



Where they stand

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NH Business Review asked the major party candidates running this year for four key offices — the U.S. Senate, the two congressional seats and governor — about six issues of major interest to the state’s businesses: energy, inflation, affordable housing, workforce availability, healthcare and taxes. We did not edit their answers unless they exceeded the word limit. We also asked the candidates to submit biographical information.

The race for governor

Incumbent Republican governor Chris Sununu is serving his third term, receiving in 2020 more votes ever than any candidate in state history. With Sununu’s leadership, New Hampshire is ranked the No. 1 state in the country for personal freedoms by Cato Institute. Named the nation’s most fiscally responsible governor by Cato Institute, he has delivered three balanced state budgets with no new taxes.

His third budget phases out the interest and dividends tax, provides tax relief to employers and small businesses, and reduces property taxes by \$100 million.

His Democratic challenger, Dr. Tom Sherman, has dedicated his life to service. He volunteered as an EMT in high school, then went on to work for 35 years as a doctor. He ran a multi-physician medical practice and served as medical staff president at a major hospital. Sherman served two terms as a state representative and two terms as a state senator, where he worked across the aisle to help expand healthcare to 50,000 Granite Staters, lower prescription drug costs, protect our first responders and our drinking water from harmful chemicals, and pass “Buy American” provisions protecting New Hampshire’s steel fabricators.

● What can be done to bring down the price of energy?

Sununu: D.C.-driven inflation has caused energy prices across the country to skyrocket, so New Hampshire is taking action. We are delivering electric bill credits to families, expanding resources for low-income families to pay their electric and home-heating bills this winter, and have called on the Biden administration to increase domestic energy production. Under my leadership, New Hampshire is leading in offshore wind development, cheap hydroelectric power and investments expanding solar.

Sherman: One of the first things we can do is prioritize energy efficiency and weatherization, because the cheapest energy is the energy we don’t use.

More broadly, in order to bring down skyrocketing energy prices on families and businesses, we must expand our energy options. New Hampshire's overreliance on natural gas has driven up our energy costs and made it harder for us to mitigate spikes in natural gas prices. For years, Governor Sununu has vetoed bipartisan measures that would have allowed us to produce more energy closer to home.

We need to remove these regulatory barriers, increase funding for low-income energy-efficiency programs and expedite offshore wind production. I sit on the offshore wind task force, and I believe the state needs to be taking action now to train the workforce and build industry partnerships that will allow New Hampshire to capitalize on cleaner and cheaper energies.

- **What policies can address supply chain issues and inflation?**

Sununu: With out-of-control spending coming out of Washington, a recession is inevitable. My job as governor is to minimize the impacts as much as possible, making sure we're the last state entering one and the first to get out. Washington needs to cut spending.

Sherman: We need to work to lower everyday costs of things like electricity, housing and child care. But the past few years have shown we also need to do more to protect and promote our domestic supply chain by producing more goods and services right here in New Hampshire. I was proud to pass bipartisan legislation that adds "Buy American" provisions to state construction projects in order to support New Hampshire steel fabricators. When we purchase from New Hampshire manufacturers, that money is spent at local stores and in our own communities and has a net larger return on investment. This lifts the entire New Hampshire economy.

By supporting American manufacturing, we help protect our domestic supply chain and lower prices for the everyday consumer in the state of New Hampshire. We can do this by reviewing existing state regulations and procurement processes for additional ways to support domestic manufacturing, expanding funding for the Small Business Development Center so they can support new businesses, waive the first two years of taxes up to a point for new manufacturing businesses, and work with our agriculture community to support them in growing more food here.

- **What would you do increase the availability of workforce housing?**

Sununu: You cannot have a strong workforce without adequate housing supply. The state is investing \$100 million into our historic and transformative InvestNH Housing Fund – which will help build thousands of workforce housing units across the state in rapid time.

