



Texans for Fiscal Responsibility 2020 Congressional Questionnaire

INTRODUCTION

Texans for Fiscal Responsibility will make congressional endorsements during the 2018 primary and general elections. We do not always endorse a candidate in every race where one is sought.

*To be considered for an endorsement, candidates must apply for an interview by submitting a completed questionnaire by **Friday, December 13**. Interviews may be scheduled upon receipt of a completed questionnaire.*

Please send as one PDF file. See the signature page for instructions.

Our endorsement of a candidate is based on our belief that the candidate will adhere to the best practices and highest principles of ethics, limited government, and stewardship of the taxpayers' resources.

Our endorsement of any particular candidate does not represent a criticism of any other candidate in the race. Men and women of goodwill can – and often will – disagree on the solutions to the issues facing Texas; that debate is healthy and necessary in a constitutional republic.

Political races are important because they affect and influence public policy. We pursue policy outcomes that are practical in the context of protecting taxpayers, stewarding the people's resources, limiting the size and scope of government, promoting individual liberty, encouraging freedom in the marketplace, and meeting public needs with greater efficiency, transparency, and accountability.

We welcome your comments, questions and thoughts on these and other issues. Additional pages – although optional – are welcome and may be attached to the document.

Topics covered in the questionnaire:

- Budget and Tax Reform
 - Corporate Welfare
 - Election Integrity
 - First Amendment Protections
 - K–12 Education
 - Pro-Citizen Ethics Reform
 - Free Markets
 - Property Rights
 - Government Operation
 - State Sovereignty
 - Role of Government
 - Leadership
-

Budget & Tax Reform

1. When is it appropriate to raise taxes or fees? Explain.

2. To control government spending at the federal level, Congress should recommend a constitutional amendment to the states for ratification that would require a balanced budget.

Agree: _____ Disagree: _____

Clarifying/related issues.

Should such a requirement only be exceeded by a 3/4 super-majority, recorded vote of both chambers of Congress, approved by the President?

Yes: _____ No: _____

3. Under what circumstances would you support increasing the debt limit?

4. How can the congressional budget process be reformed to ensure that Congress adopts a budget every two years?

5. What federal programs, commissions, or agencies should be cut or eliminated? If you cannot name one, please explain why.

Initials: _____

6. Will you oppose every effort to increase the **overall** tax burden?

Yes: _____ No: _____

7. Would you support or oppose a constitutional amendment to require a three-fourths vote of Congress before taxes could be raised?

Support: _____ Oppose: _____

8. Congress should remove the current progressive tax structure that penalizes income and replace it with a flat tax in which all Americans pay the same rate.

Agree: _____ Disagree: _____

9. The income tax is a uniquely harmful form of taxation and should be abolished entirely.

Agree: _____ Disagree: _____

Clarifying/related issues.

A. If you agree, how can that be accomplished?

B. If you disagree, why?

10. "Fees" that generate more revenue than is required to administer their related programs are, in fact, taxes. Such fees should be lowered or abolished.

Agree: _____ Disagree: _____

Corporate Welfare

11. What is the role of the federal government when it comes to facilitating economic development?

Initials: _____

12. Under the Commerce Clause, should Congress prohibit states from paying individual businesses to relocate across state lines, as has been done at the international level for decades through treaty?

13. The Export-Import bank is a type of corporate welfare and should be abolished.

Agree: _____ Disagree: _____

14. Some have proposed expanding regulated gambling, claiming it will generate new revenue for government. Others note that states with greater levels of legalized gambling often have higher costs of government, and that expanded gambling leads to collusion between the government and gambling interests. Do you support or oppose expanding regulated gambling in Texas and/or across the United States?

Support: _____ Oppose: _____

Election Integrity

15. The Voting Rights Act is a political tool used by Democrats to promote their partisan interests.

Agree: _____ Disagree: _____

16. What role should the federal government play in conducting elections?

First Amendment Protections

17. In recent years, election regulation agencies around the nation have been weaponized and used by the political establishment to suppress the free speech and political participation rights of citizens. What can be done to end this problem?

18. Elected officials should be required to disclose every gift, over a nominal amount, they receive. This would serve as a more effective regulation of the practice of lobbying than any existing system.

Agree: _____ Disagree: _____

K-12 Education Reform

19. What role should the federal government play in K-12 education? Can the federal government do anything to improve educational choice?

20. I believe a lack of funding from the federal government is the primary reason for lower educational outcomes compared to other nations.

Agree: _____ Disagree: _____

Pro-Citizen Ethics Reform

21. Some attorneys who serve in public office make money on the side through legal referral fees and through fees earned as counsel for the issuance of government bonds. Allowing public officials to earn these types of fees has been a recipe for bribery scandals and should be prohibited in Congress.

Agree: _____ Disagree: _____

22. What other ways can Congress strengthen its ethics laws so that lawmakers are held to a higher standard and citizens can have faith in their government?

