

From: Catherine McNicoll <CatherineMcNicoll@scstatehouse.gov>
To: Danny VaratDannyVarat@scstatehouse.gov
CC: Tori Beth Blacktoribethblack@scstatehouse.gov
Date: 6/23/2017 11:55:39 AM
Subject: RE: from john breslin/palmetto business daily

My Edits are in Blue.

What does he see as the biggest two or three priorities facing the SC business community right now?

1. Education (For Workforce and For the development of new small business)
 2. Taxes
 3. Understanding and working within complex and burdensome laws and regulations, which state and federal agencies often have difficulty answering questions about, let alone the small businessman or entrepreneur that has to follow them.
- The legislature recently enacted, over the governor's veto, an increase in the state gas tax. Lt. Gov. Bryant opposed that gas tax, while many in the business community supported it. Now that it's become a reality - where do we go from here in terms of making sure we have quality roads, and how can we make sure that, in the long-term, we don't have to go through another road funding battle like the one we just had in the state?
The gas tax won't fix our roads. The problem is that the SCDOT is like a football team with three head coaches and nine quarterbacks--no one can be held accountable when they lose and South Carolinians are losing. The roads won't get fixed until DOT is a cabinet agency with one figure of accountability to the taxpayer and voter--the governor.
 - How does being a small business owner effect his approach to his job as Lt. Gov?
I see every day how taxes and regulation overburden and, sometimes, kill the jobs engine in our state, our small businesses. (The phrasing of the first sentence is unclear, how about "Being a small business owner has shown me time and again that burdensome taxes and regulation kill small businesses and kill jobs.") I want to use my position as a statewide official to advocate for small business and the reforms they need to thrive.
 - What's the biggest difference he's seen between serving as State Sen. and now serving as Lt. Gov.
My job in the Senate chamber used to be to create chaos (not sure we want to openly admit that), and now it's to keep order. My perspective now only confirms for me what Churchill said, "democracy is the worst form of government except for all those other forms that have been tried" (Overall, I don't love this answer, not sure what to change.)
 - What are some ways the Lt. Gov. can impact the state's business climate?
I can and will spread the word about the value of small business and the necessity of keeping it strong and growing. (I think there is more that can be said here, but I'm not sure what right now.)
 - The state is facing a big hole when it comes to our pension liabilities. The Gov. recently signed a pension bill into law. What does the Lt. Gov think of that law? Will it help? If not, what's the solution?
I was proud to serve as co-chair of the joint legislative committee, until I became Lt. Gov., that crafted the bill. The bill will help, because it addresses the immediate funding need of the system and made improvements to the governance of the pension fund. However, the bill does not completely solve the problem. I am pleased that the joint committee has embarked on phase two of reforming the pension system to modernize the benefits package. I believe that more of a 401k style plan offers the best long-term solution. (I've made a fair number of changes to this answer and have not specifically noted them.)
 - One business issue that doesn't get as much attention as others is the lawsuit climate in our state. SC has long had a reputation as a state that is more friendly to plaintiffs' lawyers than to business. Gov. Haley signed some legal reforms into law several years ago, but there are some additional proposals pending that would go further, such as a bill to require more transparency in the asbestos lawsuit system. Where does the Lt. Gov. stand on these issues - and what does he think is the solution for breaking the considerable clout of the plaintiffs' bar in the legislature?
I enthusiastically support continuing tort reform, workers comp reform, and the curtailing of frivolous lawsuits. These actions help all our businesses, especially our small businesses who cannot afford to fight the plaintiff's bar. (Should this answer also include some vague nod to Plaintiff's, ie. Every reform to our courts should and must be carefully reviewed to ensure balance and justice.)

Best Regards,
Catherine McNicoll
Director of Legal & Legislative Affairs
Lieutenant Governor's Office
CatherineMcNicoll@SCStatehouse.gov
803-734-5292 (phone)

From: Danny Varat
Sent: Friday, June 23, 2017 11:06 AM
To: Tori Beth Black ; Catherine McNicoll
Subject: Re: from john breslin/palmetto business daily

