

Questions for State Senate Candidates:

1. What is your position regarding (a) the consolidation of Glynn County and the City of Brunswick? b) Incorporation of St. Simons Island? c) Giving the citizens the right to vote on these questions?

William Ligon (Incumbent):

Consolidation of Glynn County and the City of Brunswick could have very good results for taxpayers. From a fiscal viewpoint, it makes good sense, but there are various other considerations that come into play. The weighing of such a decision first rests with the locally elected officials who answer directly to the voters at the local level.

As the Georgia Tech study on the subject of St. Simons incorporation revealed, it would be more costly for the taxpayers of St. Simons Island to move forward with incorporation and would create fiscal problems for Glynn County, so personally I do not support it. However, this decision again rests with locally elected officials who answer directly to the voters at the local level. If they decide to move forward, that would be the right time to draft legislation.

All local citizens have the right to vote on these questions as long as the same questions are provided county-wide because all citizens will be affected by these decisions. Those ballot results then would need to be seriously considered by the City of Brunswick Commissioners and by Glynn County Commissioners who then can make an official request to state legislators for consolidation or incorporation, depending if either or both represent the will of the people.

Jerrold Dagen:

Citizens should be allowed to determine how they want to govern.

2. What is your position regarding drilling off the coast of Georgia?

Ligon:

I am against off-shore drilling for oil and sponsored a resolution, SR 706, in the 2018 legislative session to this effect.

Dagen:

There should be no offshore drilling.

3. What can you, as a state legislator, do to bring opportunities for economic growth to Glynn County?

Ligon:

As a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, I will continue to advocate for the funding needs of our higher education system so it can continue its growth and serve more students who will be better prepared for high level jobs in our area. In addition, I will continue to ensure that Jekyll Island receives the attention it deserves so that it can attract more tourism. I

will continue to secure the funding that our port needs so it can continue its growth. I will consider innovative legislative initiatives, such as the one I recently passed establishing the Coastal Greenway, which will appeal to eco-tourism. I will continue to secure funding for additional projects that make our area an attractive place to live. For example, I helped secure \$2 million for the renovation of our public library.

Dagen:

Alternative energy is the future, and the only way to provide true energy independence. Creating more clean energy jobs would be good for the environment and it is something we can do right here in Glynn County.

4. What do you feel are the top three issues facing Glynn County today?

Ligon:

Glynn County is currently assessing its water and sewer infrastructure problems. This issue is certainly one that needs to be resolved and should have top priority. Secondly, good stewardship of our natural resources must be addressed, such as protecting our water quality and supply and smart planning to maintain the natural beauty of our islands. Thirdly, we need to continue to support our port's growth and development because its success is closely tied to our economic progress.

Dagen:

Three top issues are what I am campaigning on, education- we need to provide for all our schools, the economy- we face high poverty and need an economy to help everyone, the environment- we must protect our coast and our environment for all to enjoy.

5. In your role as a state legislator, do you believe you should you be driving an agenda that benefits Glynn County or waiting for the County and/or City Commissioners to ask for your help?

Ligon:

In my role as a legislator. I can do both. I can help our city and county elected leaders by assisting them with legislation that authorizes them to accomplish certain projects in their communities. However, I am also able to drive agendas that benefit all of Glynn County or the Third District. For example, in the area of funding, I have worked to secure funding for construction projects at the college, the Coastal Greenway, the library, just to name a few. I can sponsor legislation that has a local result. For example, I assisted with legislation signaling that the Third District is open to the development of a spaceport.

Dagen:

As a legislator I would take initiative for what I think I can do to help the people, and try to work with local government, organizations, and individuals who have ideas to help.

6. What can you do, in your role, to help Glynn County address and solve the current issues with its infrastructure?

Ligon:

I can offer my support for securing state or federal grants which could assist with the infrastructure needs. If specific legislation were necessary to address funding or the governance structure of the Joint Water and Sewer Commission, I am available to work with the local officials to secure legislative changes. I have worked well with our Department of Transportation officials to assist with road infrastructure in our county and will continue to do so. Finally, I have always supported funding the infrastructure needs of our ports and will continue to do so.

Dagen:

Growth has exceeded the county's capacity to keep up with it and that is one reason why we are facing so many infrastructure problems. We have seen what happens with unlimited, unchecked growth. We need to focus on sustainable growth, which takes into account the current infrastructure problems and the ability to address them. As a state legislator I would want the county to realize they need to have better planning, and realize the many costs associated with growth, not just the monetary requirements, but the changes and impact a growing population will have on the region. That said, I would try to help with options to fund infrastructure, from roads, to power, to water, problems facing many communities across the country. We need to plan for safe and reliable infrastructure for the future, but we need better checks and balances, we need to focus on sustainable growth.