

Elections Questionnaire

Email *

Lindatgonzalez@gmail.com

Name *

Linda Thompson Gonzalez

Age

72

Gender

- Male
- Female
- Other

Hometown

LAUDERDALE BY THE SEA, Florida

Party Affiliation

- Republican
- Democrat
- No Party Affiliation (NPA)
- Green Party
- Libertarian
- Other

Office I'm running for:

Florida State House Dist 100

History of public service:

I have over 30 years of public service experience. I began as a public affairs officer at the US Department of Commerce in the Office of Minority Business Enterprise and attended night law school. As a small and minority businesses attorney, and mother of three, I worked in our Washington, D.C. community to address redlining of loans, helped establish universal Pre-k in the D.C. public schools, appeared on a CBS 60- Minutes segment concerning the impact of lead in paint on children's development, worked for bottle- recycling legislation, and served on the founding Board of Directors of the Climate Institute, established in the 1980's by my then husband upon his departure from EPA (where

he worked to get lead out gasoline).

I was recruited by the Anacostia Black Business Association to serve as a write-in candidate for the D.C. City Council, after the two-term incumbent continued racist tactics against members of another ethnic minority. Although this election bid was unsuccessful, I was endorsed by the Washington Post, and was credited by the subsequent successor to this seat with creating a broad coalition in our community to solve problems and bring positive change.

As an attorney and later Assistant Inspector General for Congressional and Media Affairs, I was responsible for reviewing legislation and worked on a bi-partisan basis with the U.S. Congress for legislation that would promote good governance and serve the U.S. taxpayer. I worked to reduce fraud, waste and abuse in government programs, and led inter-agency teams in other countries to help establish anti-corruption programs.

When my three children started college, I joined the U.S. Foreign service, serving as a senior diplomat for 14 years overseas in Colombia, Uruguay, Argentina, and Peru. As a public affairs officer and senior diplomat, I managed multi-million dollar programs for cultural and educational exchange programs, all media and press outreach for our multi-agency U.S. Embassies, and served as President of the binational Fulbright Commission in each country I served.

Since retiring back to Florida in 2014, I have been a volunteer with several community organizations. I served on the Board and was a volunteer trainer for the Voter Participation Project, founded to increase voter participation among returning citizens (ex felons) and underserved communities. I have served for the past two years as Plastics Co-Chair of the Broward League of Women Voters Environmental Issues Committee, to work with cities throughout Florida and most recently with Broward County, to pass ordinances to reduce single-use plastics and polystyrene. I am a volunteer with the Broward Chapter of Moms Demand Action, lobbied for common sense gun legislation and went door to door to gather petitions for the Amendment to Ban Assault Weapons and hand out gun locks to families with guns and children in their homes. As a member of the Sierra Club, I lobbied against the M-Cores "Turnpikes to Nowhere" that would cost the Florida taxpayer billions, serve no documented need, divide local communities, and threaten the ecosystem and habitat of several endangered species. I am also a member and volunteer with the Pompano Beach Rotary Club that has a number of local service projects including hurricane and water relief projects in Haiti and the Bahamas, dictionaries and backpacks for local schools, food distribution projects during Covid and fundraising activities to provide grants to local non-profit organizations that serve the public. I have recently been appointed to the Broward Commission on the Status of Women which will focus specifically on the issue of affordable housing.

Your Twitter handle:

@ElectLinda2022

Do you believe climate change is real?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know / unsure

How much do you think human activity, such as the burning of fossil fuels, contributes to global climate change?

- A great deal
- Some
- Not much
- Not at all

How much, if at all, do you think global climate change will affect Florida?

- A great deal
- Some
- Not much
- Not at all

Which of these statements comes closest to your view, even if neither is exactly right?

- Stricter environmental laws and regulations will hurt the economy and are not worth the cost
- Stricter environmental laws and regulations are worth the cost

Which of these statements comes closest to your view about the MOST EFFECTIVE WAY to increase reliance on renewable energy sources, even if neither is exactly right

- Government regulations are necessary to encourage businesses and consumers to rely more on renewable energy sources
- The private marketplace will ensure that businesses and consumers rely more on renewable energy sources, even without government regulations.

Do you favor or oppose EXPANDING each of the following sources of energy in our country?

More offshore oil and gas drilling in U.S. waters

- Favor
- Oppose

More near-shore oil and gas drilling in the Gulf of Mexico off the west coast of Florida

- Favor
- Oppose

More nuclear power plants to generate electricity

- Favor
- Oppose

More coal mining

- Favor
- Oppose

More solar panel "farms"

- Favor
- Oppose

More “fracking” for oil and natural gas

- Favor
- Oppose

Right now, which ONE of the following do you think should be the more important priority for addressing America’s energy supply?

- Developing alternative sources, such as wind, solar and hydrogen technology
- Expanding exploration and production of oil, coal and natural gas
- Both should be given equal priority

Do you believe Florida utilities depend too much on fossil fuels for electricity?