Sherman: For New Hampshire's economy to reach its full potential, we need housing where people can afford to live. So many businesses say they can't find the workers they need to expand because their workers can't find housing. The state needs at least 20,000 new units so this will take long-term planning and sustained investments. They include providing more resources to incentivize cities and towns to update their zoning in ways that work best for them, tripling the cap for the tax credit that allows businesses to get a tax break for investing in affordable housing projects in their community, creating a new state-level historic tax credit to

promote more mixed-use development in downtowns around the state, and increasing the Affordable Housing Fund.

- **What can be done to increase the availability of a skilled workforce?**

Sununu: Increase housing. Without housing, we cannot have a strong workforce – which is why we are investing \$100 million into our InvestNH Housing Fund to help build thousands of workforce housing units in rapid time.

Sherman: There are great programs around the state that help kids find and train in their passion, and we need to restore and fully fund Career & Technical Education schools at the high school level, community colleges across the state, and work with labor unions to educate and encourage people to join their training programs. We need to make sure there's sufficient affordable housing that workers can afford to live here. And we also need to make sure our public universities are competitive. We have the lowest level of state support for public universities in the country, and when people leave our state for college they often don't return after.

- **What can be done to lower healthcare costs for businesses?**

Sununu: Premiums for individual and small group markets are the lowest in New England. We are fortunate that, for a small state, New Hampshire has five companies competing in our small group health insurance marketplace. With robust competition, it helps to keep premiums affordable. We must continue to encourage consumers to utilize tools such as the state-created NHHealthCost website, which allows consumers to find local providers offering lower cost services. Finally, we should continue to support the NH Insurance Department's efforts to identify the true cost of state insurance mandates and its impact on premiums.

Sherman: In medicine, early intervention is always the cheapest form of healthcare. Across the board, we need to do more to expand access to preventive services, access to healthy foods and public education campaigns about preventative steps.

We can work to facilitate the process for small businesses of a similar industry to come together and purchase group products. I also helped create the Prescription Drug Affordability Board, which is examining industry practices and working to bring down prescription drug costs.

- **Do you think that current state business tax rates or federal corporate rates should remain the same, be raised or reduced?**

Sununu: When we cut taxes, our state surplus and revenue grew to historic highs. When we cut taxes, our businesses reinvested into their workforce, community and the New Hampshire economy.

As a result, the state has more money than ever before. Democrats want to raise taxes, and I've never met a tax I haven't wanted to cut. We cut business taxes, are phasing out the interest and dividends tax, and eliminated the electricity consumption tax.

Sherman: I have always opposed an income tax or a sales tax, and I would veto one the second it reaches my desk. In order for the New Hampshire economy to thrive, we need to provide more property tax relief to people and small businesses. Under Sununu's leadership, property taxes have gone up \$1.6 billion, and he keeps giving tax breaks to wealthy donors and large out-of-state corporations instead of providing relief to Granite State businesses and families. We don't need new business taxes, we just need to be smarter about the resources we already have and provide that relief to businesses based in New Hampshire in the form of property tax relief.

The race for the U.S. Senate

Incumbent: In 2016, U.S. Sen. Maggie Hassan was elected to represent New Hampshire in the Senate. She is only the second woman in American history to be elected as both governor and senator. Senator Hassan was named the most bipartisan senator by the nonpartisan Lugar Center. She recently received the endorsement of more than 140 small business owners in New Hampshire and previously received the Leadership Award from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. Senator Hassan served for three terms in the NH State Senate and later as the 81st governor of New Hampshire.

Editor's note: Despite repeated requests via email and phone calls, Don Bolduc, the Republican nominee for U.S. Senate, did not respond to NH Business Review's questionnaire by deadline — the only candidate not to do so. Instead, we are using statements from his website that address the questions. His lengthy bio from that site has been edited to the 100-word limit imposed on the other candidates.)

