



# JAMESTOWN AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

## 2016 Legislative Candidate Forum Questions And The Answers From The Candidates

**Senator John Grabinger and Mayor Katie Andersen are running for State Senator**

**Representative Jessica Haak, Pam Musland, Jim Grueneich and Bernie Satrom are running for the House of Representatives.**

**1) What do you feel are the top priorities of the 2017 legislative session? Please list your top three and why.**

**Senator John Grabinger** - Trying to balance the state's budget while at the same time finding creative ways and solutions to provide the services our public expects from the state. The second would be the effort put forth to tackle the drug epidemic facing our state and just how we can raise up our mental and behavioral health efforts with the reduced revenues we are facing. The third would be shoring up the funding necessary to cover our long-term care commitments, as well as, the needs of our veterans.

**Mayor Katie Andersen** - My top three priorities for the 2017 legislative session are Freedom, Sovereignty and Limited Government. I am committed to supporting individual freedoms, especially those defined in the US Constitution. As a state legislator, I would support state legislation to protect property rights, the right to bear arms and the protection of life at all stages.

I am also committed to the protection of sovereignty as it is applied internationally, nationally and locally. North Dakota has a unique opportunity to influence national sovereignty. Our national security and liberty will be strengthened as we become more energy independent as a country and as we continue to be a top supplier of the world's food. As we research and implement the best techniques for safely recovering our natural resources and harvesting the best crops our naturally rich soils can produce, we provide great paying jobs, improve our economy and aid national security.

We can also support sovereignty as it applies to our Native American nations. North Dakota is the home of Native American reservations. I know North Dakota can be an example of how to honor our treaties with Native American tribes and work together to improve conditions on the reservations with cooperation for education, health care, human services and law enforcement.

I believe the United States is truly a collection of states that need to retain elements of sovereignty to support our government structure. Amendment X to the United States Constitution states, "The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the states, are reserved to the states respectively, or to the people." This a continual battle to fight federal overreach. I am prepared to fight federal overreach and support state independence.

North Dakota should also honor the philosophy of the tenth amendment as it applied to political subdivisions. The North Dakota Constitution ARTICLE VII Section 1. States, "The purpose of this article is to provide for maximum local self-government by all political subdivisions with a minimum duplication of functions." Local government, the government closest to the people, is the best government.

Finally, I am committed to limited government. We need government to provide services for public safety, human/social services and education, but we must find the most efficient way to offer essential services and not expand government into areas that are best serviced by private and non-profit business.

**Representative Jessica Haak** - Growing up and putting myself through college in Jamestown, I learned the value of being smart with a dollar. It is critical that we focus on balancing the budget, and we have to stop these huge swings from surplus to deficits and I've been a huge proponent of smoothing out the process. We have to look at ways that we can make smart budget cuts to keep our fiscal house in order. It is also vital that the state takes care of those who have served our country in our veterans and that we make work to find ways to invest in quality care for our seniors.

**Pam Musland** - First, we need to get our fiscal house in order. That starts with evaluating our spending and where we can cut or consolidate programming. But it also involves looking at the revenue we're given away. Specifically, the \$13 million a month to oil companies when legislative leaders reduced the oil extraction tax from 6.5 to 5 percent. This was an unnecessary cut in revenue that was hurriedly passed with little citizen input, and in complete disregard of North Dakotans who passed the oil extraction tax by initiated measure in 1980. This reduction in revenue needs to be reversed.

Second, we need to restore cuts to Human Services. Taking care of seniors, veterans and vulnerable citizens should always be our top priority. I believe the governor-mandated cuts to balance the budget should have been targeted to specific departments rather than across-the-board cuts made in every department. We need to reevaluate those cuts and restore funding if citizens are losing critical services.

Third, adequate funding for K-12 education is a top priority. Quality education is essential for every child. It is imperative that the state's share of per pupil funding remains intact so education costs don't become a greater tax burden on property owners. We need to expand educational opportunities for our young people, including pre-K education. I also believe low-interest student loan consolidation and work-for-loan reduction programs need to be supported to ease the stress of student loan debt on college graduates and their families.

**Jim Grueneich** –

1. We need to continue to fund current levels of tax relief.
2. K-12 Education
3. Maintaining adequate funding for our states most vulnerable citizens and this might mean we restore some partial funding for the Department of Human Services.

**Bernie Satrom** -

#1 Diversify our economy: Develop a job creating, pro-business environment, Common sense regulations while maintaining a high quality of life, Property Tax relief which makes it all the way to the voters.

#2 Get our Financial House in Order: Accurate revenue projections, control our spending (learn to live within our means), Maintain Property Tax Relief

#3 Create a bold vision for the future; An old Jewish proverb once said that "without vision the people perish" We need to chart a course for a bright future for ND, our community and our families. What do we want ND to look like 10, 20, or 50 years from now? How can we protect our high quality of life while creating opportunities for our families? We also need to get a new vision on how to handle some of our problems. Jails and prisons are full and getting fuller. How can we rethink our criminal justice system? During jail or prison how can we equip them to transition into the community and live a productive happy life? How can we steer our children and young adults away from drug and alcohol abuse? We need to work together to find solutions to make our community and state a better place to live.

- 2) **What should the primary focus be of the legislature to balance the state budget, and how would you propose this be done without just a straight across the board percentage cut to each department, to ensure that the people who need the services the most are not being left out of the funding options? Please elaborate and prioritize your ideas.**

**Senator John Grabinger** - I think the real question is, how do you propose to balance the state budget with minimal revenues, yet maintain the services we must provide. First, it is imperative that we balance the budget, as this is required by our constitution. In order to achieve this, the legislature will obviously need to have department heads present concrete budgets that represent essential needs to provide their vital services, similar to what we did when I joined the city council. We must have a priority list that offers the legislators a clear picture of their department and the real needs they have. The time for any fluff has passed. Finally, it is obvious to me that we must also revisit some of the cuts that we made the first session to our revenue sources, keeping in mind we must maintain the property tax reduction that we passed.

**Mayor Katie Andersen** - Balancing the budget is not only a priority, it is a constitutional obligation. I believe we have to start with zero-based budgeting. This means reversing the process of traditional budgeting. In zero-based budgeting, every line of budget, not just incremental changes since the last approved budget, are re-evaluated. I am really looking forward to this process. Though it may be time intensive, it will look at our state government services and evaluate what is being done efficiently and effectively. I will balance that information with the principals of limited government. We need to ask ourselves, "Is this something state government should be doing?" "Is state government the best vehicle to deliver these services?" and "Are we utilizing the best resources, technology and human capital to deliver these services?" When we get back to basics and use our resources in the most efficient way possible, we will have the best run state in the United States.