- What does he see as the biggest two or three priorities facing the SC business community right now?
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The gas tax won't fix our roads. The problem is that the SCDOT is like a football team with three head coaches and nine quarterbacks--no one can be held accountable. The roads won't get fixed until DOT is a cabinet agency with one figure of accountability--the governor.
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I see everyday how taxes and regulation overburden and, sometimes, kill the jobs engine in our state, our small businesses. I want to use my position as a statewide official to advocate for small business and the reforms they need to thrive
 - What's the biggest difference he's seen between serving as State Sen. and now serving as Lt. Gov.
My job in the Senate chamber used to be to create chaos, and now it's to keep order. My perspective now only confirms for me what Churchill said, "democracy is the worst form of government except for all those other forms that have been tried"
 - What are some ways the Lt. Gov. can impact the state's business climate?
I can and will spread the word about the value of small business and the necessity of keeping it strong and growing
 - The state is facing a big hole when it comes to our pension liabilities. The Gov. recently signed a pension bill into law. What does the Lt. Gov think of that law? Will it help? If not, what's the solution?
I was proud to serve as co-chair, until I became Lt. Gov., of the joint legislative committee that crafted the ultimate bill. The bill that passed will help, because it addresses the immediate funding need. It will not completely fix the problem, though, and I am pleased that the joint committee has embarked on phase two of modernizing the benefits package to more of a 401k style plan. That is the long-term solution.
 - One business issue that doesn't get as much attention as others is the lawsuit climate in our state. SC has long had a reputation as a state that is more friendly to plaintiffs' lawyers than to business. Gov. Haley signed some legal reforms into law several years ago, but there are some additional proposals pending that would go further, such as a bill to require more transparency in the asbestos lawsuit system. Where does the Lt. Gov. stand on these issues - and what does he think is the solution for breaking the considerable clout of the plaintiffs' bar in the legislature?
I enthusiastically support continuing tort reform, workers comp reform and the curtailing of frivolous lawsuits. These actions help all our businesses, especially our small businesses who cannot afford to fight the plaintiff's bar.

From: Tori Beth Black
Sent: Friday, June 23, 2017 10:41 AM
To: Danny Varat
Subject: RE: from john breslin/palmetto business daily

Sounds good.

From: Danny Varat
Sent: Friday, June 23, 2017 10:41 AM
To: Tori Beth Black <toribethblack@scstatehouse.gov>
Subject: Re: from john breslin/palmetto business daily
I'm looking at them more closely now. Let me take a quick stab. Y'all can refine from there.

From: Tori Beth Black
Sent: Friday, June 23, 2017 10:10 AM
To: Danny Varat
Subject: FW: from john breslin/palmetto business daily

Yes, he can respond via email. Are you with him today? Do you want to send me the answers or send them straight to

him?

From: Breslin John [<mailto:jfbres@yahoo.com>]
Sent: Friday, June 23, 2017 10:00 AM
To: Tori Beth Black <toribethblack@scstatehouse.gov>
Subject: Re: from john breslin/palmetto business daily
Tori Beth

That would work, thanks, any time today at his convenience.

John

From: Tori Beth Black <toribethblack@scstatehouse.gov>
To: 'Breslin John' <jfbres@yahoo.com>
Sent: Friday, June 23, 2017 8:28 AM
Subject: RE: from john breslin/palmetto business daily

Hi John,

I apologize the LG wasn't able to contact you last night. He is working all day today in the Pharmacy - would it be possible for him to respond to you by email?

Thank you!
Tori Beth

From: Breslin John [<mailto:jfbres@yahoo.com>]
Sent: Thursday, June 22, 2017 4:42 PM
To: Tori Beth Black <toribethblack@scstatehouse.gov>
Subject: Re: from john breslin/palmetto business daily

Tori Beth

Sorry did not get back earlier, but these below are the sort of questions wanted to ask.

Regards

John Breslin
847 769 2819

- What does he see as the biggest two or three priorities facing the SC business community right now?
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From: Tori Beth Black <toribethblack@scstatehouse.gov>
To: 'Breslin John' <jfbres@yahoo.com>

Sent: Thursday, June 22, 2017 2:36 PM

Subject: RE: from john breslin/palmetto business daily

Hi John,

Thank you so much for reaching out. Would you mind sending over a list of your questions? I would love to get the Lt. Gov. to call you later today as he will be in the Pharmacy all day tomorrow, but he does have a couple more meetings so it would probably be after 5:00pm.

Thanks!

Tori Beth

From: Breslin John [<mailto:jfbres@yahoo.com>]

Sent: Thursday, June 22, 2017 12:50 PM

To: Tori Beth Black <toribethblack@scstatehouse.gov>

Subject: from john breslin/palmetto business daily

Tori Beth

I am a reporter and do some work for the above publication, palmettobusinessdaily.com

We are hoping to get an interview with Lt. Gov. Bryant to talk about his first few months in office, and his about the business climate, taxes and pensions?

I can send a list of questions but was hoping to get some time with him. I have a hard deadline of 4pm tomorrow. Any help would be much appreciated. I will take up too much time.

My telephone number is 847 769 2819.

Regards

John Breslin