



Democratic Environmental Caucus of Florida 2020 Candidate Survey

At the heart of our mission to preserve, protect and enhance Florida's natural resources, the Democratic Environmental Caucus of Florida (DECF) and its county chapters work together to identify, support and elect Democratic officials who are committed to supporting and promoting suitable action on critical environmental issues and legislation. This candidate survey assists us immensely in the evaluation process. We thank you for your willingness to serve the public and to stand for office as a Florida Democrat, and thank you for taking the time to share with us your views on these critical matters.

Name of Candidate:	Richard Thrupp
Office and District:	U.S. House of Representatives, Florida's 6th Congressional district
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Contact Person:	Richard Thrupp (Candidate)
Questionnaire completed by:	Richard Thrupp (Candidate)

The candidate acknowledges that they have either completed the survey and/or reviewed and approved of the responses contained herein.

Candidate Name: Richard Thrupp

Date: May 12, 2020

Your Environmental Positions

1. Why do you feel the Democratic Environmental Caucus of Florida (DECF) should support your candidacy? Please share some of your experiences that support your answer.

I will champion environmental and progressive issues. As a young father I care deeply about the climate crisis and the future of our ecosystems and planet.

2. If you have previously served in elected office, what specific environmental legislation or policies have you sponsored or championed while in office, and what have you publicly proposed to introduce if you are elected?

I have not. However, here is an SSRN paper on the climate crisis that I wrote in April 2019:

https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3348236

I've also written quite a bit about the urgency of the climate crisis and the lunacy of our current approach (continuing to frack, subsidize fossil fuels, expand highways and airports, fly, cruise, etc.). These writings have appeared on Facebook, Twitter, and my personal website at <http://thripp.com/category/climate-crisis/>

Specific Positions on Issues

3. Do you support the Green New Deal or a similar comprehensive plan to address energy, environment and climate? Why or why not?

I support and will co-sponsor the Green New Deal in Congress.

4. How do you envision the role of fossil fuels (natural gas, oil, coal) in America's energy tool box going forward, including the various methods of extraction (such as fracking, onshore and off shore drilling and fracking)?

We need to reduce our use of oil and natural gas and quickly eliminate the extraction and combustion of coal. We are using far too much and it's going to be very bad for our children, and many of the impacts are being felt already.

Hydraulic fracturing ("fracking") is disastrous for our fresh water, atmosphere, and ecosystems. It should be federally banned. Fracking produces methane emissions which have a greenhouse effect much worse than CO₂, as well as large amounts of natural gas as a by-product. There is so much natural gas that the industry wants to "flare" or burn off into the atmosphere due to its lack of value, which is insane. The fracking industry itself is barely profitable and is losing tremendous amounts of money with the recent low oil prices due to the coronavirus pandemic. If the costs of environmental devastation were priced into each fracturing operation, there would be NO fracking nationwide, or worldwide, for that matter, even without an outright prohibition.

The incumbent Republican Congressman I will be running against in November 2020, Michael Waltz, was a senior advisor to Vice President Dick Cheney for South Asia and Counterterrorism during George W. Bush's presidency. Cheney was Chairman and CEO of Halliburton Company from 1995 to 2000, which patented fracking in the 1940s, specializes in oil extraction through traditional means and via fracking, and was also partly responsible for the 2010 *Deepwater Horizon* disaster. You can bet

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Waltz's so-called "conservative values" include support for, and campaign contributions from, the oil and fracking industries. It is puzzling that being a "conservative" does not include conserving the one and only planet we have.

I support a nationwide prohibition on fracking and the speedy closing of existing fracking wells, and will co-sponsor the Ban Fracking Act put forth by Sen. Bernie Sanders in the U.S. Senate and Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez in the U.S. House of Representatives when it is re-introduced in the 117th Congress.

It should also be noted that, in addition to the above criticisms, fracking is also completely inappropriate in Florida due to our peninsula's limestone substructure and would cause catastrophic and unpredictable sinkholes.

5. What is your understanding of the effects of climate change on health, education, national security, immigration, and economy?

Climate change is an all-encompassing crisis for humans and the planet alike. I've read countless articles about the multi-faceted impacts, including David Wallace-Wells's book, *The Uninhabitable Earth: Life After Warming*, in its entirety. The climate crisis spreads disease and tragedy. It causes strife, struggle, and death. Hurricane Michael hit the panhandle hard affecting health, education, and the economy. Many schools and structures still have not been re-built. Hurricanes Matthew and Irma were damaging to Florida's 6th congressional district, and Dorian could have been an unparalleled disaster. The oceans are hotter. There is more water vapor and other greenhouse gases in the air. The U.S. military is bracing for sea level rise and widespread global upheaval. Our food supply will be affected. Billions of climate refugees will have to relocate worldwide. Florida is especially vulnerable to the ramifications of the climate crisis. We need action now!

6. Identify 3 environmental issues that in your opinion are most critical to the United States and what actions would you propose to address these issues. Please be specific.
 1. We need resiliency plans for our coasts. We need managed retreat, moratoriums on new development in dangerous areas, and heavy funding and long-range planning, particularly for people living in poverty who are often in the most at-risk areas. Congressional action would help. We need a national strategy.
 2. We need to secure out fresh water and keep our waterways clean. We need to minimize plastic waste, industrial and wastewater runoff, and other pollution. Florida needs to get rid of its outrageous consumptive use permits that allow bottled water companies to extract over a million gallons a day from our aquifer without paying a cent. Nationally, fracking is chewing up our fresh water and destroying our planet, which affects Florida, too. Congress needs to act. We cannot have four more years of Donald Trump and the Republicans destroying the American people and our country. The Environmental Protection Agency must have funding and enforcement power. Big business is running roughshod over us and our lands.
 3. We need a Green New Deal. We need to comprehensively attack the climate crisis. COVID-19 shows us that it is possible to live without cruises, flying, and tourism. We need to retain these gains while correcting our losses, such as on plastic waste which is exploding right now. Companies that create the plastic waste should have to pay for its total costs, including greenhouse gas emissions and recycling or landfill disposal.