

**Tell us about yourself and why you want the job of State Representative for District 48A. Given that the Chamber is a business organization, tell us specifically about your connection to the local business community and/or any business background.**

### **Nathan Kells**

My name is Nathan Kells, and I am running for the Minnesota State House of Representatives in District 48A, which includes the vibrant communities of Waconia, Victoria, Cologne, Mayer, and Western Chaska. With a lifelong dedication to public service, I have consistently worked to support and uplift my community through various roles, including volunteering with the Cologne Lions Club and continuing to serve on the Cologne City Council and the Cologne Academy School Board. My background in public service has equipped me with a deep understanding of the challenges our district faces and a commitment to finding practical solutions that benefit all residents.

As a candidate, I am passionate about addressing key issues such as improving local infrastructure, enhancing educational opportunities, and supporting economic growth. My approach is rooted in listening to the needs of District 48A's diverse communities and working collaboratively to achieve common goals. I look forward to bringing my experience and dedication to the Minnesota State House in 2025, where I will advocate for policies that strengthen our rural community, ensure equitable opportunities, and foster a prosperous future for all residents.

For more information about my vision and specific platform initiatives, please visit my website at [nathankellsformnhouse.com](http://nathankellsformnhouse.com).

### **State Representative Jim Nash\***

Visit [jimnashformn.com](http://jimnashformn.com) for details.

## GENERAL

### **Do you consider yourself to be a pro-business candidate?**

#### **Nathan Kells**

I am committed to fostering a thriving economic environment that supports local entrepreneurs and attracts new investments. By advocating for lower taxes, streamlined regulations, and targeted incentives, I aim to create a climate where businesses of all sizes can flourish. My focus will be on reducing bureaucratic hurdles that stifle innovation and growth, ensuring that District 48A remains a competitive and attractive place for businesses to start, expand, and succeed.

#### **State Representative Jim Nash\***

I have been a very pro business legislator, mayor and council members for years. I've been recognized and received endorsements and awards from many business groups like the MN Chamber, NFIB, Housing First, Realtors, Farm Bureau, Grocers, and many others. Being the voice of businesses at the Capitol is an honor for me.

### **Do you think it is important to have a competitive business climate and how can we improve our competitiveness to make sure Minnesota private sector businesses can start and grow in our state?**

#### **Nathan Kells**

Yes, I would advocate investing in essential infrastructure, including high-speed internet, reliable roads, and efficient utilities. Improved infrastructure enhances connectivity and supports business operations, making rural areas more attractive to investors. Determine easily accessible access to funding through local grants, low-interest loans, and investment programs tailored to rural businesses. Partner with banks and financial institutions to provide resources and advice for entrepreneurs. I think we need to simplify and streamline regulatory processes to reduce the burden on small and rural businesses. Ensure that local regulations are fair and do not disproportionately impact rural enterprises compared to urban ones. I support education and training programs that equip residents with skills relevant to local industries. Collaborate with metro community colleges and vocational schools to align curriculum with the needs of local businesses and provide hybrid learning when possible. I know the Waconia Chamber is great at this but I would help to create or support local business incubators and mentorship programs that offer guidance and resources to startups. I think we can also foster collaboration between businesses, local governments, and community organizations. Joint efforts can lead to shared resources, enhanced problem-solving, and a unified approach to economic development. We can only grow - I would support initiatives that promote rural products and services beyond local and regional boundaries.

#### **State Representative Jim Nash\***

A competitive business climate is important to be sure. Companies make decisions to locate or not locate in a state regularly. Recently the Majority party has implemented policies that have taken MN business taxes to the highest in the nation, implemented programs that will burden business owners with more and more regulation and costs, and have made Minnesota less competitive in the eyes of financial analysts and business owner. We must make Minnesota competitive again or we will continue to see a mass exodus of jobs creators from our state.

## **TAXES AND SPENDING**

**Minnesota has had many years of budget surpluses. Do you prioritize tax relief or investing in more government programs?**

**Nathan Kells**

I would prioritize tax relief in light of Minnesota's history of budget surpluses. My approach is rooted in the belief that when government revenues exceed projections, taxpayers should see tangible benefits. By providing tax relief, we can alleviate financial burdens on individuals and businesses, allowing them to reinvest in the local economy and drive growth. This strategy not only puts more money back in the hands of hardworking residents but also encourages business expansion and job creation. While investing in essential government programs is important, I believe that managing surpluses through tax relief will stimulate economic activity and create a more prosperous environment for our community.