I believe we can accomplish the goal of balanced budget without raising taxes! I will support continued property tax relief and reform through state funding of k-12 education and changing to state funding of county social services. I will also support the maintenance of personal income tax reductions benefiting North Dakota residents and the over 24,000 small businesses that file their business taxes through their personal income.

I anticipate that the most significant changes will happen with the Department of Corrections and the Department of Human Services. We are not solving the mental and behavioral health problems in our state, especially as it relates to incarceration. According to the Department of Human Services, 74% of all incarcerated individuals have an identified behavioral health problem. If we can reduce criminal activity by effectively addressing behavioral and mental health problems, we will have truly helped people and we will reduce the expenses of incarceration.

**Representative Jessica Haak** - I believe that we need to look at smart budget cuts. A few examples that I would cut would be the unnecessarily large retention bonuses that were handed out to a handful of people. The amount that was given in bonuses equals almost exactly what was cut from veteran's services: that's just wrong. Second, the state could have stopped the \$5 million governor's mansion that is being built in Bismarck, we easily could have trimmed that. And there are other areas we can look at, but we need to make sure we're still making the smart investments to move our state forward, including investments right here in Jamestown.

**Pam Musland** - First of all, we are required to have a balanced budget by state law, which is a good thing. Like any cash flow statement, we need to look at revenue and expenses to balance the budget. Last session, legislative leaders made a permanent reduction in the oil extraction tax from 6.5 to 5 percent. As a result, North Dakota is losing \$13 million a month in revenue on the one-time harvest of oil. Throw in the millions in cuts in corporate income taxes for out-of-state companies (82 percent of corporate tax relief went to companies headquartered out of state) and it's no wonder we have a deficit problem. Cuts in revenue need to be reevaluated, as do the across-the-board percentage cuts the governor mandated that have consequently left people without critical services. It was irresponsible to remove \$56 million of federal funding from rural hospitals and nursing homes in the special session in August. I believe we need to make targeted, strategic cuts – and reevaluate programs and efficiencies we might gain – to balance the budget. Lastly, we need to look at where we have money socked away in

various funds. It's great to have a Rainy Day fund. But if we never use it, what good does it do? Some funds may need to be used to continue critical services.

**Jim Grueneich** - I believe we need to look at efficiencies in funding across all agencies. Many agencies have grown exponentially and I believe there are ways to spend less. I have looked at the proposed 2017-2019 budget and I believe we need to move cautiously based upon the budget forecast with sales tax and oil revenue. We must use caution so we are not forced into the same scenarios the legislature faced in 2015-2017. I believe we should not vote to raid the Legacy Fund, but go ahead and spend the interest. I believe modest reductions can be made with prioritization focused on protecting our most vulnerable, infrastructure – there are serious road issues that need to be tended to. Let's look at ways we can consolidate, and be more efficient.

**Bernie Satrom** - It might be helpful to analyze where the money is being spent. Over the last 10 years spending on Human Services and Education has almost tripled. The last budget was increased by 12% and with the cuts in spending there is still a 9% increase. These funds are not ours as legislators. It is our responsibility to be good stewards of the people's money. The best decisions are usually made by those closest to the problem. For that reason, I would recommend that we get feedback from state employees at all levels as well as the public to offer suggestions on how services can be provided more efficiently, how money can be saved and how we can minimize potential negative impact.

- 3) **What is your position on the Dakota Access Pipeline? Do you support utilizing all the state's natural resources to ensure energy independence, or do you feel the state needs to take a more proactive role in ensuring the environmental issues take top priority? As a legislator, what would you do to ensure that the state's rights are preserved as opposed to allowing the federal government to tell the state what to do. How would you help alleviate the protests and resolve this issue peacefully? Please be very specific.**

**Senator John Grabinger** - My position is the whole incident should have been and could have been avoided if all the entities had been brought to the table. Which is the action I would first recommend to our governor now. I think a viable solution that would allow the pipeline to be completed is possible. It will probably cost more for the pipeline company, but could offer a greater degree of safety for the environment. All involved must start working towards a viable solution, continuing this as is, could at worse become a tragic event. I don't believe anyone wants this to happen. As far as utilizing the state's resources for energy independence, there is no question I support utilizing our one-time harvest and doing it while also protecting our state's environment at that same time. Just as former governor Link did with the reclamation of our coal mine lands.

**Mayor Katie Anderson** - I support the Dakota Access Pipeline as the safest way to move product to market. The alternatives of rail or road transport are much more dangerous and any transport of goods across an important water source is a risk. This pipeline went through and passed an intense permitting process which researched the safety concerns, identified the safest route/construction and mitigated or avoided any concerns for culturally significant areas. The United States has an estimated 2.4 million miles of oil and gas pipelines. Pipelines today are made with alloys that have been developed through research and scientific advancement to be stronger and more effective, with a factory-coated layer of epoxy fused to the metal that protects it from corrosion. Additional safety measures include an electronic monitoring system tracking pressure levels, and volumes in and out with shut-off valves on either side of the river crossing. At the river crossing, the pipe is horizontally drilled and 92 feet below the bottom of the riverbed. Ninety-two feet will allow the pipeline to be separated from the river by layers upon layers of natural rock, clay and shale.

Protests are not necessarily a bad thing, and we should honor the sovereignty of a Native American nation and the treaties that protect their land. The protestors, in this case, have a permit to be on federal

land for the protest. The state of North Dakota should not prevent the protestors from expressing their freedom of speech on land they have permission to occupy. Anyone who violates other laws such as trespassing, vandalizing or terrorizing should be subject to the consequences of breaking the law. A special thank you to law enforcement for protecting our property and keeping us safe!

**Representative Jessica Haak** - My voting record shows that I am for utilizing all of the state's energy resources, including fossil fuels and clean coal, and I strongly disagree with the Obama Administration on the Clean Power Plan. It is important to me to have an all of the above energy approach. It is critical for energy to be affordable to consumers and we need to develop the infrastructure to utilize all of these resources. That being said, it is important that the tribes are able to exercise their First Amendment right to protest and do so peacefully, and that workers are able to do their jobs in a safe manner and feel safe when going to work. In Jamestown, we come together and work to solve problems, and we need some more of that in Bismarck. I feel that the state needs to bring all parties to the table and work out an agreement. We need to be willing, even in times where our communities are in disagreement, to treat one another with dignity and bring all voices to the table.

