

Responses cannot be edited

2020 Candidate Survey (due June 30)

Dear Candidate:

The Secular Coalition for Arizona is a 501(c)(4) nonprofit advocacy organization that works to ensure a secular state government. We lobby on behalf of all individuals who believe that public policy free of religious preference is the best way to ensure freedom of conscience for Arizonans of all faiths and of none.

We also represent the Arizona nontheistic community – a vibrant and growing community of Arizonans who self-identify as atheists, agnostics, humanists, freethinkers, and other labels of personal choosing – to elected officials and government bodies in and from Arizona. We mediate the relationship between the nontheistic community and elected officials.

Secular Coalition for Arizona is operated by a board of directors and executive staff, and receives policy influence and comment from diverse liaised secular groups throughout Arizona.

Although we have been asked many times by our supporters to do so, Secular Coalition for Arizona does not endorse candidates. Instead, we offer you the opportunity to provide your position on issues important to our constituency. We will present your answers on our website exactly as you submit it to us as part of the Secular Coalition for Arizona Candidate Guide.

Instructions: Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements. Please make comments if you would like to clarify your statement. Your answers will be published exactly as you return it to us. Questions? Contact Tory Roberg, Director of Government Affairs, tory@secularaz.org

* Required

Email address *

info@mendoza4arizona.com

Candidate Name: *

JoAnna Mendoza

Candidate Website:

www.mendoza4arizona.com

House or Senate

Senate ▼

Legislative District: *

11

“Public tax dollars should not be used to fund private religious education, either directly through tax credit scholarships (STOs) or indirectly through vouchers (Empowerment Scholarship Accounts).” Indicate your level of agreement with this statement: *

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

Comments:

Public tax dollars should be reserved for public education and social service programs, not diverted to fund private schools, charter schools, and private religious schools. Every child deserves to have a quality education and be set up for success - regardless of zip code, the color of their skin, socioeconomic status, or any other factor. Fully funding our public education system is how we can achieve that goal and support the future success of all children.

“When it comes to government policy, health care decisions must be made in a religiously-neutral way based on science and evidence. When it comes to a woman’s health care decisions, the only beliefs that matter are hers. Lawmakers should not use their personal religious beliefs to dictate women’s access to reproductive health care.” Indicate your level of agreement with this statement: *

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

Comments:

Government policy about health care decisions should always be based on science and evidence, not personal religious beliefs. I fully support a woman’s right to choose and that every person should have access to reproductive health services. These are conversations and decisions that should be had by an individual and their healthcare provider. The personal religious beliefs of politicians should have no say in this area.

"A terminally ill, mentally capable person with a prognosis of six months or less to live should have the option to request from their doctor a prescription for medication which they can choose to self-ingest to die peacefully." Indicate your level of agreement with this statement: *

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

Comments:

Death with dignity legislation allows qualified terminally-ill adults to voluntarily request and receive a prescription medication to hasten their death. In the 2020 legislative session, a number of death with dignity bills were introduced (HB 2582 / SB 1384, the Arizona Medical Aid in Dying Act, SB 1497, the Arizona Death with Dignity Act), but none were allowed to pass out of committee. Individuals seeking to end their own life to avoid further suffering from a terminal illness either have to commit suicide alone, risk criminal prosecution of those aiding in the death, or travel to another state to access euthanasia. There are roughly 10 states throughout the nation that have passed death with dignity laws. Legalization allows family and friends to speak openly about this process and provide support to their loved one. Reports have shown that relatives and loved ones believe that the assisted death contributed positively to the overall end of life experience by ending the suffering of their loved one and allowing them to say goodbye.

"Public schools should not teach "creationism" or "intelligent design" as viable alternatives to scientific theories on the origin of life." Indicate your level of agreement with this statement: *

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

Comments:

Curriculum in public schools should consist exclusively of evidence-based scientific theories. Subjects such as creationism and intelligent design are not alternative scientific theories, they are religious-based concepts. They should not be taught in public schools as this gives the impression that they carry the same weight as evolution and other evidence-based scientific theories.