Challenger: Retired Gen. Don Bolduc was born and raised in Laconia. He grew up working on the historic Bolduc farm in Gilford. When he was 18 years old, he was hired as a police officer in Laconia. Bolduc enlisted in the U.S. Army and after achieving the rank of sergeant, attended Salem State University and joined ROTC. In the Army, he commanded many of our nation's most famous units during the global war on terror. Bolduc served on the Joint Staff in the Office of the Secretary of Defense and aide to the Secretary of the Army. He lives in Stratham.

● What can be done to bring down the price of energy?

Hassan: As we head into winter, we must keep working to help lower energy costs for families. I recently led efforts to significantly boost funding for a program to provide energy cost-savings for many Granite Staters. I also led the entire bipartisan New England delegation in pushing the President to release oil from the home-heating reserve to help lower energy costs. This builds on my previous bipartisan efforts to successfully push the President to release more oil from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve to help lower costs. In addition, Congress has passed and the President has signed my bipartisan measure that cuts taxes for families who make energy-efficient investments in their homes, which will help lower their energy bills. This same new law promotes clean energy technology, which will lower costs in the long term. However, there is more work to do to lower energy costs, which is why I continue to push for commonsense measures like my bill to suspend the federal gas tax.

Bolduc: We must regain the energy independence and security the Biden administration squandered, leasing and exploring federal lands for oil and gas, finishing pipelines and streamlining the permitting process. Senator Hassan has fought against the oil and gas industry and has supported the Biden administration's canceling of domestic oil leases, making us more dependent on foreign oil.

- **What policies can address supply chain issues and inflation?**

Hassan: Supply chain challenges have contributed to the inflation that we're seeing and have hurt our economy. The bipartisan CHIPS and Science Act, which is now law, will strengthen our supply chains, lower costs, support American manufacturing and bolster national security. I was proud to help develop and negotiate this bipartisan law, which will help make more goods here in America and reduce our reliance on foreign countries like China for critical technologies, such as semiconductors.

Additionally, the bipartisan infrastructure law that I helped negotiate will help strengthen our supply chains by improving our country's physical infrastructure, such as roads and ports, to help ensure that goods get to where they need to go more quickly. It's also important that we passed a new law that will lower prescription drug and energy costs, and I continue to push for measures to help bring down these costs even further.

Bolduc: We must reverse the growth of federal spending to reduce inflation. No more bailouts, no more government handouts, no more spending packages without corresponding cuts ... We must overhaul American diplomacy to focus on our national security, our supply chains and our economy. Senator Hassan has voted with President Biden 96 percent of the time, including trillions of dollars in new spending in just the last year, leading to record inflation and a stagnant economy.

- **What would you do to increase the availability of workforce housing?**

Hassan: The housing shortage in our state is an urgent issue that is hindering our economy and preventing skilled workers from moving to New Hampshire. To help address this challenge, I recently introduced legislation to provide funding to states like New Hampshire to help encourage the construction of affordable workforce housing. I also helped lead successful bipartisan efforts to bring tens of millions of dollars in emergency funding to New Hampshire over the past few years to help folks who are struggling with housing costs. And earlier this year, I partnered with a Republican senator to introduce a bill that would cut taxes for many middle-class families looking to buy new homes. There is still a lot of work to do to bring down the cost of housing, and I will continue working on this critical issue.

Bolduc: (No response. Issue not addressed on website.)

- **What can be done to increase the availability of a skilled workforce?**

Hassan: New Hampshire's innovative businesses need a highly skilled workforce in order to thrive, which is why I am working across the aisle on measures to support job training and credentialing programs to train workers in the skills that they need in our modern economy. That

includes my bipartisan bill to support career pathway programs at community and technical colleges. This bill would help people earn credits and industry-recognized credentials more quickly and connect them to employers to earn a paycheck while they learn.

Additionally, the bipartisan CHIPS and Science Act includes funding to help states like New Hampshire expand workforce training programs in critical fields, such as engineering and manufacturing. Lastly, we need to address the critical shortage of affordable housing in our state, which is one of the top concerns that I hear about from businesses.

Bolduc: (No response. Issue not addressed on website.)