**Pam Musland** - The situation is a tragedy waiting to happen. There is fault on both sides. We need to move forward and reach a peaceful solution. I believe our governor should step in and bring all parties to the negotiating table before a pipeline worker or protester is killed.

Secondly, energy independence is critical for our nation in terms of security and prosperity. The development in The Bakken is extremely important, but oil has been there for millions of years. It is not critical that we extract it all overnight, destroying our environment in the process. We've already lost thousands of acres of arable land to roads, infrastructure and saltwater spills that have sterilized the soil forever. One day, the oil will be gone and we have to ask ourselves what will be left if we don't manage our resources wisely?

**Jim Grueneich** - I have talked to many people about this issue and it is my belief, the State did everything by the book and all the environmental studies were completed efficiently. If it was not done, the PSC would not have allowed the permit. The same is true at the Federal level – all paperwork was thoroughly completed and submitted on time with accuracy. I believe pipelines are the safest method of transportation and I would rather see oil be transported underground vs. on the rail, where accidents happen or by big tanker trucks. The State should do all it can to promote and encourage fossil fuels production be it coal or petroleum.

The protest is no longer peaceful and it's necessary to take the precautions to protect the landowners and citizens in the area.

**Bernie Satrom** - Presently there are 200,000 miles of pipelines which transport petroleum products in the US. It is by far the safest and most efficient way to transport oil and gas. Many oil and gas pipelines go under lakes and rivers including a pipeline under the Gulf of Mexico from Louisiana to Florida.

The Dakota Access Pipeline is critical for the safe transportation of oil from the Bakken. I believe that if an entity goes through the legal steps and get a permit to build something and you are following the rules. whether it be a fence, a house or a pipeline that you should not be hindered from proceeding. Hindering a project like this will cause future investors to think twice about taking on such an undertaking. This would ultimately cripple our economy.

I believe that it is in our country's best interest to be energy independent. Clean affordable energy is a critical component for our security and a thriving economy. I have toured the Bakken and Coal Country. I have witnessed oil rigs up close as well as a coal mine and coal generating plant and was very impressed by the attention to detail utilized to protect our environment. As an example, land that is reclaimed from

coal mining is returned to the same topography as it was before it was started. In addition, great effort is made to return the soil to the same condition to what it was originally.

The Dakota Access Pipeline protestors are allowed to peacefully assemble but I do not think that they should be allowed to interfere with the operation of a legally permitted project, harass local citizens or damage property or the environment. I would recommend a sizeable buffer between the pipeline workers and the protestors. The situation needs to be dealt with in a positive way before someone gets hurt.

The Obama administration has declared a war on coal and fossil fuel, a path which could drastically increase energy costs for businesses and consumers. We need to elect officials locally, statewide and nationally who will protect responsible usage of oil and coal until we responsibly develop other forms of energy. I have become increasingly concerned by Federal Regulators like the EPA. Recently they wanted to regulate the dust from farms as well as cow flatulence and burps. We need to protect ourselves from Federal over reach.

- 4) **What suggestions do you have to diversify the North Dakota commodity-based economy, other than oil, to ensure the state is not as affected by the agricultural and oil boom and bust cycles? How would this diversification help bring more people (especially young people) to the state for the jobs to guarantee we have a viable workforce in the future?**

**Senator John Grabinger** - I firmly believe we have started on that path Senator Dorgan envisioned with the research corridor we have created. To truly reach the potential of this, we must continue the efforts at our research institutions and expand on entrepreneurial ventures throughout the state. Last session, the legislature took steps, and I support them, to put ND on the forefront of the drone technology. This is clearly an example of those efforts. Finally, we must remain competitive when we have an opportunity for expansion of industry or manufacturing in our state. Consequently, creating good jobs to keep our young families here in North Dakota.

**Mayor Katie Andersen** - North Dakota needs to continue developing the energy and agriculture sectors of our economy through reduced and efficient regulation/tax burden as well as supporting value-added processes that add to the stability to our commodity-based business. Businesses like Dakota Spirit AgEnergy, a 65 Million gallon ethanol plant and the newest to announce Spiritwood Energy Park Business (a soy bean crushing business set for a Governor's welcome to North Dakota on October 28<sup>th</sup>) are perfect examples of how a value-added business can provide great-paying jobs and utilize the products already produced in the region.

By building a pro-growth legal, regulatory and tax environment, North Dakota can expand our manufacturing and high tech industries. As Mayor of Jamestown and a member of the Jamestown Stutsman Development Corporation and the Jamestown Regional Airport Authority we are working together to encourage the development of more aviation related manufacturing and high tech business to Jamestown. As a state, we are seeing the success and growth of the unmanned aircraft business, and we are looking forward to welcoming more high tech businesses to Jamestown and all of North Dakota.

**Representative Jessica Haak** - I work at the North Dakota Farmers Union, and agriculture is near and dear to my heart, and it is the backbone of our economy locally here in Jamestown and across the state. But I believe there is also a future in manufacturing and technology in North Dakota. Last session, I worked with my colleagues on the finance & tax committee to help bring in technology centers to North Dakota. Another aspect of bringing in new jobs to North Dakota is the infrastructure that needs to be developed with it, to help attract hardworking families to stay in the state. Affordable, quality childcare is an issue that I've been working with community leaders on for years and affordable housing for all families is another way to keep hardworking middle class families in Jamestown.

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move forward and reach a peaceful solution. I believe our governor should step in and bring all parties to the negotiating table before a pipeline worker or protester is killed.

Secondly, energy independence is critical for our nation in terms of security and prosperity. The development in The Bakken is extremely important, but oil has been there for millions of years. It is not critical that we extract it all overnight, destroying our environment in the process. We've already lost thousands of acres of arable land to roads, infrastructure and saltwater spills that have sterilized the soil forever. One day, the oil will be gone and we have to ask ourselves what will be left if we don't manage our resources wisely?

**Jim Grueneich** - North Dakota still has plenty of jobs – and many of the workers who came here to work in the Bakken have continued to stay. You can see it in our school districts, and in our towns. Agriculture and oil will always be job leaders in our state, but the new wave is going to be technology. Our universities are producing some of the best and the brightest and industries will continue to look to North Dakota for business expansion as we are an easy state to do business in and our universities can adequately provide a viable workforce. There are plenty of jobs in North Dakota if people want work. Let's keep it that way.

