

EXECUTIVE ROUNDTABLE

The Business Journal asked readers to submit questions for the two major party gubernatorial candidates. Two questions, dealing with topics that readers deem most important to their business, will appear each week. The answers are taken from interviews with the candidates and their position papers.

Mike Schwab

CEO, Portland Clinic

“How would you equalize payments, or influence the equalization of Medicare and other payments, coming to the West Coast for our seniors versus what gets paid in other parts of the country?”

John Kitzhaber: That’s a huge problem because we’ve got doctors who are dropping people when they turn 65 or not taking them. We’re supposed to get another \$5 billion (in federal health care funds) over the next 10 years. We need to find a way to take that money and create a different delivery model by focusing on prevention and wellness in the community-based management of chronic conditions. We need to show that Oregon can actually reduce costs and have much better outcomes through that model. In the process, we need to ask for at least the national average reimbursement of Medicare.

Chris Dudley: There’s a big imbalance. It came up during the health care reform discussion. As governor, you can be an advocate and support your representatives and senators to push for it. It’s something that (Rep. Peter) DeFazio was talking about during that debate. We need to not be punished just because we’re efficient.



Schwab

Jeff Borlaug

Vice president and director of brokerage, Norris Beggs Simpson

What three specific actions will you take to recruit businesses to Oregon? And what types of business would you try to recruit?

John Kitzhaber: I will attract new private-sector investments through an aggressive business recruitment program, and through promoting Oregon in the global economy. Oregon can offer a unique gateway to America for advanced manufacturing, assembly, design and marketing.

I will help existing Oregon businesses grow by helping them access capital. This includes maximizing the value of the state’s investment dollars right here at home and helping our community financial institutions lend again. We can help the timber industry thrive again by developing our biomass industry and marketing our sustainably produced and value-added timber products to the world. I will also support our growing expertise in clean technologies such as energy efficiency, green building, transportation and green chemistry, and build on this expertise by effectively transferring these technologies to the private sector.

Chris Dudley: First, I intend to make cities across Oregon a partner in recruiting new businesses to Oregon. We need all hands on deck, working together to put Oregonians back to work. I will allow cities to keep half the additional state income tax revenues generated from the employees and businesses they recruit.

Second, I will reverse the decline in economic confidence by implementing my package of tax relief. Investors and entrepreneurs need to know it’s safe to go back in the water.

Third, I will declare that Oregon is open for business. I will promote Oregon’s many natural assets across the nation and around the world as a desirable investment and tourist destination. And finally, the greatest single investment Oregon can make in its economic future is an investment in higher education; improving access for middle class families to attend our schools and improving the quality of our entire system of education – pre-kindergarten through college.



Borlaug