● **What can be done to lower healthcare costs for businesses?**

Hassan: I have a long record of working to lower healthcare costs for Granite Staters. For instance, I stood up to the healthcare industry and worked with a Republican senator to pass landmark legislation to ban the absurd practice of surprise billing. I also worked to lower prescription drug costs across the board by passing into law a bill to finally allow Medicare to negotiate drug prices after hearing from Granite Staters who are struggling to afford their prescription medication. I am also working to get more generic drugs onto the market faster, which are often cheaper than their brand name counterparts and helps to increase competition, which in turn leads to lower drug costs across the board. These changes will help lower costs for businesses as well as individual patients.

Bolduc: (No response. Not addressed on website.)

● **Do you think that current state business tax rates or federal corporate rates should remain the same, be raised or reduced?**

Hassan: I am proud of my work to cut taxes for New Hampshire families and small businesses, and I will keep working to cut taxes for them. As governor, I doubled and made permanent the state research and development tax credit, and as senator, I successfully fought to double the federal research and development tax credit to help foster innovation and keep our small businesses on the cutting edge. I also worked across the aisle to cut taxes for small businesses and for new businesses that opened during the pandemic, which is something I pushed for after hearing from a new small business owner in Berlin who had been left out of tax cuts during the pandemic. I will also continue to work to close tax loopholes for Big Pharma, while my opponent has supported Big Pharma's agenda through and through.

Bolduc: (No response. Not addressed on website.)

The 1st Congressional District race

Incumbent: Democratic Congressman Chris Pappas is a small business owner born and raised in Manchester, and is a proud product of Manchester public schools. In Congress, he serves on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee and the Veterans' Affairs Committee, and he has been named one of the most bipartisan representatives. He worked across the aisle to pass legislation to expand VA healthcare, strengthen American manufacturing and invest in our

infrastructure. He has also worked to bring down prescription drug prices and lower costs for New Hampshire families, including home heating oil and gasoline.

Challenger: Republican Karoline Leavitt was born and raised in Atkinson in a small business family with deep roots in the community. Leavitt is an alumna of Saint Anselm College in Manchester. Before running, Leavitt served in President Trump's White House as an assistant press secretary under Kayleigh McEnany, and as the communications director for Congresswoman Elise Stefanik before resigning to run for Congress. Leavitt currently lives in Hampton and works at her family business in Plaistow.

- **What can be done to bring down the price of energy?**

Pappas: One of the most pressing issues New Hampshire faces as we enter the cold winter months is ensuring our small businesses are not struggling with high energy costs. I supported and fought to pass legislation that is delivering a record amount of federal support for the Low Income Heating Assistance Program (LIHEAP), doubling the amount from last year. I also helped pass the Inflation Reduction Act, which will provide tax credits and incentives to help Granite Stater's retrofit and weatherize their homes and businesses to be more energy efficient and lower their utility bills. That legislation includes investments to pursue all of the above energy strategies, including expanding domestic oil production and developing clean, renewable power. I've stood up to the Biden administration and fought efforts to export domestic crude oil overseas when we should be ensuring New Hampshire's energy needs are met first.

Leavitt: First, we must address why energy prices are the highest they have been in decades, and it's because the Biden administration and the Democrat-led Congress have prohibited our domestic energy supply and fossil fuel production here at home. Their restrictions, and actions, such as canceling the Keystone XL Pipeline, have led to a fossil fuel and natural gas shortage and the highest gas and electricity prices in decades. When elected to Congress in January 2023, I will take immediate action to unleash our domestic energy production again, so we can replenish our supply here at home, rather than beg OPEC and our adversaries abroad to produce more oil. Congress must pass legislation to restart the Keystone XL Pipeline, reverse President Biden's ban on drilling on federal lands, and ensure the oil industry has the confidence they need to invest, drill and produce oil for the American people.