**Bernie Satrom** - We need to create a vibrant business environment, reasonable taxes, common sense regulations with a level playing field and attract or train a quality workforce. Another large component to this is having affordable energy. On a smaller, but more important scale, we need to encourage small business development. At one point small businesses comprised 60% of all new jobs. We need to encourage Entrepreneurship, and the idea of starting small businesses in our schools and colleges. We rank 40th in Patent applications per capita. We need to encourage our children to be creative and be willing to think outside the box.

- 5) **What is your stand on the recent suggestion that the state hospital be closed/removed from Jamestown and the services be spread out throughout the state? What would you do, if elected, to keep the hospital in our community and this region? It is one of the larger employers and has a huge economic impact for the region.**

**Senator John Grabinger** - As was stated in the article in the Jamestown Sun that has brought this to light. I firmly disagree with my colleague from Fargo. He and I have had this conversation before and I made it clear just how important the work done by our employees at the state hospital is to our state and its citizens. The fact is, the hospital happens to be very centrally located for everyone in the state and most people could be here within a few hours. If anything, we need to focus on expanding the services offered at the state hospital. The mental and behavioral health needs of the state have never been greater and obviously, the privatization of this has helped lead to a higher incarceration rate and an epidemic drug problem. As a former employee of the state hospital and a current member of the interim incarceration committee, I have seen the needs first hand. Most of us probably know someone that needs or could use this help. I just believe our state can do better.

**Mayor Katie Andersen** - The state hospital location is designated in the North Dakota constitution as part of the distribution of trust lands. Those campuses established in the Constitution are vital to the economies of the areas they are located in, and I do not support any changes to the original intent for the campus creations across North Dakota. The language in the constitution does not need to be changed, nor should the state hospital campus be moved from Jamestown. However, I do think that mental and behavior healthcare has changed a lot since the days of institutional care for those labeled "insane." We should model the services of the state hospital after the Anne Carlsen Center. Anne Carlsen Center provides residential care on the Jamestown campus, but the Center also meets growing needs with offices in Grand Forks, Devils Lake, Bismarck, Fargo and Minot serving more than 2,600 children and their families. In the example of Anne Carlsen Center, the economic impact of the expansion of the

services to other communities is still positive for Jamestown and positive for the individuals and families that are served at satellite locations. I am confident that we can change the way we administer mental health services and retain the state hospital campus in Jamestown.

**Representative Jessica Haak** - I stand with the state hospital staying in Jamestown and would work hard with colleagues to keep the hospital in our community. We have a serious problem in North Dakota with access to mental and behavioral health care. If we privatize these services patients have to come up with a large sum of money to receive care, then can be put on an extremely long waiting list, that is not the route we need to go. If we need to do anything it's expand access to treatment. My dad used to teach at the state hospital when there was a juvenile ward and now there are fewer places to help youth that aren't privatized throughout the state. So, if we need to do anything we need to expand these services for our youth as that service is now falling on foster parents and ministers in our communities.

**Pam Musland** - I am adamantly opposed to any action that would remove or close the state hospital in Jamestown or blot out its reference in our state constitution. (The Legislative Council regularly updates outdated language in state law so archaic words, such as "insane," could be cleaned up in our constitution as a housekeeping measure.) The hospital is a huge employer in our community and region and provides critical mental and behavioral health services. The expertise of its staff and workforce cannot be overstated. I believe the suggestion to close the hospital down and reallocate dollars speaks to the need for more local treatment programs in local communities. But I don't think it's an "either or" option between the state hospital and community-based services. We need both.

**Jim Grueneich** - Simply, I don't agree. Moving people to other areas in the State is not the answer. The drug and alcohol addiction treatment center is crucial to the State – these are the serious offenders and this program grew from 60 to 90 beds and it is going to be a key component of the 2017 legislative session. Treatment needs to happen and this facility is less expensive than the State Prison.

**Bernie Satrom** - Absolutely not. It might be helpful for people to have some more background information: Sen. Tim Mathern is a Democrat from Fargo who works for Prairie St John's Hospital as the Director of Public Policy, Prairie St Johns is a hospital which deals heavily with Psychiatric Issues. From what I understand he has floated this idea on other occasions. With the NDSH being changed in the constitution I fear that this would be a pathway where the role of the state hospital could be radically changed or eliminated. Closing the state hospital might be beneficial to Prairie St Johns but would be detrimental to the wellbeing of our state as well as our area. As a side note he is also presently the Democrat candidate for State Treasurer who wants to eliminate that position as well and have other departments handle their responsibilities (another very flawed idea)

It is important to remember that the majority of mental health/substance services are provided in the local communities (including Jamestown). The State Hospital is only accessed when the person's service needs exceed community resources. The goal is always to utilize the least restrictive community services, and only access the State Hospital as needed. In addition, most forensic services (evaluations for the court) are provided by the Hospital, as the experts for these services are employed by the Hospital. Since these individuals require a short stay in the State Hospital, most community providers have shied away from hiring the necessary experts and gearing up for these services, as they are adequately and professionally provided at a central site (the State Hospital). The Hospital has seriously downsized since the 90's and has been an active participant in placing people in the most appropriate community settings. But, quite frankly there are individuals that need the services of the State Hospital and likely would not be served as adequately in least restrictive community settings.

I WILL STRONGLY RESIST any effort to eliminate the State Hospital, not only for the economic and staff impact (although this is very important), but also the human impact - at times people need the services of a safe, secure and inpatient option such as the State Hospital to best meet their needs. If the Hospital



is gone and this option is not available statewide, people will fall through the cracks and have limited options for services.

- 6) **Do you feel it is ethical and appropriate to serve as both a legislator and on a local city council in a leadership position during the same time frame, especially for the community the size of Jamestown? (Note: only one city in the state has this now, with a population of 1100 people) During the legislative session, this person would not be readily accessible to the city of Jamestown, and during the off year, there are many legislative committee meetings that would require additional time away from the city. With the needs and priorities of Jamestown right now, is this ethical and appropriate? Please elaborate.**

**Senator John Grabinger** - First, I know this is a big concern to many in our community, as I think it should be. Two years ago, I was asked to run for Mayor by some of my fellow citizens. After careful consideration, I decided to decline due to some simple factors. I know the time it takes to be effective at both jobs, having served eight years on the city council and now as a senator. I frankly believe the citizens of Jamestown deserve representation in both jobs that devote their efforts to one position only. Both of these positions are vital to the community, and neither job should be taken in a way that the other may be slighted.

