



Here are the core issues I will work on in Congress. I am a 28-year-old husband, father, and teacher educator at University of Central Florida. I was born in Daytona Beach and have lived in Volusia County my whole life. Follow me online: <http://thripp.com>, <https://twitter.com/richardxthripp>

### **Addressing the Climate Crisis**

As a new father, I am acutely aware that the next generation will face the fight of their lives when it comes to the climate crisis. I support the *Green New Deal* as well as ending subsidies for fossil fuels. The United States must be a leader in reducing its emissions and developing new technologies to remediate the crisis. The Daytona Beach area has been hit by hurricanes Matthew and Irma in recent years, and is increasingly vulnerable due to population growth and development, as well as oceanic warming from human activities. The climate crisis is of immense importance. Congress needs representatives like me who will take it seriously.

### **Restoring Congressional Authority**

Let's face it—Congress has become known for gridlock and inertia, with public approval ratings in the single digits. Sycophantic and obstructionist Republicans are blocking any meaningful dialog or bipartisanship, with Congress unable to even pass a budget on a regular schedule. The judicial branch, now stacked with partisans, is running circles around legislators, striking down key components of hard-fought legislation. Petty squabbles and pointless government shutdowns hurt Americans, damage our credibility, and could end up costing us hundreds of billions in interest if investors demand higher rates on U.S. government debt due to a lack of trust. We need to restore Congressional authority over the purse strings, making and declaring war, and other duties that Congress is Constitutionally authorized—or even obliged—to oversee. I will act to help restore Congressional authority, at all times fighting for the 99% rather than merely enriching the 1% as the Republicans do.

### **Strengthening the Affordable Care Act**

Although Medicare-for-All is the topic of the day, the Affordable Care Act has been chugging along providing much-needed health insurance subsidies to residents of Florida's 6th district and across the nation. Therefore, it is my position that we should work on strengthening the ACA rather than pursuing a single-payer system. Here are a few ways I will seek to do so:

- Close the coverage gap. Florida's Republican leadership continues to disenfranchise poor Floridians by refusing to accept federal dollars to expand Medicaid. People who earn *less* than the federal poverty line but above the Medicaid cap are not covered under the ACA ("coverage gap"). I support tying expansion of Medicaid to federal highway funding (as we do with drinking age) or similar mechanism to help the poor, or expanding the ACA to close the coverage gap.
- Restore funding for health insurance navigators and other outreach efforts to educate Americans, many of whom are going uninsured despite being eligible for a full subsidy of their premiums.
- Outlaw the practice of "surprise" medical billing. We have all been hit with one of these, which are often the result of such predatory practices as balance billing, out-of-network providers, insurers trying to wriggle free of their obligations, or even clerical errors.

## **Prioritizing Education**

As a teacher educator, I know that education is a gateway to success and to civic engagement. We need to support students and educators at all levels, with a special focus on underserved urban and minority students. I support increasing Title I funding for local schools, as well as funding for the National Science Foundation and other agencies that further education and scientific progress. Beyond this, I believe that federal student loans should be limited to higher education that presents a good value, such as our excellent college and state university systems in Florida, as well as HBCUs and cutting-edge institutions. In Congress, I will also support financial education and reining in financial institutions' predatory, inequitable, and confusing practices.

## **Ensuring Fair and Equitable Taxation**

The IRS is underfunded and understaffed. Tax evasion by wealthy individuals and corporations is at an all-time high, yet the IRS lacks the resources to collect these taxes when faced with obfuscation, stonewalling, and armies of attorneys. Instead, the IRS audits low-income taxpayers who may or may not have incorrectly claimed the Earned Income Tax Credit, while leaving billions on the table from wealthy tax evaders. I support strengthening the IRS by expanding its workforce and appropriating funds to overhaul its technology.

Social Security payroll taxes are regressive because high earners pay very little into the system. Presently, income that exceeds \$132,900 per year is not taxed at all. I support removing this cap, which would make Social Security solvent for the foreseeable future, without cutting benefits. Beyond this, unearned income such as rents, interest, dividends, and capital gains should be taxed among high earners, which are typically their primary sources of income.

Many proposals abound regarding a tax on accumulated wealth. The wealthy have definitely not been paying their fair share for many decades, resulting in a new gilded age of staggering wealth inequality. In addition to raising taxes on new income received by the rich, I believe that a small portion of existing wealth among the top 0.1% should be taxed through new legislation that allows the U.S. Treasury department to take ownership of wealthy individuals' corporate equity and other securities, while allowing them to maintain their shareholder voting rights on ceded shares. American ingenuity has produced astounding wealth, and in this way, a part of their fortunes will help enhance prosperity for all. Furthermore, we need to tax items that exacerbate the climate crisis, such as private jets, to ensure justice for disadvantaged populations.

## **Other Issues**

I support ending American militarism and bringing home our troops and contractors in the Middle East, abortion rights and women's health, equity and civil rights, the Equal Rights Amendment, voting rights, workers' ability to unionize, grassroots support and *not* dialing for dollars, and interest abatement on student loans. When elected, I will open a district office in mid-town Daytona Beach to serve local constituents, as well as 2–3 other offices and a mobile office.

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