- **What policies can address supply chain issues and inflation?**

Pappas: Global supply chains were turned upside down due to the Covid-19 pandemic. These disruptions won't be fixed overnight, but there are steps we've taken to ensure we fully recover. The bipartisan Infrastructure Law included \$17 billion for American ports to upgrade facilities and technology to ensure that goods can get to market and consumers faster and more efficiently. I fought to pass the Ocean Shipping Reform Act, the first overhaul of U.S. international shipping regulations in over two decades. This would alleviate backlogs in ports and prevent the bottlenecks we've seen that disrupt our supply chain.

My primary concern in Congress remains lowering costs for New Hampshire families and addressing inflation.

This Congress, I've worked to pass legislation to lower the cost of prescription drugs, cap the price of insulin and limit costs associated with prescription drugs. I also passed legislation to stop the oil companies from price gouging at the pump, costing us even more money. And I passed bipartisan legislation to jumpstart American manufacturing so that we make more goods right here at home and outcompete China and the world.

Leavitt: We are facing the highest inflation in 40 years, because the Biden administration has spent more money in two years than any administration in United States history. Congress must stop the spending, slash the trillions of dollars spent on wasteful federal government agencies and pass a truly balanced budget. The Democrats' so-called solution to inflation was to spend even more money, which will only worsen our economy and increase the cost of goods. Our supply chain will also only be strengthened if we decrease the cost of oil and fuel, by unleashing our domestic energy production here at home. We govern effectively at the state and local levels here in New Hampshire by passing sound fiscal policies and balanced budgets, and we need a leader who will take that same approach to Washington, D.C.

● **What would you do to increase the availability of workforce housing?**

Pappas: New Hampshire is facing an extreme shortage of affordable housing, with the 15th most expensive rental market in the nation and a vacancy rate of less than 1 percent. I have supported expanding the Low Income Housing Tax Credit, which helps build housing for all income levels. I have supported and co-sponsored the LIFELINE Act, designed to permit states, territories or tribal governments to use ARPA State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds to finance qualified low-income housing projects with loans obligated by Dec. 31, 2024, and the ability to be repaid over 30 or more years.

On a bipartisan basis, I advocated with the Treasury Department to unlock the ability of state and local governments to take unused recovery funds and use them for affordable housing. This effort paid off in July 2022 when the Treasury Department issued revised guidance permitting this flexibility.

Leavitt: New Hampshire's affordable housing shortage has only worsened in recent years, and it's having a huge impact on my generation of younger Granite Staters. We must increase our supply of affordable housing and rental properties in our state to ensure we have a sufficient workforce for our small businesses. Under the current administration, housing costs, rents and mortgage rates have skyrocketed, and the dream of owning a home has never been more out of reach for young Americans. The crippling inflation we are experiencing is not making that any easier. We need to stop the spending in Washington to get inflation under control and allow the free market to solve this problem — it always has and always will. It will be my utmost priority in Congress to get the government out of the way, roll back regulations and cut red tape, to help solve our economic challenges, including our housing crisis.

● **What can be done to increase the availability of a skilled workforce?**

Pappas: To compete in the 21st century economy, New Hampshire needs a highly skilled workforce to get the job done.

That's why I've supported legislation to invest in job training, apprenticeship programs and Community College Training Grants. I've also advocated for increased funding for Manufacturing Extension Partnerships, helping small manufacturing in our state.

Leavitt: Sadly, the higher education system has conned young Americans into believing they need a four-year degree from a liberal arts school to be successful. That could not be further from the truth. Rather than subsidize six-figure college degrees, our leaders should be promoting trade schools and increasing our academic standards in our local public school system to ensure the next generation is taught much-needed, sought-after skills that will help them succeed in life.

● **What can be done to lower healthcare costs for businesses?**

Pappas: As a small business owner, I understand the cost of doing business can be high, which often includes healthcare and prescription drug coverage for employees. This Congress, we made good on promises from Washington for decades to lower the cost of prescription drugs. This bill will allow Medicare the ability to negotiate with drug companies for lower prices, cap the price of insulin at \$35, and limit out-of-pocket costs. Americans pay more for healthcare than any industrialized nation, so I fought to save middleclass families of four in New Hampshire \$1,655 a year on their healthcare premiums and expand the number of Granite Staters who can enroll in an affordable plan on the marketplace.

