

VSEA Candidate Survey:

Name: Jay Hooper

District: Orange-Washington-Addison

1. Should the work of State government be performed by State employees?

Yes

2. As an elected official, how would you improve the overall safety of state employees?

I would support legislation that is attentive to the potential threats imposed on state employees by the circumstances under which they work. For instance, policy improvements that consider the best ways to refurbish sick buildings (like addressing the toxins in outdated carpeting or peeling lead paint), or perhaps legislative initiatives that approach issues with highway safety for flaggers and construction workers, to name a couple.

3. What is your plan to make the health care system more fair and equitable for working Vermonters?

In an ideal world, all Vermonters would have universal healthcare. I think that working Vermonters need more affordable health care, so I intend to support policies that will benefit working class Vermonters. I would certainly consult the VSEA on bills pertaining to healthcare.

4. Will you support collective bargaining and vote against "Right to Work" legislation in any form?

If I get elected, I will support collective bargaining, and I will vote against the "Right to Work" legislation.

5. What do you see as the role of State employees and how would you support them in their role?

I see the role of State employees as any occupation commissioned by the Vermont state government. State workers perform very important services like license issuance at the DMV, environmental enforcement, or snow plowing. I will do my best to listen to the most common concerns of those workers, and represent them accordingly.

6. What mechanisms would you put in place to avoid budget shortfalls?

I think the state legislature should work to keep the projected expenditure appropriations at a lesser number than the total sum in anticipated annual revenue. That is to say, we should figure out the best places from which to draw more funding for state programs, like taxing the 1%.

7. What approach would you take to make higher education more affordable for Vermonters?

I think we need more educational opportunity for high school students in Vermont, and we should look at ways to make our graduation rates higher so more students will consider attending college. We also should combat student debt, and develop more initiatives for scholarship programs. I think a lot of high school students in Vermont rule out potential college aspirations because they feel it would be more practical to simply join the workforce. I bet our college guidance councilors could be better equipped to remedy those notions, and help students plan on reaching various longterm goals in their academic careers, by encouraging students earlier on in their high school years to consider attending college. I would also support increases in funding for the Vermont Student Assistance Corp (VSAC).

8. What would you do to ensure the viability of the state college system?

To ensure the viability of the state college system, I would maintain a productive relationship with VSC Board of Trustees, and look for ways to highlight the strengths of each of Vermont's state colleges.

9. Do you support a livable wage for Vermonters? If so, what do you think that amount should be?

Yes I do support a livable wage for Vermonters. The consensus for many, is that an annual income of \$30,000 is what should be considered 'livable', which means that Vermont should pursue a minimum wage of \$15 per hour so long as it wouldn't cripple small businesses throughout the state.

10. Briefly state why the VSEA should endorse you, and describe the type of assistance that you would be seeking from a VSEA endorsement.

The Vermont State Employee's Association should endorse my candidacy because I aspire to be a champion of the working class here in Vermont. I've worked on the production line at our family business, Vermont

Creamery, which has grown over the past 30 years to employ over 85 Vermonters. My mother has testified in favor of boosting minimum wage, payed maternity-leave, paid sick-leave, and is actively seeking wage increases for employees at Vermont Creamery, as well as improving employee benefits.

Furthermore, my dad was the chairman of the House Government Operations Committee, and had a 100% voting record on labor issues. I hope to do the same.