Initials: _____

Promoting Free Markets

23. What are some residual or oppressive regulations imposed at the federal level you believe should be repealed?

24. Governmental regulations are often duplicative, useless rules that, while advanced with good intentions, result in tremendous costs for businesses and consumers. Congress should actively look to limit new regulations from being promulgated and thoroughly review existing regulations for opportunities to repeal them.

Agree: _____ Disagree: _____

Property Rights

25. What entities should be allowed to use eminent domain? For what purposes?

26. Civil asset forfeiture was developed with the intent of disrupting illicit activity by removing valuable assets from criminals, but has been perverted into a revenue stream for some law enforcement agencies. Congress should require a criminal conviction before citizens' property can be permanently seized.

Agree: _____ Disagree: _____

Government Operation

27. What changes, if any, should be made to the Americans with Disabilities Act?

Initials: _____

28. The current defined-benefit format of many government employee pensions is proving unsustainable. Would you support or oppose a transition of public employee pensions to a defined contribution formula?

Support: _____ Oppose: _____

29. The federal minimum wage should be abolished.

Agree: _____ Disagree: _____

30. The federal government currently owns nearly 50% of the land in the United States. In light of this fact, would you support or oppose efforts to sell federal lands to private citizens or return them to the states?

Support: _____ Oppose: _____

31. What changes, if any, should be made to federal policy regarding legal immigration?

32. What policies should be implemented to secure our borders and prevent illegal immigration?

33. Do you support or oppose President Trump's plan to build a wall on the southern border?

Support: _____ Oppose: _____

Initials: _____

34. What changes should be made to United States trade policy?

35. An increase in tariffs is a tax increase.

Agree: _____ Disagree: _____

State Sovereignty

36. Mandates from Washington, DC, drive the Texas state budget, particularly through Medicaid and other health care spending. What efforts will you support to bring about greater state and individual control in health care decision-making?

37. "Local control" is a policy-making tool, and not an over-arching conservative principle.

Agree: _____ Disagree: _____

38. What should Congress do to compel local and state governments to comply with federal laws, such as laws relating to immigration?

39. Do you support or oppose an Article V Convention of States in order to propose constitutional amendments that would rein-in the federal government?

Support: _____ Oppose: _____

Role of Government

Initials: _____

40. Would you support or oppose a federal right-to-work law?

Support: _____ Oppose: _____

41. Would you support or oppose the full repeal of all provisions of ObamaCare?

Support: _____ Oppose: _____

42. What, specifically, will you do to ensure that a vote on full repeal is held in the U.S. House?

43. What can be done to increase competition and provide free market reforms for our healthcare system?

44. What are some plausible ways to reduce dependency on federal welfare programs and reform social security?

45. Entities funded by federal tax dollars should be prohibited from spending tax funds to employ lobbyists.

Agree: _____ Disagree: _____

46. Man-made climate change is a manufactured crisis used by the federal government and others to manipulate the economy and subsidize “renewable energy” companies.

Initials: _____

Agree: _____

Disagree: _____

47. What role should the federal government play in environmental policy?

48. What should be the primary purpose of US foreign policy?

49. Many conservatives believe that the federal government has taken a large degree of power the Constitution reserves to the states for its own. What can be done to decrease the power of the federal government and remit control to the states?

50. Do you support or oppose legislation aimed at reducing the power of the Executive Branch and returning authority to Congress such as the REINS Act?

Support: _____

Oppose: _____

51. Congress should impeach activist judges who abuse their authority to rewrite laws they do not favor.

Agree: _____

Disagree: _____

52. In addition to impeachment, what can congress do to rein-in abuse of power by the federal judiciary?

Legislative Leadership

53. Despite conservative activists working to elect more Republicans to Congress over the past decade, Congress has done little to actually enact many of the promises they made on the campaign trail. What will you do to ensure that Republican leadership actively pursues Republican reforms while the party controls Congress?

54. What criteria will you use in selecting the Majority/Minority Leader and Speaker of the House for the next Congress?

55. What criteria should citizens use to evaluate whether Congress did its job and/or you should be re-elected?

Initials: _____

Please **sign** the completed questionnaire and return all pages as quickly as possible to be considered for an endorsement interview. **Note:** We will use this information to contact you to schedule an interview should you be selected. Please verify all fields are correct.

Please Print

Full Name:	Phone:	District #:							
Campaign Address:									
Email:									
Website:									
General Consultant:	Campaign Manager:								
Voting History (circle all that apply):									
GOP Primary:	2016	2014	2012	2010	2008	2006	2004	2002	2000
DEM Primary:	2016	2014	2012	2010	2008	2006	2004	2002	2000
General:	2016	2014	2012	2010	2008	2006	2004	2002	2000

Signature of Candidate

Date

*Note: Please submit one PDF file no later than **Friday, December 13** to be considered for an endorsement. (Multiple images or files will not be accepted.)*

The completed questionnaire may be sent to us at:

endorsement@empowertexans.com