William Z. “Zack” Fields – House District 20 Representative – Democratic Nominee

Residence Address:  
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Age: 36

Place of Birth: Charlottesville, VA

Spouse’s Name: Khalial

Children’s Name(s): Zara, Simone

Occupation: Legislator, union organizer

Length of Residency in Alaska: 9 years

Alaskan Communities Lived in: Anchorage, 2012-2020

Education: Bachelor’s Degree, Major in Economics, Minor in History, from University of Virginia

Political and Government Positions:  
Local government aide, 2006-2009  
Congressional aide, 2009-2012  
Special Assistant to Alaska’s Labor Commissioner, 2015-2018

Business and Professional Positions:  
Outdoors writer  
Union organizer for Laborers Local 341

The views expressed in this statement are from the candidate and not endorsed by the Division of Elections.  
The text of this statement was provided and paid for by the candidate in accordance with AS 15.58.030 and 6 AAC 25.690.
Service Organization(s) Membership:
Anchorage NAACP
Bike Anchorage
Mountaineering Club of Alaska
Anchorage Youth Court

Special Interests:
Reading and spending time outdoors with family.
Backcountry skiing, whitewater paddling, mountain biking, fishing.

Other:
I grew up in a racially segregated community in the South. From a young age, the poverty, disenfranchisement, and violence associated with segregation outraged me. Since my family is mostly poor and white, I noticed that apartheid policies also contribute to lack of opportunity for whites. I volunteered in politics from a young age and I’ve worked at the local, state, and federal levels of government. For many years have written outdoors columns for the Anchorage Press.

Position Statement:
We face serious challenges going into the 2021 legislative session. Even with a $0 PFD, we will likely face a $500-$600 million deficit. We are out of rainy-day funds to fill this deficit, and have no responsible choices except to raise additional revenue to balance the budget.

I am categorically opposed to draining the Permanent Fund. If we were to fill the deficit and pay unaffordable PFDs by overdrawing the Fund, we would lock ourselves into a fiscal death spiral of ever-declining revenue, rising class sizes, shrinking public safety capacity, and elimination of the marine highway and much of the University of Alaska system.

For every $1 billion we overdraw the Permanent Fund, that means $50 million less in revenue next year and in each year after that. So overdrawing the fund this year means next year we’d have to lay off every state prosecutor and some state troopers, or close the Pioneer Homes, or shut down the Marine Highway, just to show the magnitude of this revenue reduction.

In contrast, we absolutely can survive this fiscal crisis and have a thriving economy in the future if we raise modest additional revenue and take a
PFD holiday until oil prices stabilize and we can once again afford to pay a dividend. Our future will depend on whether we can provide the public safety, education, transportation, and higher education infrastructure that is necessary for a growing economy.