

Roger Thoney for State Representative

www.rogerthoney.com

67th District – Newport, Bellevue, Dayton, Southgate, Wilder, Woodlawn, part of Highland Heights, KY
17 Meadow Lane #10, Highland Heights, KY 41076; Email: rthoney@fuse.net; Phone & Fax: 859-781-0790

4/22/10

Responses to Courier Journal's Voter Guide Questions

(<http://www.thevoterguide.org/v/louisville/race-detail.do?id=193257490>)

(Responses are limited to 1000 characters)

Why are you the most qualified candidate?

We need someone in Frankfort who understands business and economics and the job creation process and who is willing to stand up to entrenched political interests on behalf of the people of Kentucky. I will be that person. I am a professional engineer with an MBA and an MS in Economics. I apply my skills working as an economic troubleshooter developing comprehensive solution plans to our economic problems with an eye on minimizing unintended consequences (see www.rogerthoney.com for examples). My primary focus is to help low-income individuals and families improve their situation in life by creating more jobs and reducing the cost of living. I am a Jefferson Republican who will put the people first ahead of self and party, stand up for individual liberty and economic freedom, and live up to the Constitution. People need jobs to pay their bills; so job creation should be our top priority next to state sovereignty and security, not raising money to “feed the government beast.”

What are the most crucial issues, and how would you address them?

Create jobs, reduce the cost of health care and provide access to health insurance for more people, reduce the cost of living, eliminate “hidden taxes” paid by low-income families, and reduce the number of foreclosures. To create more jobs, we must (1) reduce the cost of doing business in Kentucky by eliminating taxes on business activity (“hidden taxes”) and reducing the cost of regulation and litigation and (2) provide more investment capital for new and existing small businesses by implementing the *Kentucky Small Business Investment Program*. Implementing the *The Freedom Plan for Health Care Finance Reform* will reduce the cost of health care and expand access to health insurance. Reducing the cost of doing business (by reducing the cost of taxation, regulation, and litigation) and taxes will reduce the cost of living. We can reduce the number of foreclosures by convincing banks to be more lenient in accepting less than full payments. See www.rogerthoney.com for details.

How should the legislature solve the problem of declining revenues that have forced cuts in education and other state services?

The problem is due to unemployment. The solution is to promote job creation. High unemployment has caused the tax base to shrink and social spending to increase. Creating more jobs will reverse this. To promote job creation, we must make Kentucky the most business-friendly state in the nation and create investment capital for new and existing small businesses. To balance the budget in the near term, we must delay construction projects, such as some roads, new buildings, and sewers; eliminate “political” spending, such as renaming roads and “earmarks” used to buy votes and reward political cronies; continue pressure to operate more efficiently; and reduce borrowing. Unemployment is a result of inefficiency whether in government or the private sector (government and the private-sector are part of the same economy). Borrowing increases future spending and

should be avoided unless the resulting "investment" produces a return of its own sufficient to pay the principal and interest.

Do you favor or oppose reforming the state tax system to raise revenue. Why? And which taxes would you increase or cut?

I support reforming the state tax system to reduce the cost of living and make Kentucky more business-friendly, not to increase revenue. To reduce the cost of living and help those who struggle to make ends meet, I will try to eliminate all taxes on business activity, property taxes, and taxes on electric, phone, insurance, etc. bills and reduce the excise taxes on alcohol and cigarettes. These measures also will promote job creation which will increase revenue (by expanding the tax base) and reduce spending on social programs. In addition, we can reduce the burden on taxpayers by changing welfare to a loan-based program, implementing a medical credit card program (see www.rogerthoney.com), and increasing user fees. Why do we tax businesses when doing so undermines job creation and increases the financial burden on low-income households? It is time to "put the people first" and to relegate Karl Marx's hate-filled, destructive ideas to the ash heap of history where they belong.

Do you support expanding gambling to allow video slot machines at Kentucky's race tracks?

Gambling addiction can cause great harm not only to the addict's family but also to the local community. There have been instances in Northern Kentucky of money being embezzled from a local government and a church to feed a gambling addiction. Who pays for this? On the other hand, why should responsible Kentuckians be denied this form of entertainment because of the bad behavior of a few? This is a clear case for majority rule; and I believe that those who live in the county in which the race track is located should make the decision. The county also should establish a fund to provide full restitution to organizations victimized by gambling-related embezzlement and to provide for the rehabilitation of addicted gamblers. This program is part of the cost of gambling, so it should be funded by a tax on gambling proceeds. Taxpayers should not have to pay for this. In addition, race track owners should look for other ways to generate revenue from their grossly underutilized assets.

Would you support legislation that raises Kentucky's dropout age from 16 to 18?

This is a noble goal. Education is very important to the future success of an individual in today's world and higher graduation rates would look good; however, forcing an older teenager to attend school against his will can have adverse consequences. Such an individual could become disruptive and interfere with the learning experience of others, acting out until he is thrown out. In addition, higher attendance requires more funding from the legislature to meet the needs of the added students. This decision is better left to the local communities. I will support legislation that will enable each county to decide if they want to increase the dropout age to 18 for county schools and likewise for city schools. If one locality does it and it works well, then others will follow. It is time to move beyond an "all-knowing, one size fits all" mindset and decentralize decision-making in Kentucky. Those who live and work close to the situation should be empowered to make more decisions.