

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 care deeply about the future of Northern Michigan and want to ensure that future generations have the opportunity to live, work, and raise a family here. I was born and raised in Northwestern Michigan, started my business here, and have built my life in this region, giving me a significant stake in the future of our state. For many years, I have watched friends and family members leave Michigan in search of greater economic opportunities, and I believe we can do better. As a small business owner, commercial pilot, and recent Western Michigan University graduate, I understand the challenges facing young people, families, farmers, and employers across our communities.

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?

I would support policies that lower energy costs, reduce burdensome regulations, encourage job creation, and expand broadband access in rural communities. Northern Michigan's economy depends on affordable and reliable energy, strong infrastructure, and an environment where businesses can invest and grow. I will also use my communication and negotiation skills to maintain constant pressure on appropriations leaders and state agencies to ensure Northern Michigan receives its fair share of funding and resources for local infrastructure, economic development, and community priorities.

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?

Addressing our housing shortage starts with increasing the supply of available housing. I believe we need to create an environment where builders, developers, and local businesses can afford to invest and grow by reducing unnecessary regulations, lowering energy costs, and removing barriers that drive up construction expenses. I would welcome the opportunity to partner with NMCA, local governments, and the private sector to identify incentives that encourage new housing development while ensuring local zoning, permitting, and ordinances support responsible growth. Until we build more housing, affordability and availability challenges will continue to impact families, workers, and employers across Northern Michigan.

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?

I support programs like the Going PRO Talent Fund because they are employer-driven and help businesses train new and existing employees for real workforce needs. To attract and retain talent in Northern Michigan, we must continue supporting workforce training, promoting skilled trades and career education, and creating an economic environment where businesses can grow and provide good paying jobs that keep people in 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?

Reliable and affordable childcare is a significant challenge for many families and can be a major barrier to workforce participation. I support innovative solutions like the Michigan Tri-Share Child Care program, which shares childcare costs between the employer, employee, and state to help parents return to work. I would also support policies that encourage employers to help expand childcare access and affordability so more families can remain in the workforce while ensuring their children receive quality care.

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?

One of the most important steps we can take to improve educational outcomes is ensuring students can read proficiently by the end of third grade. Reading is the foundation for future learning, and students who fall behind early often struggle throughout their academic careers. I support restoring a strong focus on the Third Grade Reading Law and returning education to the basics of reading, writing, math,

and critical thinking. Parents should be empowered as the primary decision-makers in their children's education, and schools should be focused on academic achievement and preparing students for success. We should also continue supporting higher education and skilled trades opportunities while ensuring taxpayer dollars are directed toward programs that produce meaningful outcomes for students and employers.

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?

One of the biggest challenges facing small businesses is the uncertainty and cost created by excessive regulations, permitting delays, and compliance burdens. Too often, it feels like when someone starts a business in Michigan, government agencies show up to regulate them rather than help them succeed. I support implementing a "No Stricter Than Federal" standard to ensure Michigan regulations do not exceed federal requirements unless specifically approved by the Legislature. This would create a more predictable business environment and provide accountability when bureaucratic agencies impose unnecessary regulations on small businesses, farmers, and job creators. By reducing red tape and increasing certainty, we can encourage investment, expansion, and job growth throughout Northern Michigan.

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?

To make Michigan a more affordable place to live, work, and do business, we must focus on lowering the cost of government and reducing the tax burden on families and employers. I support cutting unnecessary spending in the state budget, lowering taxes, reinstating Right to Work, and repealing prevailing wage requirements that increase the cost of construction projects. These policies would help attract investment, create jobs, lower costs for taxpayers, and make Michigan more competitive with neighboring states. When businesses can grow and workers can keep more of what they earn, our communities are stronger and our economy thrives.