

Chris Troupis As mainstream as Idaho gets

Chris Troupis, GOP candidate for attorney general, Lewiston Tribune

Once again, our attorney general has come up short on facts - on federal lands, the Land Board and Obamacare. In desperation, he calls me a "fringe member" of the Republican Party.

The fact is that my positions on the issues are in the mainstream. Let's give the people of Idaho the opportunity to decide. Let's have a discussion of the issues in at least four debates so all Idahoans will know who best represents their interests.

He dismisses the belief that we should use all legal means to reclaim our public lands from the federal government. There is a lot more to this issue than just filing suit. The federal government has shown it cannot manage these lands properly. The state can do so at a profit. We need to start negotiating to accomplish this. We can boost Idaho's economy with natural resources, while protecting the recreational opportunities and the quality-of-life values that make Idaho a great place to live. The selective harvesting of timber can create Idaho jobs while preserving and protecting those lands. Better than watching it burn up.

The Idaho Legislature agreed this is a good idea. It called for a study on how Idaho could best approach demanding our federal lands back. So did the Idaho Association of County Commissioners and the Idaho Farm Bureau.

This position is also fully supported by the state and the national Republican parties. The Idaho Republican Party State Central Committee passed Resolution 2013-34 supporting the take-over of management of all public lands in Idaho. The Republican National Committee also passed a resolution calling upon the western states to take control of management of all their public lands.

Once again, the attorney general has taken a position contrary to the Idaho Republican Party, the National Republican Party, the Idaho Legislature and the Association of Idaho County Commissioners.

Which candidate best represents the majority of Idahoans?

His short-sighted opposition once again demonstrates his lack of understanding of constitutional issues and also how out of touch he is with the need for jobs in our rural counties - jobs that will create growth, prosperity and opportunities for our children and grandchildren.

He has a history of running from a fight. He signed onto a suit brought by other states over Obamacare, but when it failed on narrow grounds, abandoned Idahoans and refused to enforce Idaho's Health Freedom Act. Because of that, Idahoans who haven't bought into Obamacare will be penalized with a "head tax" next year.

There is a good defense to that tax. As your attorney general, I will ensure that all Idahoans have that defense.

He has done the same on the Land Board. After losing several times to environmentalists over grazing leases, he refused to consider land exchanges authorized under the Idaho Constitution that would have kept these lands in productive agricultural use. The Land Board could have acquired profitable timber and mineral lands in the process, but instead our attorney general instructed the board to buy commercial properties and compete with private business, killing Idaho jobs.

We can no longer afford an attorney general who is not willing to fight for Idaho and Idahoans, and doesn't understand that his legal decisions impact and destroy jobs.

I am proud of my record in court on the defense of Idahoans' constitutional rights, and I am not afraid to face the federal government - or anyone else - whether across a conference table or in a courtroom.

Trouis is an attorney who lives in Boise. He is seeking the Republican nomination for attorney general.