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TRAVERSE CONNECT PAC SUPPORTS STATE REPRESENTATIVE CANDIDATES

Candidates vetted on their alignment with the mission, vision, & policy priorities

TRAVERSE CITY, MI – The Traverse Connect Political Action Committee (PAC) continued its advocacy for the northern Michigan business community with endorsements of state representative candidates who have a proven track record or indicate they will be strong advocates on behalf of our region's businesses. The PAC is one of Traverse Connect's advocacy tools used to support the election of decision-makers who will ensure northern Michigan has a strong voice in Lansing.

The Traverse Connect PAC is funded by personal contributions distinct and separate from corporate investment in Traverse Connect. The PAC's bipartisan committee thoroughly vets candidates based on the organization's economic development priorities and provides recommendations to the Traverse Connect Executive Committee, the final decision-making authority.

The Traverse Connect PAC provided endorsements of and contributions to the following candidates:

- Jack O'Malley (R), State House District 101
- Michele Hoitenga (R), State House District 102
- Daire Rendon (R), State House District 103
- Dan O'Neil (D), State House District 104
- Ken Borton (R), State House District 105

The PAC took a regional approach to select candidates because Traverse Connect's economic development work reaches beyond Grand Traverse County to the greater region. Chair of the Traverse Connect PAC, Tony Anderson, said, "Making a decision on which candidates to support was difficult, but we ultimately leaned on our process and selected candidates who embody the spirit of Traverse Connect." The PAC solicited responses to a questionnaire, asking candidates about their stance on infrastructure, childcare, education, housing, talent, COVID-19 recovery, and more. Responses were analyzed by the PAC and recommendations were sent to the Traverse Connect Executive Committee for consideration. "The Traverse Connect PAC has a responsibility to inform investors of candidates who we feel best align with our work," said Russ Knopp, PAC Committee member. "This is a part of our investor education."

Dan O'Neil received the endorsement and a contribution from the Traverse Connect PAC for the competitive 104th State House District. The democratic candidate, an owner and partner at Thompson & O'Neil, offered close alignment with Traverse Connect's mission, vision, and policy priorities. His responses during [Traverse Connect's Meet the Candidates Forum](#) were also considered in making an endorsement and contribution. "Dan's depth of knowledge and ideas around rural economic development and COVID-19 recovery for businesses align with our investors' priorities. His stance on housing solutions, rural broadband, and support of career technical education were also in alignment with Traverse Connect's priorities," said Kirstie Sieloff, Director of Government Relations. "These are critically important issues that the business community must play a role in; they affect our quality of life and availability of talent for our businesses."

The Republican challenger for the 104th State House District, John Roth, offers qualities deemed attractive by the business community, including his experience as a small business owner and his commitment to making the business climate more competitive by reducing unnecessary regulation. Roth's support for skilled labor education and childcare solutions is also aligned with Traverse Connect's priorities.

Voters can learn more about each candidate by visiting the Traverse Connect 2020 [election webpage](#).

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About the Traverse Connect PAC:

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