

# STATE SENATOR RACE DISTRICT 1

# Profile of Scott Herndon

By Lyndsie Kiebert  
Reader Staff

*Editor's Note: Scott Herndon is running as a Republican in the State Senate District 1 race.*

### Sandpoint Reader: What is your background in North Idaho?

Scott Herndon: I moved here from San Francisco, where I met my wife. The minute we started having children — we had our first in San Francisco — we wanted to get to somewhere rural. My brother bought land in the Selle Valley in 2004, and he said “Hey, you should go check out Sandpoint,” so I flew up here in March 2004 and in one weekend bought a piece of land. We bought a house in town in April 2004, and the land we’re currently living on in June 2004. I built our home, and I actually am a homebuilder now. We’ve been doing that for customers since about 2007. I had never built a home in my life until I built mine. I got all the books, watched some videos and learned how to do it.

### SR: What inspires you to run for office?

SH: I have a lot of friends that are legislators, in this state and in other states. It’s almost like, “Why not?” In other words, if you’ve got strong ideas for government and you can present them well and you get along with people and you can work with people and try to navigate them toward some of your positions, and you actually care about some of their positions, then I think it’s a good idea to get involved — especially if you have the time or the inclination.

### SR: What are your top three issues?

SH: My number-one issue is constitutional government, especially in relation to the federal

government. The federal government is supposed to be a lot smaller than it is, but it’s pretty much in every aspect of our lives. It’s very big in regards to the budget, and very big in regards to reach. A lot of states just implement federal policy — it’s almost like the states have become policy implementers of federal policy. It’s taken states that could be unique and made them all homogeneous. For people who have really strong political ideas about how a state should be run, there’s no state that best represents them because they’re all becoming the same. So, if you really liked a certain ideology and Washington had a better representation of it, it seems to me you ought to be able to move to Washington.

Number two would be state sovereignty: the idea that the federal government was meant to serve a very limited role, and that the states were meant to serve everything else. The way to do that is states don’t go back to the federal government and ask permission for everything. They can simply just do it. I don’t think people understand that state sovereignty is an actual constitutional thing under the Tenth Amendment and that states can navigate their own way.

My number-three issue in Idaho is the expense of Idaho government. Right now it’s growing. Our general fund expenditures, for example, grow at six to nine percent a year. The economy is only growing (at a) three-and-a-half-percent (rate). It’s almost as if there is no overarching view of the growth of government, or people trying to restrain the growth of government to what can actually be supported by the economy.

### SR: If you’re elected, how will you aim to serve all your constituents, especially now, when it feels like we’re in a very polarized political situation?

SH: What’s interesting is some people think of the left as very

different from the right. I’m a constitutional conservative, so I would get labeled way over on the right. However, what’s interesting — can I use your notepad here? — I think that most people view ideologies in government as a bell curve, where there’s a small group on the way left and a small group on the way right, and most people are in the middle. I view it like this. (Herndon draws a circle with two nearly connected ends, and labels one end the “left” and the other the “right”). We actually have a lot in common, those of us that are extremely passionate. For example, we all shop at the same organic foods stores and do yoga and care about CBD oil. I think the way to get along is to go ahead and find the topics we are right next to each other on. We have to respect each other at least for the fact that we’re willing to go out and say things about what we care about. You just have to influence each other politely over time.

### SR: A lot of people find your methods of persuasion when it comes to anti-abortion protests disturbing, and they’re concerned about where you decide to demonstrate. What do you have to say about that, especially now that it’s been happening for a while?

SH: You know what’s funny is I’m hardly ever out doing stuff like that, but there is a group of people that does, and I totally support their right to do that. I’ve been out with them, and I think abortion is one of those things that is like human slavery, in that it’s a human rights violation, so it’s a civil rights question. I hope it’s one of those things in the future that we look back and we realize how repugnant the notion was. The abolitionists of slavery were very disruptive because they were trying to upset the whole economy, and a whole way of life. Unfortunately, when you’re trying to change some of the really big ideas, it disrupts a whole culture.



Courtesy photo.

It’s upsetting to people because it threatens their whole worldview. Abortion is something I care very much about, but it’s not my number-one issue because I don’t think we’re going to overturn and abolish abortion right away until we get other ideas in place.

### SR: What else do you want people to know about you?

SH: We have a lot of ideologies in District 1. A lot of people wonder how I’ll represent the whole district, and the reality is that I don’t think a legislator can perfectly represent a whole district because they’re bound by their oath to uphold the constitution. If, say, the whole district wanted something that wasn’t constitutional, then the legislator is going to have to hold the line. But a good legislator would explain to the district why they can’t do x, y or z. I will represent everyone in the district, and I’ll have an open phone. I would say there are people around here that would be surprised that I would take some of their ideas very seriously and introduce them to the Legislature.

## Scott Herndon AT A GLANCE

**AGE:** 50

**BIRTHPLACE AND RESIDENCE:** Born in Richmond, Va. Moved to S. Division in Sandpoint in 2004 and to 15 acres on Otts basin in Sagle in 2006.

**GOVERNMENT SERVICE:** Worked for the USFS in college as a firefighter. Then worked for UC Berkeley and the Los Angeles County Office of Education for a total of four years as a computer programming contractor implementing Peoplesoft Financial Systems.

**PROFESSION:** Previously accounting and finance and 10 years as a computer programmer. He has been a home builder in residential construction in Bonner and Boundary County as Scott Herndon Homes for 11 years.

**EDUCATION:** BS in Finance from Arizona State University, 1989.

**FAMILY:** Married to his wife, Arlene, for 20 years. They have eight children together ranging in age from 4 to 21.

**FUN FACT:** At Arizona State University, Herndon was president of the Skydiving Club and accumulated 492 jumps while in college, including over 8 hours of freefall.