**State Representative Jim Nash\***

This next legislative session we are looking at a structural deficit according to the Walz administrations own financial analysts. The \$18 billion surplus that was to be used for tax relief was squandered and was followed by another \$10 billion in new taxes. We must cut spending and lower taxes if everyday Minnesotans are to thrive.

**Due to large increases in government spending in 2023, the budget forecast now shows state spending growth outpacing tax revenue growth. If the state were to encounter a budget deficit, how would you balance the state's budget – cut spending or increase taxes?**

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**The Minnesota corporate tax rate of 9.8% is the highest in the nations. Do you support or oppose reducing the corporate rate?**

**Nathan Kells**

Transitioning to a lower corporate tax rate requires careful planning to ensure that it does not inadvertently undermine the state's financial stability or lead to unintended economic consequences. I would need to do further research to see if the decreased revenue impact would outweigh the ability to be more competitive when attracting businesses to Minnesota.

**State Representative Jim Nash\***

Absolutely! Yes, we must reduce this rate or we risk losing businesses to neighboring states.

**Minnesota has four individual income tax rates, and the top rate of 9.85% is the 6th highest in the nation. If the state continues to generate large budget surpluses, do you support lowering all tax rates, only for lower- and middle-income taxpayers, or do you not support lowering income taxes?**

**Nathan Kells**

If Minnesota continues to generate large budget surpluses, I support lowering income tax rates with a focus on providing more significant relief to lower- and middle-income taxpayers, while also considering a modest reduction for higher-income brackets. This approach strikes a balance between broad-based tax relief and targeted support

**State Representative Jim Nash\***

We need to lower income taxes much like business tax or we will see more of what the state demographer and others have shown which is a net loss of people of wealth who create jobs only to be back filled with people not in the same strata.

## **ENERGY**

**Should affordability and reliability should be the priorities as the state transitions to new sources of power generation or should Minnesota prioritize the shift to renewable energy through regulations or mandates, even if affordability and reliability may be compromised?**

### **Nathan Kells**

In balancing priorities, we need to ensure that energy remains affordable which is crucial for both households and businesses. High energy costs can disproportionately impact lower-income families and small businesses, potentially leading to economic strain and reduced quality of life. We also need to consider that reliable energy infrastructure is essential for maintaining daily activities and economic operations. Power outages or unreliable supply can disrupt lives, damage businesses, and undermine confidence in the energy system.

A balanced approach involves integrating renewable energy sources gradually. This allows for the development of technology and infrastructure that supports renewables while maintaining existing systems that ensure reliability and affordability. Investing in and supporting technological innovations can enhance the efficiency and storage capabilities of renewable energy, making it more reliable and cost-effective over time.

Instead of strict mandates, Minnesota would benefit from providing incentives for renewable energy adoption can encourage innovation and investment without compromising current energy stability and costs. Regulations should be designed to adapt to evolving technologies and market conditions, allowing for flexibility in meeting renewable energy goals while maintaining energy affordability and reliability.

### **State Representative Jim Nash\***

Yes, the renewable energy mandate passed by the majority party has put us on a path to failure. We need to embrace modern nuclear technology being used elsewhere in developed countries if we are to achieve renewable energy goals foisted on MN recently.

## **WORKPLACE MANDATES**

**Do you support new wage and benefit mandates to ensure employees have higher wages and entitlements, or should private-sector wages and benefits be determined by employees and employers, and the market?**

**Nathan Kells**

I think there are essential protections and standards the state has enacted to ensure basic fairness and prevent exploitation, such as minimum wage laws and basic benefit requirements. I think business owners should retain the flexibility to offer competitive wages and benefits based on market conditions and their specific operational needs. A collaborative effort between employers and the state to implement programs that support employee development, such as access to training and career advancement opportunities, can complement wage and benefit mandates would be beneficial. This may decrease the divide and strengthen the relationship.

**State Representative Jim Nash\***

The market should and does dictate these very things. The Paid Family Medical and Earned Sick and Safe time are costly and completely ignored potential private sector solutions. This is a mistake

**Do you think that state-imposed workplace mandates “level the playing field” between large and small employers? Do you think that the state should play a role in these types of competitiveness issues? If yes, should this take the form of establishing a one-size-fits-all mandate implementing state-determined floors, or should the state promote small business exemptions to certain state-imposed workplace mandates?**

**Nathan Kells**

No, I do not. I do think the state has a role in promoting fair labor practices and ensuring worker protections. However, it should also consider the impact of regulations on business viability and competitiveness. Standardized mandates can simplify compliance for businesses by providing clear, uniform rules. This can reduce confusion and administrative burden. But, a one-size-fits-all approach may not account for the diverse needs and capacities of different businesses. Small businesses might struggle more with the same regulations that larger companies manage more easily.