- Yes
- No

Florida [trails the nation](#) in energy efficiency measures. Would you favor or oppose legislation directing the Public Service Commission to set efficiency targets?

- Favor
- Oppose

Do you favor or oppose cutting the credits given the owners of rooftop solar systems for the excess energy they send to the grid, a practice called net metering?

- Favor
- Oppose

Do you favor or oppose expanding the use of solar panels on state buildings?

- Favor
- Oppose

Florida is one of the only states that does not allow power purchase agreements, where a third-party developer installs, owns and operates an energy system on a customer's property and sells the electricity at a fixed price. Do you favor or oppose allowing PPAs in Florida?

- Favor
- Oppose

Do you believe the Florida Legislature should mandate the creation of an energy independence plan for the state?

- Yes
- No

Do you favor or oppose lowering the taxes on electric vehicles?

- Favor
- Oppose

If there's anything you'd like to add, please share it with us here.

Florida's future depends on clean water and clean energy.

Clean water is the basis of everything that happens in Florida. Clean water is essential to the tourism and maritime industries that are the basis of our economy, as well as to the beautiful beaches and coastal waterways that make Florida the place we all want to live. Yet our legislature has failed to protect our vital resource. The state has issued 23,000 National Pollutant Discharge Elimination Permits

which allow industries to pollute Florida's waters. Another 1,000 permit applications have been filed since January, 2022. As proponents of the Right to Clean and Healthy Waters Ballot Initiative for 2024 have pointed out, "Florida's regulatory system has failed to protect Floridians and our waterways from pollution." Blue-green algae blooms, which are linked to neurodegenerative diseases, "have become the new normal." Meanwhile, state legislation has favored development over protecting our wetlands, which are essential to filtration for clean water. After an enormous backlash when (SB 2508) legislation passed, the Governor vetoed the blatant pay for play bill that would have created a fast-track for wetland destruction and sped up an already streamlined process. Despite a wetland's restoration program and a federal edict that development should result in "no net loss," Florida's legislators have failed their obligation. According to recent SunSentinel reporting, Florida has lost the most acreage of wetlands in any state since 1845, over 9 million acres according to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The Right to Clean Water Amendment Petitions are circulating now with the goal of collecting 1 million petitions to qualify for the 2024 statewide ballot. Voters should sign this important citizen initiative and protect our clean water. Visit: FloridaRighttoCleanWater.org

Clean energy is equally vital to Florida's future to help address the sea level rise that is threatening our coastal homes, infrastructure, and, in turn, increasing salt water intrusion into our fresh water supply. Clean energy is the essential link in the chain to reduce carbon and methane emissions (greenhouse gases) that warm the oceans and cause sea level rise. To date, our state legislature has focused on costly adaptation strategies. These adaptation costs will only continue to grow with the rise in sea levels if there is no comprehensive statewide plan for emissions mitigation. Absent direct statewide action, the storms, flooding and seas will only increase the threat to our homes and cost us all dearly for their failure to act. The current insurance crisis with many insurers already exiting Florida, should be a call to action for our legislators, if not serve as a canary in the mine to everyone that we need a comprehensive statewide emissions reduction plan, and we need it now. This year Senator Tina Polsky sponsored legislation (SB 1362) to reduce greenhouse gases in Florida (55% by 2030), to zero in 2050, and Rep Kelly Skidmore introduced HB 993 for agricultural carbon sequestration. According to the SE Florida Regional Climate Compact study, 48% of regional emissions were transportation (vehicles), with 26% from residential energy consumption and 24.5 % from commercial energy consumption. Florida voters recently approved a penny tax to support the transition of public transportation vehicles to electric, as well as statewide electric grids. The plan to meet these emission reduction goals must now also include, among others, legislation that will address the residential and commercial consumption. This legislation must allow for greatly expanded access to affordable rooftop solar for homeowners and businesses, as well as a robust plan for rooftop solar on government buildings, schools and new construction. A comprehensive statewide plan should also improve energy efficiency plans for building codes and allow third party certified and licensed renewable energy providers. Legislation intended to undo net metering for homeowners was vetoed. But legislation is needed to expand access to affordable rooftop solar so that all Floridians, including those in low-income and rental housing can also benefit from the energy savings of solar co-ops and avoid the anticipated energy rate hikes. As the Sunshine state, Florida should be the leader in clean renewable energy. This resource should be available to all Floridians as part of a meaningful statewide mitigation plan. Instead of the millions in tax rebates each year to major corporate campaign donors, taxpayer dollars could be given to homeowners and businesses with subsidies and tax rebates for green upgrades and clean energy installations. Our tax

rebates should benefit our taxpayers and our future. Expanded access to affordable solar and clean energy solutions should be Florida's path forward to serve the millions of renters and homeowners who are struggling now. This would not only serve our vital carbon emissions goals, it also would save homeowners millions in skyrocketing energy rate hikes. Serving our people is the best bet in the long run, and in our Sunshine state, the thousands of good paying jobs in clean energy should be the future of Florida's economy. Our future depends on it.

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