**Mayor Katie Andersen** - The role of a state legislator and a local city council member have many differences and many similarities, but ultimately, the goal of representing people is the same. Every elected official that has other employment, family/personal obligations or any other range of commitments will have to balance the time it takes to complete all the roles and tasks to which they have committed. North Dakota has zero full-time Mayors and zero full-time legislators. I think that is the way this should be in a citizen representative government.

As for only one city in the state, with a population of 1100 people, being the only example of a city elected official and state legislator, this is completely FALSE!! Brad Bekkedahl, Vice-president of the Williston City Commission and Finance Commissioner is a Dentist and a Republican Senator for District 1. Williston has a population of over 20,000. Alisa Mitskog was President of the Wahpeton City Council is a Chiropractor and a Democrat Representative from District 25. Wahpeton has a population of about 7,800. Curt Kruen was on the Grand Forks City Council and a Representative for District 43 from 2010-2014. Grand Forks has population of 54,932. Too many other legislators to name serve on other public boards including school boards, county commissions, electric co-ops, rural water boards, etc. We also have many public employees as legislators, including teachers like Senator Nicole Poolman (R-Bismarck area) or Joe Kroeber a Democrat representative for Jamestown and Ron Gugissberg (D-Fargo) is a fire chief.

I have personally worked with Brad, Alisa and Curt, and we have discussed how to balance the two elected offices, work and family. I have also spoken with other state legislators with young children to understand how they balanced the office with their responsibilities as a parent. We ask a lot of our elected officials, and we are incredibly fortunate in North Dakota to have people who are willing to personally sacrifice to serve in elected office.

I know that the state senate will not be an easy job, and I know that many challenges of balancing business, family and elected office will occur. I have always believed that you should utilize your strengths, live your passions and take every opportunity to serve and grow. I am confident that I am up to the challenge!

**Representative Jessica Haak** - I feel that it is up to the citizens of Jamestown as to who represents them where, even if it is in multiple roles so I will leave that decision with them. From my experience, as someone who works a full-time job, helps raise two young children, and serves as a voice for the people in Jamestown I understand that time is incredibly valuable and serve an incredibly busy life, like

many people in Jamestown. I personally enjoy spending time with my family & friends and sharing the spare moments I have at hockey games and Christmas concerts, so that is where I spend my time. But like I said, I believe it is up to the citizens of Jamestown.

**Pam Musland** - I'm not discounting the talent or ability of any candidate, but I don't believe anyone can give 100 percent of their time and effort to two jobs and do justice to both. If Jamestown is the train and I'm trying to be the caboose and the engine at the same time, the train isn't going to move far if there's a conflict between the two. What a city official advocates for in their community and what a state legislator advocates for in their district, and ultimately state, can be diametrically opposed. It will be very difficult for one person to wear two hats at the same time and do justice to both jobs.

**Jim Grueneich** - There have been several examples of legislators being county commissioners, city commissioners, township officers or city employees and often times, and they seem to have made it work.

**Bernie Satrom** - When I think of ethics I think of a conflict of interest. The job of the local council is to represent the interests of their city, in this case Jamestown. As a Representative or State Senator, the job is to represent the interests of the same people. If we had a person who is on the Jamestown City Council, who also acts as State Senator or Representative, this could be a tremendous benefit by Jamestown in representing the citizens of Jamestown interests. In some ways it would be like having a lobbyist for Jamestown at the capitol during the session. In two years the city position will be up for reelection. At that time the candidate and the voters can evaluate whether they like the arrangement.

Ethically I do have concerns about Sen. Tim Mathern, Director of policy for St John's suggesting policy on how the State hospital should be run (a competing entity). I also have a question about whether some candidates who work for policy groups can ethically and honestly represent the voters rather than their employers.

- 7) **According to recent statistics, there has not been an improvement in employment of people with disabilities since 1990. How do you intend to increase the workforce participation for people with disabilities? What additional training of workers and/or education of employers could be done to improve the awareness of this opportunity for more people in the workforce?**

**Senator John Grabinger**- By working to increase awareness of the programs available to assist employers willing to hire or train individuals to fill a position. We should increase the awareness of these programs and we can expand the efforts to reach out to the employers and the companies willing to hire, more than is being done now.

**Mayor Katie Andersen** - Jamestown must be the exception to this statistic because I see Jamestown businesses like Triumph Inc., Alpha Opportunities, The Anne Carlson Center, Freedom Resource Center and others doing a great job helping individuals overcome barriers and participate in the workforce. Stutsman County has such low unemployment, slightly over 2%, the incentive to move anyone willing to work into the workforce has never been better. We also have the best technology and inventive, creative people to implement adaptations that make it possible for those with disabilities to participate in workplaces that before were not possible. I think the communication between private employers, non-profits, volunteer organizations and government agencies can be strengthened to share common goals or meeting our workforce needs.

**Representative Jessica Haak** - We can start by making the state of North Dakota a model employer for people with disabilities. I worked at the Anne Carlsen Center for nearly five years, it was a wonderful experience that opened up my eyes to little things that can make a world of difference such as handicapped accessible entrances, bathrooms, and wider hallways. It is critical that we work together to

address this issue, I think about the House chamber and how difficult it would be for someone who is blind or in a wheelchair to move around and visit with colleagues on the floor. We can lead the way and set an example for businesses. We could also set a state minimum wage for those with disabilities, to help them earn a living wage to live a more independent life.

**Pam Musland** - Unfortunately, there has been no real champion for people with disabilities since the Americans with Disabilities Act passed in 1990. Our economics have changed in 26 years, our knowledge has grown, and businesses and policies need to catch up to fully tap into this human resource. I believe workforce participation ultimately depends on employers. It's important for employers to understand the value in the skillset of people with disabilities and the talents they can bring to the workplace that other employees can't.

It's been my great honor to be involved with Special Olympics in our community for more than a decade. I've learned more from the athletes in terms of human interaction and understanding than I otherwise would have known...and they all have ability. Instead of looking at an individual's limitations, employers need to evaluate applicants based on their skillset and then carve out a job for them to fill a need within that business. Inclusivity, rather than exclusivity, widens the pool of workers for our business community.

