

Statement of Damond Watkins, endorsing Tommy Ahlquist for governor of Idaho in 2018

I don't take this year's Governor's race lightly. I have a tremendous respect for the process of our great party and have taken pride in my neutrality during political primaries. For over fifteen years, I have served in some type of leadership position for the Idaho GOP. I have created critics in the party because the impression has been "Damond never takes a position."

With four good men seeking the highest office of our state, I have studied this race out with the deepest due diligence. I was born and raised in Idaho. After graduate school in New Hampshire, I chose to come back and make Idaho my home with my family. I know this state and I know the party well. I have seen firsthand the impact a good vision can have. Good ideas will always drive good policies. You can't have good policies unless you have a leader that can inspire those people around him/her to take risks and advance an agenda that puts Idahoans first, above the political calculations that drive elections.

Tommy Ahlquist is a man that I hold in the highest regard. He is a devoted family man. In every aspect of his life that I have seen firsthand, I am convinced that Tommy represents the best ideals of the republican party. Republican primaries are always messy, especially in a state like Idaho where most of the elections are determined in our primaries. I have a longstanding tradition of always supporting the victor coming out of our primaries. I am convinced, however, that the best candidate our party can offer up to the general election voters is Tommy Ahlquist.

I would encourage all my conservative friends to do their own diligence and vet these candidates as I have. I am certain that your conclusion will be the same as mine. Tommy Ahlquist is perfectly positioned to tackle the complicated issues that face our state. He has an abundance of energy. He won't be outworked. Period. He studies the problems out thoroughly before he offers up solutions and believe me, he will have solutions. His integrity is unmatched. His ethics won't be compromised. He has earned my trust and for the first time in my political career, I am making an endorsement of a candidate I believe would be one of the best Governors the state of Idaho has ever seen.

Sincerely,

Damond Watkins

Idaho Republican National Committeeman