters and small businesses. A very simple bill, amending one section of law to lower the tax rate on homes, would have eliminated – and can eliminate in the future -- this \$267.7-million-a-year homeowner tax increase. For decades, Democrats and Republicans worked together to pass legislation to make huge residential valuations "revenue neutral" – meaning that homeowners, renters and small businesses wouldn't get smacked with huge state residential property tax increases like they did in 2023. Lowering the residential tax rate also brings Montana property taxes into compliance with the Montana constitution's "equalization" requirement for property taxes. Mont. Constit. Art. VIII, § 3.

7. State Law provides for tax increment financing (TIF) and urban renewal districts. TIF is used within urban renewal districts to combat blight and promote economic development. However, critics of TIF say that these urban renewal districts can be in place for many years, and TIF diverts property tax revenue away from schools and county governments.

What is your opinion of TIF? What changes to TIF statutes would you recommend, if any? *

I support TIF districts. They are essential to economic development in Montana.

8. One in five homes in Montana is serviced by an onsite septic system. If properly installed and maintained, septic systems are a safe and cost-effective means of waste disposal for homeowners and businesses. Some regulations on septic systems are enforced by local health departments, and enforcement is inconsistent. For instance, how bedrooms are counted to determine what size of system is necessary and how nonconforming systems are handled varies.

Will you support legislation that brings greater consistency to the enforcement of regulations on existing septic systems? *

Absolutely.

9. Housing development outside of areas with access to municipal water systems frequently rely on exempt appropriations statutes for water supply.

What are your thoughts on current statutes? What, if any, changes would you support? *

I support all efforts to assist developers in access to existing infrastructure and municipal water systems.

10. **Do you support Montana's existing code regarding exemptions on discrimination in housing (49-2-305)? ***

I believe the statute is consistent with federal discrimination in housing language and I am unaware if it is not.

11. REALTORS® believe that private property rights are fundamental to our free-market system and are a cornerstone upon which this nation was founded. Our United States and Montana Constitutions recognize and protect the right to own property. A strong economy depends upon preserving the right to freely own, use, and transfer real property.

If elected, what approach will you take to balancing private property rights with public interests? *

100% percent stand with private property owners.

12. Treasurer's Name, Address and Phone Number *

Ellie Boldman, 1125 Helen Avenue, Missoula, MT 59801 / 406-218-9608

13. Will you accept PAC contributions? *

Yes

No

Thank you!

We appreciate you taking the time to complete our survey so that we might better understand your position on key issues facing our community. The committee will be evaluating surveys received and responding within a few weeks regarding next steps.