

Cinde Wirth, Democratic Candidate for Indiana State Senate District 44
Responses to questions from the Greater Bloomington Chamber of Commerce
For the Nov. 3, 2020 General Election

1. The COVID-19 pandemic will have a significant impact on the state budget. What issues or priorities will guide your budgetary decisions in the next legislative session?

- Fully funding our public-school system is a top priority to ensure our Hoosier students receive an excellent public education that will serve them for the rest of their lives.
- Hoosiers face many existing challenges that have been highlighted in the COVID-19 pandemic, such as an unlivable minimum wage, lack of access to affordable childcare solutions, and skyrocketing healthcare costs. These issues affect our middle class and disproportionately penalize working mothers, young workers, and minority Hoosiers.
- To assist in economically recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic, we must support Indiana's small businesses, farms, and small manufacturers with a focus on long-term agricultural and economic sustainability such as prioritizing health care manufacturing, cutting edge renewable energy jobs, and regenerative agricultural practices.

2. Many local businesses are struggling in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. What state financial aid, programmatic assistance or other actions would you support in the coming months to strengthen economic recovery?

- State stimulus programs focusing on educational programs and training for displaced and/or underemployed workers from employment sectors that are diminishing are needed.
- State assistance in developing a robust care-giver program for childcare, dependent care, and elder care will alleviate concerns of the false choice many working caregivers face daily.
- Legalization of cannabis and increased agricultural production of hemp and hemp products will result in new job creation and increased revenue from the associated and regulated manufacturing and sales of these products.

3. Other than the current crisis, what will be your top 3 priorities in the state legislature that relate to the business sector?

- Indiana's public schools need to be fully funded in order to attract and retain great teachers and working families in the Hoosier state. When public tax dollars for education are allocated outside of our public schools, we face an increasing decline of our public schools and public school teacher shortages.

- Promoting positive childcare and health care solutions for all Hoosiers will support our workforce and assist in attracting and retaining economic investment in Indiana. Comprehensive childcare programs for working families and quality accessible health care are critical needs of Indiana.
- Indiana needs to better facilitate our transition to increase the role of renewable energy sources and manage the decline in dependence on oil and gas energy sources. This will have a lasting positive effect on both our Indiana economy and Hoosier health.