**State Representative Jim Nash\***

I'm a classical economic minded person. I realize that the Laissez Faire (hands off) approach is what has built our nation. I am not in favor of government over regulation or intervention.

## HEALTHCARE

**Do you think we need a state- or federally-run public option available to all people that can compete with healthcare policies offered by private insurance companies, or do we need to reduce mandates and taxes on health insurance policies and allow individuals and businesses to design plans that best fit their needs?**

**Nathan Kells**

I think if this is something that is considered, the planning and implementation process would need to take years. The financial strain on the state would be devastating. I would consider a hybrid approach where a public option coexists with private insurance, providing a safety net while maintaining a competitive market. This model can offer the benefits of both systems and ensure comprehensive coverage while encouraging innovation in a competitive environment. I would need to research this topic more to give a more comprehensive answer...

**State Representative Jim Nash\***

I do not. This is a horrible idea .

## ENVIRONMENT

**Minnesota's environmental review and permitting system has been criticized as being difficult and confusing. Do you believe Minnesota's current environmental review and permitting system is sufficient or the current system should be modernized and reviewed for changes so permits are processed faster with clear and consistent timelines?**

**Nathan Kells**

Yes, modernizing Minnesota's environmental review and permitting system is essential to address concerns about complexity and delays. By streamlining processes, enhancing transparency, leveraging technology, and maintaining environmental protections, the state can create a more efficient and user-friendly system that supports both development and sustainability. I think the state should work with key stakeholders in order to create a system that is satisfactory for both processors and applicants.

**State Representative Jim Nash\***

The process to move a project forward actually sees government regulators giving conflicting information between themselves. Their heavy handed was in both statute and rule making has made environmental review efforts costly, slow, and confusing for business and local governments. This must change.

## CONTACT THE CANDIDATES

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### Rep. Jim Nash

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JimNashforMN.com

## How Can I Vote in Waconia?

City of Waconia residents have multiple options for voting:

1. Vote by mail.
2. Vote at City Hall, 201 South Vine Street (City of Waconia Residents Only).
3. Go to the Taxpayer Services Department at Carver County Government Center, 600 E. 4th Street, Chaska, (ALL Carver County Residents).
4. Vote in person on Election Day on November 5, 2024.



### Early and Absentee Voting at City Hall (Waconia residents only)

Early and absentee voting starts September 20 and goes through November 4. Waconia residents can vote at City Hall Monday - Thursday from 7:30 am - 4:30 pm, and Fridays from 7:30 am - 11:30 am. Extended hours include:

- Saturday, October 26 - 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
- Tuesday, October 29 - 7:30 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.
- Saturday, November 2 - 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
- Sunday, November 3 - 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
- Monday, November 4 - 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

If you are not a City of Waconia resident (but reside in Carver County) you can absentee vote at the Carver County Government Center in Chaska. Their hours are different than the hours listed above.

### How Do I Vote by Mail?

To request a mail ballot, please visit the [Secretary of State's Website](#) or [www.waconia.org/votebymail](http://www.waconia.org/votebymail).

### City of Waconia Polling Locations

The City of Waconia is no longer part of a Ward Boundary System. Your polling place may have changed in 2022. The City of Waconia is divided into three precincts, please view the polling places listed below. If you are unsure of the precinct in which you reside, please consult the [City of Waconia Precinct map](#) (link).

[www.waconia.org/DocumentCenter/View/3042/WaconiaPrecincts](http://www.waconia.org/DocumentCenter/View/3042/WaconiaPrecincts)

#### Precinct 1

Faith Lutheran Church  
800 Waconia Parkway North  
Waconia, MN 55387

#### Precinct 2

Trinity Lutheran Church  
601 E. 2nd St.  
Waconia, MN 55387

#### Precinct 3

Waconia Ice Arena  
1250 Oak Avenue  
Waconia, MN 55387

Questions? Call City Hall at 952-442-2184

### Current Elected Officials

For a full listing of current city, county, state, and federal elected officials, visit [www.DestinationWaconia.org/live/#government](http://www.DestinationWaconia.org/live/#government).