Leavitt: The record-high inflation we face as a result of Democrat-led spending in Washington has affected the cost of nearly everything, especially healthcare and prescription drugs. We need to get government out of the way, encourage competition in our healthcare system to see prices go down and fight for price transparency. For businesses, we should also strengthen alternative options to care such as Association Health Plans, Short Term Limited Duration Plans and Individual Reimbursement Accounts.

● **Do you think that current state business tax rates or federal corporate rates should remain the same, be raised or reduced?**

Pappas: The tax code should encourage innovation and incentivize companies to keep jobs here. We should also ensure that small New Hampshire businesses are not bearing more than their fair share. That is why I have supported requiring the largest corporations, those with income over \$1 billion, to pay a minimum tax on their income. For too long, these corporations have profited through tax loopholes and avoidance of paying zero taxes. Granite State businesses and individuals must pay taxes, and so should these mega-corporations.

I am also fighting to repeal the federal excise tax on trucks, which is currently the highest federal sales tax and was implemented to fund World War I. Phasing out that tax will help small businesses and lower costs for consumers whose goods move through the supply chain on trucks.

Leavitt: If elected, I will always look for ways to reduce taxes on businesses and individuals. The Democrats recently proposed a corporate tax rate higher than Communist China's. I am adamantly opposed to tax increases of any kind — business owners and the American people know how to spend their money better than the government does, and the more money we keep in the pockets of the people, the better. I also believe Congress needs to simplify our tax code,

and would vote in favor of abolishing the IRS and passing a flat tax to make it easier for every American to file taxes and keep more of their hard-earned money.

The 2nd Congressional District race

Incumbent: When Democrat Annie Kuster was elected to Congress, she pledged to bring a new approach to Washington — that’s exactly what she’s done. Ranked one of the most bipartisan members of Congress, she has reached across party lines to end the gridlock and dysfunction in Washington. She serves on the Energy and Commerce Committee and Agriculture Committee where she advances policies to strengthen our economy and our state. A proud New Hampshire native, born and raised in Concord, she lives in Hopkinton with her husband, Brad, an environmental attorney, where they raised their two sons Zach and Travis.

Challenger: Robert Burns is a lifelong New Hampshire resident. Burns was born in Nashua, attended Manchester West High School, and is a graduate of Keene State College with a degree in business management. From an early age, Burns attended legislative sessions in Concord with his mother, Leslie, who served three terms as a state representative. In 2005, Burns was first elected to serve as a selectman in Manchester’s Ward 12. In 2010, he was elected Hillsborough County treasurer. Currently, Burns owns and operates Burns Automation, a growing quality control and pharmaceutical safety company in Bedford.

● What can be done to bring down the price of energy?

Kuster: Families and businesses in New Hampshire are hurting because of the high costs of energy. That’s why I pushed the Biden administration to release reserves from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve and the Northeast Home Heating Oil Reserve to address the high costs of gasoline and heating oil. In the long term, we must invest in American energy independence by increasing domestic energy supplies and diversifying our national energy portfolio. We’ve seen what our reliance on foreign natural gas has done to electricity prices here in New Hampshire. As a member of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, I am uniquely positioned to help lead the transition to the clean energy economy of the future by easing regulatory barriers to unleash more solar, wind and hydro power that will shield consumers from the price swings and volatility we’re currently facing.

Burns: Most crucially, we need to reverse course and finish the Keystone Pipeline. We also need to rapidly expand our domestic production of nuclear energy. Furthermore, we must open any and all avenues to domestic production of natural gas, including new pipeline construction. Lastly, we must remove Jones Act restrictions on the transportation of natural gas.

● What policies can address supply chain issues and inflation?

