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Jackson: Support jobs, not backroom deals

Erwin Jackson • Rebuttal • Published: August 15, 2010 2:00AM

Re: "City Commission, Seat 5: Gil Ziffer" (July 17).

We are in the middle of the worst economy in 50 years. However, last year, my opponent supported an increase in our property taxes, voted to increase our utility rates and voted to increase building inspection fees. Now he is surprised when the construction industry is on life support and small businesses are closing in record numbers.

I pledge to put the interest of the public first. That is one reason why the Northeast Business Association and the *Capital Outlook* newspaper support my candidacy. My opponent's loyalties to the public are questionable, since he accepted contributions from 20 lobbyists, 29 out-of-town contributors, 12 out-of-state contributors and three political action committees.

I believe we should protect our neighborhoods against unreasonable development. When a south-side neighborhood learned that a biomass plant with a 150-foot smokestack would be its unwanted neighbor, I opposed it. Even though I was criticized by incumbent commissioners, my action protected the health and quality of life of my south-side neighbors.

I believe lower utility rates are essential to our prosperity. Tallahassee has one of the highest utility rates in the state. I will vote to stop the automatic and unjustified utility rate increases. My opponent has supported the \$50 million smart meter program that will be a financial burden on our families and small businesses for years.

I believe we need jobs for every income level. My opponent said he doesn't want \$10-per-hour jobs. He is obviously out of touch with the approximately 15,000 people looking for work in our community.

We cannot afford downtown insiders to continue running our city for their enjoyment at our expense. We will put an end to the "backroom deals" and the "private club" mentality. It is time to hold our "collegial" incumbents accountable for taking an extra \$22,000 in compensation, misusing city credit

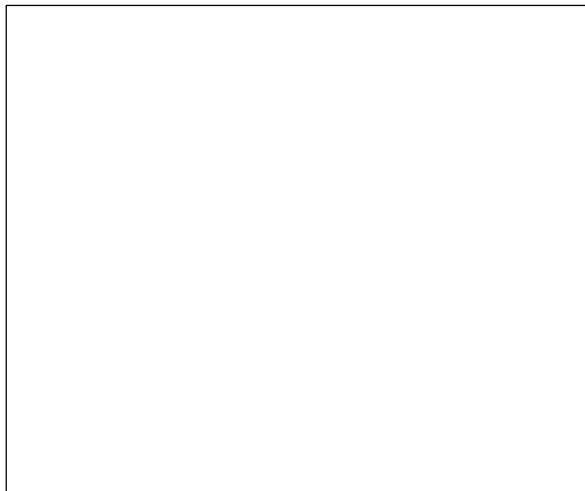
cards and approving contracts to commissioners' friends, law partners and lobbyists.



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