"Religious institutions should not be exempt from the requirements and restrictions of tax policy that is imposed on all non-profit and charitable organizations." Indicate your level of agreement with this statement: *

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

Comments:

Churches, religious organizations and ministers were granted special tax exemptions by Congress in recognition of their unique status in American society, but times have changed. Our government loses millions of dollars every year as a result of the tax-exempt status of religious institutions. Many religious institutions are making a substantial profit, while individual taxpayers bear the burden. The other troubling issue about tax exemptions for religious institutions is that they are not required to disclose where the money comes from, which is a breeding ground for corruption. Tax exemptions are a privilege and not a right, and the time has come for us to rethink this privilege for religious institutions.

"If a government meeting is opened with a prayer, it should be open and inclusive for representatives of all religious beliefs, including unpopular minority religions and people with no official beliefs or creed." Indicate your level of agreement with this statement: *

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

Comments:

As is written in our US Constitution, there should be a clear separation of church and state. Everyone has a right to their own religious beliefs. That should not influence public policy and governmental affairs.

"A statewide non-discrimination law is needed to protect all Arizonans from discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity or expression." Indicate your level of agreement with this statement: *

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

Comments:

No one should live in fear of discrimination in any aspect of their life because of their sexual orientation and/or gender identity. The recent Supreme Court ruling that LGBTQ+ individuals cannot be discriminated against in the workplace is a monumental step forward for our country. However, there is still much work to be done in Arizona to ensure that we protect LGBTQ+ individuals. A statewide non-discrimination law is still necessary to implement protections for areas such as housing, healthcare, businesses, and other public accommodations.

"A patient has a right to know if their health provider will refuse certain services, treatments, prescriptions, or withhold scientific information and options based on the provider's sincerely held religious beliefs." Indicate your level of agreement with this statement: *

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

Comments:

This is absolutely something that should be provided upfront to a patient. Healthcare should be based on data and science, not religious beliefs. A patient should never be denied the healthcare services that they need because of their provider's own religious beliefs. If a healthcare provider refuses to provide any services, potential patients have a right to know that information in order to make fully informed decisions about their healthcare options.

"Comprehensive, medically accurate and age-appropriate sex education is a matter of public health and safety, and should be offered in public schools with parents having the right to opt-out." Indicate your level of agreement with this statement: *

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

Comments:

Young people deserve and need to have access to comprehensive, medically accurate, and age-appropriate sex education in schools in order to help ensure their health and well-being. This is absolutely a matter of public health and safety. We are failing to provide them with the information that they need to live healthy lives - physically, mentally, emotionally, and socially. Programs that offer comprehensive and age-appropriate sex education have also been shown to improve academic success. This should be the standard in our public schools, giving parents the right to opt-out rather than having an opt-in system.

“Public employees deserve a workplace free from religious proselytizing and pressure by the Governor, agency heads, municipal or county leaders, or other persons in authority in public spheres.” Indicate your level of agreement with this statement: *

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

Comments:

Public employees should never be subject to pressure about religious preferences from any person in authority. Religion should have no place in the public work sector.

“So-called ‘conversion therapy’ is a pseudoscientific practice attempting to ‘convert’ LGBT individuals to become heterosexual. Practicing this on LGBT youth should be banned in Arizona.” Indicate your level of agreement with this statement: *

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

Comments:

Absolutely. Conversion therapy is a traumatic and harmful practice that should never be used, particularly for youth. It has been disavowed by reputable medical professionals. I fully support a ban on these practices in Arizona.

“Religion is never an excuse to harm a child or allow harm to a child. Religious loopholes for medical neglect, physical abuse, and reporting requirements must be repealed.” Indicate your level of agreement with this statement: *

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

Comments:

There is no excuse for harming a child, period. So-called religious beliefs are no exception. Any loopholes for neglect, abuse, or reporting requirements should definitely be repealed.