Kuster: The Covid-19 pandemic decimated global supply chains. As we come out on the other side of this pandemic, pent-up demand has driven price increases and put a real strain on families and small businesses. I’m proud to have helped bring both Republicans and Democrats together to pass the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, which is making much-needed improvements to our national infrastructure and modernizing our ports, roads, bridges and railways. The CHIPS and Science Act, which I was proud to help get signed into law, is making important investments

in our domestic production of semiconductors and computer chips, so that we are not reliant on foreign producers. This summer, I was excited to join the ribbon cutting of Onsemi's new facility in Hudson, which is a fantastic example of progress when we bring sophisticated manufacturing back home.

Burns: We must stop reckless and unsustainable government spending. Corporate welfare, bailouts, stimulus packages and omnibus spending bills are examples of methods that D.C. politicians have used to waste our taxpayer dollars and further devalue our currency while also overstimulating the economy and contributing to inflation. To address the supply chain, we must diversify our procurement sources in federal contracts to minimize the impact of bottlenecks at plants and production centers.

- **What would you do to increase the availability of workforce housing?**

Kuster: As I travel throughout the district, I hear firsthand about the challenge that the lack of affordable housing is posing to our businesses and communities. We have companies like Dartmouth Health, Fidelity, BAE and hundreds of small businesses trying to hire thousands of employees. But the lack of housing is making recruiting workers a real challenge. I've been heartened to see more housing being built in communities throughout the state, from Salem to Lebanon and Keene to Bethlehem, but more must be done. New Hampshire has used \$100 million from federal ARPA funds to support the construction of housing. I've also directed resources to a local organization in the North Country that is working with communities to make needed changes to local zoning ordinances. I believe this program could serve as a model throughout the state.

Burns: This is an issue that is best handled locally — the only role that the federal and state governments should have is to reduce regulations. D.C. should not interfere in the business of local planning and zoning boards in order to force housing projects on unwilling communities.

Moreover, taxpayers should not be forced to subsidize workforce housing projects. Instead, individual towns should have the final say on whether buildings should be constructed within their borders — not the federal government or the courts.

- **What can be done to increase the availability of a skilled workforce?**

Kuster: Addressing the housing shortage is key to attracting more workers to New Hampshire. Additionally, we have seen many parents, particularly women, leave the workforce due to a severe lack of affordable child care. The American Rescue Plan invested heavily in increasing access to affordable child care to allow parents to reenter the workforce. We must build on that progress so no family is left behind. I've also fought to support career and technical training programs that prepare young people to fill job openings right here in our communities. I recently urged the Northern Border Regional Commission to use its authority to help attract rural healthcare workers by using J-1 visas. I'm excited that the NBRC will be launching that program next year.

Burns: A stronger emphasis on vocational and community colleges would increase the supply of available specialized workers across many industries. We also must end subsidies that remain from the Covid-19 era, which disincentivize some from rejoining the workforce.

- **What can be done to lower healthcare costs for businesses?**

Kuster: We've taken critical steps to lower healthcare costs for Granite Staters through the Inflation Reduction Act. This transformative legislation will lower the costs of prescription drugs and expand access to affordable healthcare. These significant savings will help consumers afford coverage in the marketplace and bring down the cost of healthcare writ large across our system.

Burns: Investment in preventative care will go a long way towards lowering our massive treatment costs. I also support allowing the purchase of basic healthcare plans across state lines to increase competition. Both of these actions will drastically drive down the cost of insurance policies for businesses in the long term.

- **Do you think that current state business tax rates or federal corporate rates should remain the same, be raised or reduced?**

Kuster: We must ensure that the largest corporations, which are currently making record profits while Granite State families face rising prices, pay their fair share in taxes. It's unbelievable that corporations like Amazon pay less in taxes than firefighters and teachers. The Inflation Reduction Act makes important investments that will help ensure the largest corporations pay the taxes they owe.

Burns: I will always strive to find ways to reduce taxes and regulation on businesses. As the owner of a small business, I am acutely aware of the painful burden that high taxes can impose on entrepreneurs and business owners.