**Josh Mers – Candidate for Treasurer**

1. What sets you apart from the other candidates?

My experience and background have better prepared me to take on the minimum job duties of the State Treasurer and expand the office to match the Constitutional authority of the office.  Professionally, my experience doesn’t come from a corporate handbook, it has been learned from being in small business.  My insurance and financial services agency, while small, has given me the opportunity to manage every aspect of the day to day and long range success as well as working with the financial security of everyday, hard-working Kentuckians.  Adding to this financial background, having served as the Treasurer for one of Lexington’s government agencies, I have first hand experience being a responsible steward of the taxpayer dollar.  Couple this with nearly two decades of advocacy work serving for 5 years as the Chair of Lexington Fairness, on the Fayette County Democratic Executive Committee, President of the Fayette Young Dems and University of Kentucky College Democrats, and serving on several boards and commissions, I have proven my ability to advocate for folks often left behind or willfully ignored.

1. How are you going to bring Kentucky into the future?

By working in partnership with the new Governor, I will position the role of State Treasurer as the Chief Economic Ambassador of the Commonwealth, helping to set an economic agenda that moves Ky forward and invests the power of our people.  This will include investigation into the $13 Billion that we give away each year in tax expenditures, advocating for fair and equitable tax reform, and generating new sources of revenue.  I fundamentally believe that Kentucky can fully fund our public education system, rebuild our infrastructure, invest in an economy of the future, and can do all of this without bankrupting the Commonwealth.

1. What are your goals if elected?

My goals are to be that trusted partner to the new Governor and be a loud advocate for the people of Kentucky.  Within the office, we will start on day one improving the understanding and value of the Treasury by taking unclaimed property and financial literacy initiatives out across the state.  The more that the people of Kentucky become familiar with the work of the Treasury, the more successful I can be in advocating on their behalf.  The Treasury is also in dire need of improvements in technology and fraud prevention.  Areas that will serve to protect the taxpayer and make the Treasury more user-friendly.

1. How do you plan on addressing income inequality in Kentucky?

In that advocacy role, I will work to encourage investment in economic and educational development in areas being left behind as well as join the fight to improve wages in Kentucky (raising the minimum wage, eliminating Right to Work, and stopping payroll tax wage theft).  Whether it’s the West End of Louisville or coal country in Eastern Kentucky, whole communities of our neighbors are being ignored when it comes to conversations about new business development, infrastructure planning, and modernization.  These areas need a strong voice that will proactively work to address discrepancy in areas such income inequality, food insecurity, housing affordability, and healthcare related life expectancy.