Another roadblock I see to people with disabilities fully entering the workforce is the limitation on how much income they can earn a week without losing program assistance for housing, food and Medicaid. Even if most worked 40 hours a week, their income would still be below the poverty line. This needs to be revisited as do labor laws that allow businesses to pay subminimum wages to people with disabilities. Under these conditions, people with disabilities are generally unable to save for the future. We need to continue to expand access to programs that encourage personal savings, such as ABLE accounts legislation that was passed last session. We also need to expand on-the-job training opportunities and provide employer incentives to engage this workforce population.

What we really need is a model employer to pave the way for other businesses, and that model employer should be the State of North Dakota.

**Jim Grueneich** - I would believe this is a great opportunity for partnerships with business. People with disabilities have every right to work and in our state we have made tremendous progress over the years and of course, more can be made. This is an ideal example of where local chambers of commerce can offer some education to businesses as well as offer some partnerships with entities specialized in people with disabilities.

**Bernie Satrom** - Over the years our company has hired multiple people with disabilities. It was a good experience for our company and I trust a good experience for the workers involved. At that time there was a tax credit which assisted in their wages as well as some assistance for training. People with disabilities can be very loyal and a valuable addition to a company's workforce. There are several Federal Tax Credits in place to assist employers. The Disabled Access Credit to assist Businesses provide access, The Barrier Removal Tax Deduction. (help with the expense of removing building barriers). The Work Opportunity Credit gives a 40% tax credit for people in a targeted group (including people with disabilities) Also there is an Expanded Tax Credit for Hiring Unemployed Veterans. All of these plus any state programs presently in place should to be promoted.

- 8) **North Dakota has one of the highest percentages of nursing home placements in the country. How do you propose to provide better Home and Community Based Services to assist people wishing to remain independent in their own home? What could be done to overhaul Social Services in order to help it become more efficient and effective in this area?**

**Senator John Grabinger** - One way to provide more services is to continue to foster some of the faith-based efforts that are in progress. Some are pilot programs, but clearly show some promise. Keeping our elderly in their own homes as long as possible clearly has benefits to both the individual and a significant cost benefit to the state. Unless state dollars were allocated, social services are a branch of our county government that can only be as effective as the funding and the staffing can allow. The efficiency of this entity is a responsibility of our county commission that oversees it.

**Mayor Katie Andersen** - We need to start with the questions, "Is this the best care option for the individual?" If the nursing home is the best care (and we have some outstanding long-term care facilities in Jamestown and throughout North Dakota), we should not be concerned about how we compare to a national statistic. However, if remaining in independent living or moving to assisted living is the best care option, we should have resources available to make that option possible. Jamestown is such a great example of how to provide the range of services to those facing problems that would limit their independence. Jamestown has skilled nursing care, assisted living, senior-specific living units, memory care facilities and home health services. Jamestown has supported senior-specific, assisted living and accessible housing units with flex-space housing incentive, renaissance zones and property tax exemptions. The Jamestown Regional Medical Center/Jamestown Hospital was the second Home Health Agency in the state of North Dakota established in 1966 and the first hospital-based agency. JRMC Home Care is Medicare Certified/State Licensed and Joint Commission Accredited. With the incorporation of advancements in technology we can offer things like telemonitoring. Telemonitoring is a unit in your home that can electronically monitor your blood pressure, pulse, respirations, weight and/or oxygen level. The unit can also remind you to take your medications and maintain your prescribed diet. New advancements in this field should be utilized to provide the best care for the individual at the smallest cost. Home health care can be a win-win, as it can reduce the cost of institutional care and help an individual remain independent as long as possible.

**Representative Jessica Haak** - Taking care of Jamestown's seniors is a top priority of mine. I will work to ensure that we have funding for long-term care options in our state and have co-sponsored several times bills to eliminate the state tax on social security. Last session, we passed a bill that allows state employees to take sick leave to help care for an ill parent. Giving employees that option to help in the care of parent can be critical in seniors remaining in their homes, so we at the state lead by example.

**Pam Musland** - As a Meals on Wheels volunteer in Jamestown, I've seen the deplorable conditions that some of our seniors are living in. We need to make sure that people can live in their homes safely with proper care and services for as long as possible, as much for their own happiness as for taxpayer relief. In order to do this, respite care to relieve loved ones for a time as the primary caregiver and other direct support professionals are needed.

Ultimately, the work of Social Services falls under the purview of our county commission, not the state legislature. Although there was an idea put forth to have the state take over some of these services to reduce local property tax burdens, it did not come to fruition. Those efforts should be revisited, keeping in mind that the work of Social Services seems best left in the hands of local control to rapidly respond to needs.

**Jim Grueneich** - It is my belief that North Dakota has made significant improvements in addressing Home and Community based services in lieu of nursing home care. As a son of aging parents, I would welcome and work with such services to keep my parents in their home as long as they can. It is statistically proven, people are better off staying home if care can be provided. From the research that I have done, our legislators have funded these services and will continue to do so again. It is a service I would agree with and support dollars to make this happen. It is my understanding that the state has not used up all the dollars for the positions available. I heard radio ads this summer in an attempt to recruit people to this profession. These radio ads were paid for by the Department of Human Services.

**Bernie Satrom** - It is critical that we assist people to remain independent in their own homes. This gives them a higher quality of life as well as a money savings for them as well as the state. A side note to this is helping them to stay in their homes by having policies which provide property tax relief and reasonable heating and energy costs. North Dakota has one of the highest percentages of nursing home placements. In many cultures nursing homes are used rarely. Is there something we should be doing differently? Better? Should we encourage people to stay in their homes as long as possible? Is taking care of our family (including our elders) the priority it should be?

- 9) **Where do you stand on the reauthorization of Medicaid expansion? This needs to be addressed from the state's perspective, as there are approximately 20,000 North Dakotans who have been able to obtain coverage under this program. If you are elected, what are you going to do about these residents if you vote not to reauthorize the Medicaid expansion? Please keep in mind that this is providing a huge local economic impact, so it is not just a federal issue.**

**Senator John Grabinger** - It was a red-letter day when the governor signed the Medicaid expansion for our state. This additional funding has been of great benefit to those (nearly 20,000) who have been assisted and is also helping our hospitals get reimbursement where many times they would not have. I will certainly support the reauthorizing of the Medicaid expansion. I also think it is crucial that ND step up and continue this program.

