NORTHERN MICHIGAN CHAMBER ALLIANCE

Elevating & advancing local business.

2026 Northern Michigan Chamber Alliance Candidate Questionnaire

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1. **Purpose and Responsibility**
   Why are you seeking this office, and how would you define the responsibility of the office to the people of northern Michigan and the Upper Peninsula?

   I am seeking this office because I believe the people of the Upper Peninsula deserve a strong voice in Lansing, someone who understands our communities, our challenges, and our opportunities. As a healthcare provider, I've seen firsthand how state policy affects people's daily lives, from access to healthcare and childcare to the strength of our workforce and local economy. I am running to ensure that the concerns of our region are heard and addressed.

   The responsibility of a State Representative is to be an effective advocate for the people they serve. That means listening to constituents, working across differences to find practical solutions, and ensuring that state government is responsive to the unique needs of my district. Our communities face unique challenges, including workforce shortages, aging infrastructure, housing availability, access to healthcare, and the need for reliable transportation and broadband connectivity. My goal is to help build a future where people can find good-paying jobs, start and grow businesses, raise families, and remain in the communities they love.

   Above all, I view this role as one of service. The people of this district deserve someone who will represent their interests with integrity, transparency, and a commitment to improving the quality of life throughout the Upper Peninsula.

2. **Jobs, Investment, and Competitiveness**
   What specific policies would you support or develop if elected, to ensure northern Michigan and the Upper Peninsula can compete for jobs, investment, infrastructure, and other state and federal resources?

   Our areas have unique advantages, including a strong work ethic, outdoor recreation, and communities that people want to call home. To compete for jobs and investment, we must address the barriers that hold our region back. I support continued investment in critical infrastructure, including roads, bridges, ports, water systems, broadband, and reliable

energy infrastructure. Broadband expansion remains especially important for rural communities, businesses, healthcare providers, and students.

Workforce shortages are another major challenge. I support strengthening partnerships between employers, educational institutions, and workforce development organizations to align training programs with regional economic needs. We should also ensure that rural communities receive their fair share of state and federal economic development resources and have the capacity to compete for grants and investments.

I also believe we must support key industries that drive our regional economy, including small businesses, manufacturing, healthcare, tourism, agriculture, forestry, and emerging energy sectors. Economic development efforts should focus on creating sustainable, family-supporting jobs that help people build long-term careers in our communities.

3. **Housing and Regional Partnerships**
   NMCA's policy framework calls for housing solutions and regional partnerships to address the region's critical housing shortage. What policies or ideas do you have in which you can partner with the Alliance to make a positive impact?

   Housing availability has become one of the biggest barriers to economic growth in Northern Michigan and the Upper Peninsula. I support expanding tools that help communities increase housing supply, including workforce housing, attainable homeownership opportunities, and rental housing. I am interested in working with the Northern Michigan Chamber Alliance, local governments, developers, employers, and nonprofit partners to identify barriers to housing development and create practical solutions that fit local needs.

   Regional partnerships are essential because housing challenges do not stop at municipal boundaries. I believe the state should continue supporting regional planning efforts and provide communities with greater flexibility and technical assistance to pursue housing projects that meet workforce demands while preserving community character.

4. **Workforce Development and Talent Attraction**
   What are your views on programs such as Going PRO, Michigan Reconnect, and talent attraction programs? What would you do to help attract, retain, train, and grow the workforce needed by northern Michigan and Upper Peninsula employers?

   Programs such as Going PRO Talent Fund and Michigan Reconnect have demonstrated real value by helping workers gain skills and employers fill critical workforce gaps. I support continued investment in these programs.

   To attract and retain talent, we must address the issues people consistently identify when deciding where to live and work: housing, childcare, healthcare access, quality schools, infrastructure, and economic opportunity. Talent attraction cannot be separated from community development.

I also support expanding apprenticeship programs, career and technical education, internship opportunities, and partnerships between employers and educational institutions. We should create more pathways that allow young people to build successful careers without leaving the region while also attracting new workers and families to our communities.

5. **Childcare Access**
   Please describe your view of the need for childcare in the region, and what would you do to enhance access to this resource?

   Childcare is both a workforce issue and a quality-of-life issue. Across Northern Michigan and the Upper Peninsula, families struggle to find affordable childcare, and employers struggle to find workers because many parents cannot access reliable care.

   I support efforts to expand childcare capacity, reduce barriers to opening and operating childcare facilities, and strengthen the childcare workforce. We should examine opportunities to support employer-sponsored childcare partnerships, increase access in underserved rural communities, and ensure providers have the resources necessary to remain financially sustainable. Improving childcare access helps children, families, employers, and local economies. It is one of the most effective workforce development investments we can make.

6. **Education Outcomes and Funding**
   What do you believe is the best action you could take to support growth in measurable outcomes for k-12 students in northern Michigan and the Upper Peninsula? How well is Michigan's funding of our higher education systems working, and would you make any changes to the way we fund education in this state?

   Every student deserves access to a high-quality education regardless of where they live. Improving educational outcomes starts with ensuring schools have the resources needed to attract and retain great teachers, maintain safe learning environments, and provide students with academic and career opportunities.

   I support strengthening career and technical education programs, expanding work-based learning opportunities, and ensuring students graduate with the skills necessary for college, skilled trades, or direct entry into the workforce.

   Michigan has made progress in higher education funding, but affordability remains a challenge. We should continue investing in programs that reduce financial barriers to higher education and workforce training while ensuring institutions that serve rural regions have the resources necessary to meet local workforce needs. Strong partnerships between higher education institutions and employers are critical to building the workforce our economy requires.

7. **Regulatory Climate and Small Business Growth**
What regulations, permitting processes, taxes, mandates, or compliance burdens do you believe most limit small business growth in our region? What would you do to make our state's regulatory environment more predictable?

Small businesses are the backbone of our regional economy. While regulations serve important purposes, the government should strive to make compliance straightforward, transparent, and predictable.

I regularly hear concerns about permitting timelines, regulatory complexity, and uncertainty that can make it difficult for businesses to plan investments and expansions. I support efforts to streamline permitting processes, improve coordination among state agencies, modernize outdated systems, and provide businesses with clearer guidance and timelines.

Predictability is critical. Businesses need confidence that decisions will be made efficiently and consistently. I believe we can protect public health, safety, and natural resources while also creating a more business-friendly regulatory environment.

8. **Affordability and Economic Vitality**
What meaningful changes do you believe would help advance Michigan's economic vitality by making this state a more affordable place to live, work, and do business?

Michigan's economic competitiveness depends on whether families and businesses can afford to live, work, and invest here. Addressing affordability requires a comprehensive approach.

Expanding housing supply, improving childcare access, strengthening workforce development programs, investing in infrastructure, and ensuring access to affordable healthcare are all essential components of improving affordability. We must also continue supporting policies that help people secure good-paying jobs and advance economically.

For businesses, affordability means reducing unnecessary barriers to growth, maintaining reliable infrastructure, and ensuring access to a skilled workforce. For families, it means making sure essentials such as housing, healthcare, childcare, and education remain within reach. My goal is to help create an economy where businesses can grow, workers can succeed, and families can build a future in the Upper Peninsula.