

Montana Governor

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PROJECT**

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THE ISSUES

**MIKE
COONEY**

DEMOCRAT



**GREG
GIANFORTE**

REPUBLICAN

See Guides.vote for online guides with links and sources.	Volunteer for Mike Cooney at cooneyformontana.com	Volunteer for Greg Gianforte at gregformontana.com
AFFORDABLE CARE ACT Support Affordable Care Act (ACA), also known as Obamacare? Support expansion of Medicaid and Medicare?	Yes. Supports ACA and opposes efforts to repeal . As Lt Governor, helped expand MT Medicaid . "As governor, I plan on making sure that Medicaid expansion continues."	No. Supports ACA repeal . Voted against bill to protect pre-existing conditions . Has said that he supports them, though, and wouldn't push repeal of MT Medicaid expansion .
CAMPAIGN FINANCE Require political ads to disclose their largest funders?	Yes. "Keep dark money and out-of-state special interests out of politics and out of our elections."	Likely no. Opposed HR1 , which mandates political ads to disclose their largest funders, though possibly due to other objections.
CLIMATE CHANGE Consider human-caused climate change a serious threat?	Yes. Will "tackle the threat of climate change to our public lands, clean air and clean water." Will work toward fulfilling the Paris Climate Agreement at the state level .	No. Needs to be addressed, but human activity is only one of several factors . Voted against bill to stop Trump administration from leaving Paris Climate Agreement .
COVID-19 Support administration's response to coronavirus pandemic?	No. Criticized response that saw states "scrambling and competing." Would make insurance fully cover testing and treatment.	Yes. Voted against congressional committee to oversee administration's Covid-19 response. Favors "personal responsibility" over "government mandates" on masks.
COVID-19 ECONOMIC RESPONSE Economic response to coronavirus pandemic?	Would suspend utility and rent payments during crisis . Supports "investing in 21st-century infrastructure." Ensure "students and workers have access to the training they need," with apprenticeship tax credits.	"Get economy going again, get Montanans back to work in good-paying jobs, and get Montana open for business." Cut taxes and regulations on energy, mining, natural resources, high tech, and tourism industries.
EDUCATION Increase K-12 public funding?	Yes. Supports "record investment in education," with better K-12 resources and state-funded pre-K program .	Unclear. Education dollars should go to teachers, not bureaucracy . Work to "get more money to the classroom."
EDUCATION Use public funding for private and/or for-profit schools?	No. Against diverting public funding to private education , such as "devastating" Supreme Court Espinoza ruling .	Yes. For public funding for private schools . Joined amicus brief in Espinoza case, calling ruling "a step in the right direction."
ENVIRONMENT Tighten or loosen environmental regulations?	Tighten or continue. Supports stronger requirements for oil and gas producers to protect critical wildlife areas . Protect public lands against privatization .	Loosen. "Excessive regulations are a wet blanket on job creators." Would "modernize" the Endangered Species Act . Opposes "overbearing government mandates."
FINANCIAL REGULATION Tighten or loosen regulation of banks and credit card companies?	Maintain or tighten. Criticized Gianforte's vote for "rolling back financial regulations on large financial institutions."	Loosen. Voted to roll back Dodd-Frank bank regulations, which opponents said disadvantaged smaller banks .

ISSUES	COONEY (D)	GIANFORTE (R)
GUN LAWS Enact more restrictive legislation on guns?	Somewhat. Supports expanded background checks and “red flag” laws. But has worked for more access and rights to hunt and fish on public lands.	No. “The Second Amendment is very clear.” Voted for expanding concealed right-to-carry and against expanding background checks.
IMMIGRATION Encourage or restrict immigration?	Encourage. “Montanans are a welcoming people.... refugees go through a thorough vetting process and contribute to the workforce.”	Restrict. “Fix America’s broken immigration system,” secure the border, “reform chain migration,” and replace visa “lottery” with “merit-based” visa system.
LABOR Support “right- to-work” laws, eliminating unions’ ability to mandate dues for workers they represent?	No. Testified against 2019 House bill that would have further limited Montana public sector unions. “Why would anybody support people having the right to work for less?”	Likely yes. Voted in Congress against bills strengthening unions, including one to give TSA employees same rights on the job as other federal workers.
LEGAL ABORTION Keel legal or ban?	Legal. “Will use the power of my veto pen to stop any and all attacks on a woman’s right to choose.” Voted against constitutional amendment to protect “unborn human life” as “compelling state interest.”	Ban. Joined brief asking Supreme Court to overrule constitutional right to abortion, calling Roe v. Wade “unworkable.” Voted to prohibit abortion after 20 weeks except in certain cases of rape or incest.
LGBTQ RIGHTS Support LGBTQ rights, including same-sex marriage and protection from discrimination on sexual orientation?	Yes. “No Montanan should fear discrimination or be fired because of who they are or whom they love.”	No. Voted against Equality Act , prohibiting discrimination based on sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity.
MARIJUANA Legalize recreational marijuana? Support Initiatives I-190 and I-118 to do this?	Not opposed, but let voters decide on “a commonsense strategy that suits Montana’s needs.”	No. Keep medical marijuana legal , but opposes recreational legalization , and specifically opposes I-190/I-118.
MINIMUM WAGE Raise Montana state hourly minimum wage above current \$8.65?	Yes. Supports state’s regular adjustment of minimum wage based on cost of living and inflation.	No. “Ultimately, greater economic growth raises wages, and we must keep the economy going to keep wages growing.”
PLANNED PARENTHOOD Support Planned Parenthood’s receiving public funds for non-abortion-related care?	Yes. Claims “an extensive record of fighting for access to affordable reproductive healthcare.”	No. Co-sponsored bill to defund Planned Parenthood , which he says “prioritizes abortion over health care services.”
STUDENT FINANCIAL AID Support free or subsidized tuition for lower income individuals? Support lower interest or forgiveness on student loans?	Yes. Would freeze college tuition at four-year colleges, and raise funding for two-year institutions. Supports federal funding for TRIO programs , supporting low-income students. Would reduce student debt.	No. Sees “market forces,” a decrease in the availability of student loans, as helping to lower cost of tuition. Focuses on promoting “trades education and apprenticeship programs” over four-year college degrees.
TAXES Support administration’s \$1.9 trillion (2017) tax cuts?	No. Attacks Gianforte vote on the cuts. They “exploded the federal deficit by more than \$2 trillion. Multi-millionaires like him got a tax cut. The rest of us got saddled with a check.”	Yes. Voted for the cuts and praised them for helping “hardworking Montanans keep more of what they earn.”

[Campus Election Engagement Project](#) is a nonpartisan effort to help colleges engage students in elections. Sources include [Votesmart.org](#), [FactCheck.org](#), [Politifact.com](#) and candidate statements. [Vote411.org](#) and [Ballotready.org](#) offer guides to local races.