**Mayor Katie Andersen** - We need to start with the questions, "Is this the best care option for the individual?" If the nursing home is the best care (and we have some outstanding long-term care facilities in Jamestown and throughout North Dakota), we should not be concerned about how we compare to a national statistic. However, if remaining in independent living or moving to assisted living is the best care option, we should have resources available to make that option possible. Jamestown is such a great example of how to provide the range of services to those facing problems that would limit their independence. Jamestown has skilled nursing care, assisted living, senior-specific living units, memory care facilities and home health services. Jamestown has supported senior-specific, assisted living and accessible housing units with flex-pace housing incentive, renaissance zones and property tax exemptions. The Jamestown Regional Medical Center/Jamestown Hospital was the second Home Health Agency in the state of North Dakota established in 1966 and the first hospital-based agency. JRMC Home Care is Medicare Certified/State Licensed and Joint Commission Accredited. With the incorporation of advancements in technology we can offer things like telemonitoring. Telemonitoring is a unit in your home that can electronically monitor your blood pressure, pulse, respirations, weight and/or oxygen level. The unit can also remind you to take your medications and maintain your prescribed diet. New advancements in this field should be utilized to provide the best care for the individual at the smallest cost. Home health care can be a win-win, as it can reduce the cost of institutional care and help an individual remain independent as long as possible.

**Representative Jessica Haak** - I think it is important to look at the cost and the benefits of this program. We don't have a definitive cost yet, just estimates, and we will be able to look at that fiscal note this session. This program also helps hospitals with debt, being able to collect more than if people did not have insurance. It helped the JRMC here pay off many debts.

I understand that the cost of health insurance is getting out of hand and that we need to do more to drive those costs down for families; however, removing 20,000 people from health insurance is a way to drive up the costs of health insurance so it is important to take that into account when making a decision, rising costs are not good for working families.

**Pam Musland** - I support reauthorizing Medicaid expansion. If elected, I will not eliminate coverage for 20,000 vulnerable North Dakotans.

**Jim Grueneich** - This is a big question and it really depends on the outcome of the presidential election. Our current president says it needs work and it needs to be fixed. We have to continue to fully fund it in support of getting it fixed first at the federal level.

**Bernie Satrom** - Apparently this was one of those government programs where it was initially free and as time goes on the cost to the state increases. The program is income based but ignores the person's net worth. If you are worth a million dollars but show low income for the year, you could qualify. I think it needs some scrutiny.

**10) Advanced education is not always the right choice for students, so what would you propose to assist the vocational colleges to encourage more students to pursue education in the trades, to provide for the workforce that is currently lacking in these areas? (South Dakota has a fund set up to help with scholarships in the areas of shortages.) How can the legislature address the needs for the current and future workforce? What should the priorities be in terms of job creation, business growth and development and incentives for new businesses versus existing businesses? Please be specific.**

**Senator John Grabinger** - Last regular session, the state scholarship program was given additional funding to help ND students get a larger amount. When this was being discussed, I suggested to the Senate education chair that rather than increase the amount to only high ACT scoring students, as it is now, we should consider reducing the requirements and allow twice as many students to take advantage of the programs. Clearly this would help many who may not be destined for a 4-year degree, but do have the desire to learn a trade and need some assistance to jump start their career goals to get started. The second part of this question in regards to priorities and incentives for job creation, business growth and development for both new and existing businesses is really a stand-alone question. The state has and does allow many different types of tax incentives and programs which are coincidentally being studied by an interim committee right now. Many of these were created with good intentions, but were then taken to another level by some communities looking to offer as much as they can legally get by with. I personally have always agreed that we must work to expand primary sector job creation, but there are very few places, if any, where we should incentivize one retail business over a competing business. We, as a community, should not use tax money to pick winners and losers in our retail sector.

**Mayor Katie Andersen** - I am always supportive of researching what other states or entities are using as techniques to solve problems. It will be interesting to see if the South Dakota incentive achieves the results they are looking for, especially in the long term. I think the problem with low participation in vocational education is three-fold. The first barrier might be financial, and the implementation of scholarship or financing programs would help alleviate that barrier. The second barrier is cultural. We have a history of socially supporting advanced education as the best path to employment success. This is not something that can be changed with a scholarship program. We have to educate all our citizens about the dignity of all work, and the successful careers that a vocational education and training can support. This needs to start with our young students in cooperation with their parents. The earlier that conversation and communication starts, the better. The third problem is the accessibility to the vocational training schools. As a member of the Jamestown Stutsman Development Corporation I worked to encourage the North Dakota State College of Science based in Wahpeton to locate satellite centers in Jamestown and other cities. Many individuals that are interested in a vocational education have work and family obligations that do not allow them to move to a new city for training. The more accessible the training is to the workforce, the more successful we will be in recruiting the workforce to the training. The legislature can prioritize higher education funding to support vocational training institutions and utilize the Bank of North Dakota to help students with any financial barriers.

**Representative Jessica Haak** - It's about working with business leaders and the Chambers across the state to help fill the voids of where we need workers. There are programs that already exist that need to

be better utilized. These programs help match students in the fields to the jobs right here in North Dakota. It does again go back to infrastructure and working on things like affordable housing and childcare to attract young people to fill these jobs.

**Pam Musland** - The need for people in our trade and service industries continues to grow with each passing year as more and more people retire and our economy grows. With any advanced education, we need to keep it affordable and provide more scholarships for students. Our state-based scholarship program is currently based on GPA. One adjustment could be to award scholarships based on aptitude for a skillset rather than GPA to make sure more young people consider a vocational career. More businesses, both new and existing, could offer internships, apprenticeships and incentives for students to work for them after graduation. We also could expand some of the workforce training grant programs that are currently offered to help employers find new employees. Ultimately, we need to remember that not every student is cut out to attend a four-year college. Having them attend and then drop out a semester or year later with student debt is not an esteem builder. Many of our most lucrative jobs are in the trade industry. My father taught me that hands-on ability is important and valuable in the workplace and at home. It's great to be able to recite poetry when stranded beside the road with a flat tire, but better yet to have the skillset to change a tire.

**Jim Grueneich** - First off, as a parent, we see in our children what natural skills they have, sometimes as early as the age of 5. It is not entirely up to our schools or our state to direct people into careers. Parents own it first. Again, private industry can help in this area too. They can be engaged with students at career fairs and job fairs. Perhaps we need more career days earlier in a child's education. And as parents, we need to expose our kids to all the possibilities. We also need to make sure our tech schools, colleges and universities remain affordable. Incentives for new businesses are really happening at the local level and our state should lend a hand in helping to recruit, but when we look at the last 8 years, our state could hardly keep up with all the business expansion and we had the lowest unemployment rate in the nation.

