

Duluth KBJR 6 and CBS 3 Candidate Questions

Name: *Leah Vukmir*

Party Affiliation: *Republican*

Political race: *US Senate*

1. Tell us about who you are, your work and political experience and why you are running.

→ *I am a nurse, military mom, and conservative with a proven record of reform. As a daughter of Greek immigrants and lifelong Wisconsinite, I graduated from Brookfield East High School, received a Bachelor's degree in nursing from Marquette University and my Master's degree from UW–Madison. I grew up in a family filled with many cousins and constant activity — a real-life big, fat Greek family. I quickly realized that if you want to be heard, you have to speak up and not back down. My parents also taught me the importance of a relentless work ethic. I worked my way through high school and college, from stocking at a sporting goods store, to announcing blue light specials at Kmart, to working overnight shifts in an emergency room while studying to be a nurse. I raised two successful children, Elena and Niko, in Wauwatosa where I lived for 30 years as a member of Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church and recently moved to Brookfield. Niko is now a first lieutenant in the Army and Elena works in finance on Wall Street.*

→ *Over the last eight years in Wisconsin we have been able to turn budget deficits into budget surpluses, turn record high unemployment into record low unemployment, and reduce burdensome regulations. We have created an economic miracle and a business environment that has put more people to work in Wisconsin than ever before. Now, we desperately need someone that has a proven conservative record in Washington D.C. to do the same for this country. We are facing dangerous budget deficits, unsustainable spending, and an unrelenting immigration problem. I have a proven conservative record of reigning in reckless spending, bringing budgets to balance, and pushing leadership to solve tough problems. It is time we send someone to DC ready to work and solve this country's problems.*

2. What's your take on current immigration and border security issues? What needs to change? How?

→ *First and foremost, we need to secure our southern border with Mexico. Any and all reforms must start with border security. If we cannot control the influx of illegal immigration and drug trafficking into our country, any reforms we implement will be automatically undone. Once we secure the border we can begin to implement reforms that are best for America and our economy.*

3. What's your plan to combat the opioid epidemic?

→ *As a member of Governor Walker's Task Force on Opioid Abuse we have passed more than 30 bills to limit the spread of this terrible epidemic. Just last session, I authored a bill to provide law enforcement more resources to investigate and stop the inflow of illegal drugs and provided resources to treat those struggling with addiction. Through a two-pronged approach of limiting the inflow of drugs and providing resources to those battling with addiction, we can stop the spread of this public health crisis.*

4. How do you plan to address the cost of higher education and student loans?

→ *Student loan debt is becoming a severe burden on hard-working taxpayers and is a growing problem for families. This is a direct consequence of what happens when government inserts itself into areas that are better left to the free market. The rising costs of education have far outpaced growth in wages and it has put us on an unsustainable path. We need to lower the price of higher education, reign in these excessive costs, and must also create a system that doesn't burden students with high priced loans that they are unable to repay. Creating competition in the loan marketplace to keep down interest costs can do this.*

5. Are the recently enacted tariffs by the current administration helping or hurting Wisconsin?

→ *One of the reasons President Trump was elected was because he's a great negotiator. The President has seen the effects of these bad trade deals across our country, and he is going to fight for better deals. President Trump is a free trader, and so am I, but we can't allow this to go on. I am going to trust him as he negotiates better deals.*

6. How do you plan to address the accessibility of affordable healthcare across the state?

→ *Obamacare must be repealed. Rising healthcare costs are becoming an enormous burden on hardworking families. We need to bring healthcare back to the states and give them as much freedom as possible to operate. We need to provide consumers with information and tools to make informed choices, and we need to remove the requirements that all insurance plans have one-size fits all benefits. We must also allow for the option to purchase plans across state lines. Opening up the market creates greater competition, decreases costs, and will exponentially increase choices.*