

# Hunhoff

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lot that proposes to increase the state general sales and use tax rate from 4 percent to 5 percent to, in part, help fund K-12, there is some uncertainty in regards to the future of education funding. What do you think of current funding levels, and what is the way forward?

Education funding will continue to be a priority for the Legislature. Funding is dependent upon the revenue that is raised and the allocation of those resources among state government. Education currently is 48 percent of the general budget. Providing more dollars to education has historically occurred with the exception during the recession. I have consistently supported more dollars to education. But we cannot spend more than the state takes in. In this upcoming election, the people will be voting on a tax increase to support education. The Legislature focuses on the revenue that is projected to be earned to provide for a balanced budget. It's the people that will decide if there will be an additional one-cent sales tax that should be designated to education.

3. The general election ballot will include Referred Law 14, which would determine whether or not the Large Project Development Fund will be formed to assist with the construction of economic development projects. Is this fund needed? Why or why not?

Economic development is about creating jobs for South Dakota citizens. It is a competitive market for states to attract new businesses and support expansion of existing businesses. Incentives such as loans and tax credits are offered to companies for coming into states. The Large Project Development Fund will be used to recruit companies to South Dakota. The criteria for projects eligible for the funding are specific and there is more oversight and accountability for using the dollars to demonstrate measurable outcomes. Economic growth stimulates our economy and broadens our tax base to reduce the burden on the individual taxpayer.

4. Do you think South Dakota's economy is heading in the right direction?

I believe it is. Even in the recent downturn in the economy, South Dakota was one of the few states where the economy was stabilized. Agriculture remains our number one industry and we continue in our efforts to expand our agricultural markets internationally and support research for creation of new products and markets. We're bringing new companies to S.D. because of our favorable tax climate, and we are continuing efforts in supporting development of small businesses by reducing the impact of government on business. Our focus and actions continue to be on keeping our young people in this state. The economy is dependent up an available workforce. The state must continue in its efforts to support education for workforce development to meet the needs of business and industry.

5. Scientists link the increasing frequency of extreme weather events such as last year's flood and this year's drought to the effects of climate change, yet the issue has been largely ignored at the federal and state levels. Should the Legislature take any measures to address the growing impacts of climate change?

Impacting climate changes requires global responses. A state's responsibility is to assist its citizens in actions to respond to climate changes and monitor the changes as to the impact on the state. Examples of responses to climate changes are seen in agricultural research. Research in seed and crop production at SDSU has resulted in crops that can produce in varying climates. This has led to new crops being introduced in parts of the state based on select climate conditions. After the flood of 2011, the state has engaged in discussion with the Corps of Engineers to prevent future flooding. The state has worked with companies for the production of wind energy. This is a work in progress through monitoring, keeping current and proactive in addressing the effects of climate change.

6. Final thoughts?

It has been a privilege to serve Yankton County for the past 12 years. Experience in the legislative process to get bills passed or not passed, leadership in committees for decision making and broad knowledge base are the skills I have developed to be an effective voice and advocate for Yankton County. I will continue to use those strengths to represent Yankton if reelected.

# OTJ

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ing with people. It's just a blast."

Despite being an aspiring park manager, Odens said he enjoyed both internships a lot.

"I'm a really hands-on person, so I really enjoyed the maintenance side of the internship," he said. "However, the management side was great just because it's more of a challenge I saw and benefited me with learning in life."

Odens is currently a student at Mount Marty College in Yankton where he is studying recreation management with a minor in busi-

ness. He is slated to graduate in May 2013.

He said when he found out he got the award at the South Dakota Parks and Recreation (SDPRA) meeting in September in Huron, he was in a state of shock.

"I was taken aback when I found out that I got the award. I wasn't expecting it at all and was very surprised by it," he said. "I was so shocked when I got the award and appreciative that people recognize you for the work you've done. I was also caught off guard big time because I'm the type of person that likes to stay low-key, and to get such high recognition threw me off."

Other awards that were given out at the conference included

employee recognition awards and volunteer of the year awards.

Odens said this was the first year that he has attended the conference and he may have been invited partly because of the award he received. However, he decided to go — not knowing about the recognition — in order to network with other employees around the state.

Shane Bertsch, who is the district park supervisor for the South Dakota GF&P and was also Odens' supervisor for his internships, said there are a number of traits that helped Odens stand out.

"His demeanor really separates him from all other seasonal employees here," he said. "He is busi-

ness-like, yet cordial to the public. He also kept me well informed of things he ran into and always asked if he had any questions or problems."

Bertsch added that Odens has a lot of the skills that a park manager needs to possess when they go to run their own park.

"He has a really well-rounded background that has prepared him well with the experience he has from his other jobs and schooling," Bertsch said. "He's a good guy to have on your staff. He rubs off well on other staff members and people really like working with him."

Bertsch noted that there are about 400 seasonal employees in the state park system and the di-

rector takes nominations from several different categories, one of which is the seasonal award that Odens won.

"I really think he has a future with the GF&P," Bertsch said. "He will be applying as positions open up and I think he will be a good manager at some point."

"I want to be a park manager and work my way through the ranks up to a district or regional manager," Odens said. "I want to put my time in and work my way up and am currently applying for open park manager positions."

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