**Bernie Satrom** - A couple of years ago there was a great demand for diesel mechanics. In order to fulfill the demand Butler Machinery worked with the NDSCS in Wahpeton to introduce an apprenticeship program where they would spend a certain amount of time in school and similar time on the job. As I recall the students made a very good wage while they were in the program. If we have a shortage of electricians or plumbers, then they could band together to provide scholarships to encourage students to go into those areas. If there is a great demand and limited supply, then companies will pay higher wages to get the people they need. The free market and supply and demand can do a great job of supplying the people we need without the taxpayers having to pay the bill.

**11) What changes, if any, would you make to the North Dakota's campaign contribution disclosure law to assure there is transparency and that outside PAC groups are limited in their ability to support state campaigns? Or do you agree with the law as it stands? Please be specific.**

**Senator John Grabinger** - There likely will be an effort coming in the next session to make public where campaign funds are spent. I would support that effort if it is part of legislation that also includes an ethics commission in ND. The very idea that campaign funds can be utilized for personal things with little oversight certainly raises the propensity for possible misuse and even possibly bribery.

**Mayor Katie Andersen** - North Dakota has very accessible campaign finance information. The North Dakota Secretary of State's website allows for public viewing and searching in a user-friendly manner. As candidates, we are responsible for reporting any contribution over \$200. I think this disclosure provides the information voters or other candidates are seeking to understand where financial support for various campaigns originate.

**Representative Jessica Haak** - I voted for more transparency on these issues during my first term in

office. I think we first need to stop allowing campaign funds to be used for personal resources, as the law stands in North Dakota any money that is donated to a candidate can be used for any reason whatsoever and it is tax free, that is unacceptable. We should, also, have better reporting to track expenditures and expenses paid for by outside special interest groups. North Dakotans pride themselves on ethics, and I can't see why any politician would be against more transparency. Growing up in Jamestown I was taught if you don't have anything to hide, then you don't have anything to worry about.

**Pam Musland** - I support more transparency. The expenditure of campaign funds should be reported, not just the income a candidate receives as is the case now with donations over \$200. The public is entitled to know what special interest groups support a candidate and how much money is being pumped into their candidacy.

One of the greatest responsibilities of a governing body is allocation of financial resources. How a candidate spends their funds is a direct reflection on their ability to govern. Are they spending campaign contributions on things like yard signs or are they going on vacation with those funds? Campaign contributions should never be used for personal use. I also support an Ethics Commission for our legislative body.

**Jim Grueneich** - As a first-time candidate who has recently completed the on-line forms, I believe the current law is sufficient with any contribution over \$200 being reported.

**Bernie Satrom** - In our free society our constitution allows people to voice their opinions, as well as give to causes they support. As much as I dislike large PACs from out of state messing with ND politics I do not think we can change it without hindering everyone else's liberties as well. Currently any donation over \$200 must be reported. I do not think that lowering the amount that must be declared would be beneficial.

**12) How do you feel about the practice of contractors of suing the state of ND for non-payment for the final billing of construction projects which were not completed according to the construction contracts, such as the Veterans Home and the Heritage Center Expansion? These contractors were the low bidders in the RFP process, but did not complete the work satisfactorily. How do you feel about this practice and what do you think could be done to preclude this practice in the future?**

**Senator John Grabinger** - The state officials overseeing such bid projects have a responsibility to assure that the bid specs are met. If they aren't completely adhered to then they should withhold payment until they are. If the contractor disagrees, then certainly they should have the right to seek relief through the judicial process.

**Mayor Katie Andersen** - The North Dakota Century Code defines the process for Public Bids and Improvements in Chapter 48-01.2. This law requires bidding for any construction of a public improvement of one hundred thousand dollars or more, and the award the contract to the lowest responsible bidder. I have a lot of experience as Mayor of Jamestown with this bidding process, and we have completed millions of dollars of infrastructure improvements. (For example, \$2.5 in water distribution improvements and new water tower and over \$10 million in sanitary sewer improvements.) In these and many other projects we have had unexpected changes to plans, weather influencing construction schedules and the resulting change orders were sometimes approved and sometimes denied. The public entity responsible needs to make the best decision they can about payments for construction projects utilizing their expertise, engineers and legal counsel. Sometimes differences between the contractor and the public entity cannot be resolved amicably. The civil court system, arbitration or mediation can be used to resolve these disputes. I believe we have a system in place to handle these situations, and no changes in the law are needed at this time.



**Representative Jessica Haak** - I agree that the state has the right to hold the bidders to a standard that the work is done satisfactorily. It is important to make the smart decision when dealing with taxpayer's money and completing these projects, so we should do a better job of balancing the quality of the contractor along with cost of the project.

**Pam Musland** - I think contractors have the right to sue for money they feel is owed to them. And I think the state has the right to refuse payment when the terms of a contract are not met. While lawsuits are costly, I believe the state should hold firm in contract disputes that are justified. The companies our state does business with need to be reputable and vetted. When they are not, it usually costs more money to complete or repair what they've done. I'd also like to see North Dakota-based companies get extra consideration in the bidding process for state projects. Rewarding North Dakota companies and our citizens for the work they do has value and contributes to our state's economy.

**Jim Grueneich** - As a professional contractor, I have plenty of experience in this arena. I will preface my comments with, there are two sides to every story and I am not intimate with the details of the mentioned cases that are highlighted. The contractor agreed to perform the job and to perform this job to the satisfaction of the client. If the job is not completed as detailed in the contract, the client has the right to withhold the last payment until the job is done correctly. It is necessary to comply with the contract documents. To preclude this from happening, do these types of contracts need a contract inspector? Was this position part of the original contract on those jobs? Those are the unknowns. And in the construction business, change orders detail all the client changes which are to be performed by the contractor.

**Bernie Satrom** - Conflicts, law suits and poor workmanship are all common symptoms of selecting the lowest bid. The state presently has 2 lawsuits, one from 2013 and a new one in 2016 with the same company! The character of the contractor and the quality of their work should be equal factors in selecting firms to provide construction services. Delays, stress and legal fees from outside firms all have a cost. Also Life Cycle Costs should be considered: Poor quality brings higher maintenance and shorter service life. Low Bidding is cheap on the front end but ultimately more expensive in the final analysis.