1. **Overall 2013 was a tough year for everyone in Congress, especially considering public perception. But now that you've had about a year in office since being elected, how would you characterize your 2013?**

Unfortunately, Washington is paralyzed by politics and has been reduced to sound bites.  In many ways, the Senate can be a frustrating place to work, but at the same time, it is an honor to go to work every day with the goal of improving people's lives. This year, I have tried to focus on finding reasonable solutions that can help people at home.

2. **With issues like veterans affairs, housing and, of course, mining being huge in the area, what things can people expect from you to push in 2014?**

For five years, Congress has been paralyzed by gridlock, and has failed to pass a budget. Passing a budget and spending bills on time is one of Congress’s basic responsibilities. It’s also an important step towards determining our nation’s long-term goals and reining in our debt. If Congress does not pass a budget on time, then Congress should not get paid. I will continue to advocate for my No Budget, No Pay legislation, which withholds pay from Members of Congress if Congress does not do its basic duty and pass a budget and spending bills.

One of the highlights of my job is helping people at home. My staff and I stand ready to help the people of White Pine who need help, whether that means they need assistance with their Social Security payments, or perhaps securing their Medicare benefits. These issues will always be a priority.

3. **What are your goals in 2014 in terms of legislation you'd like to see happen?**

Every day I go to work to advocate for our great state and let Nevadans know there is someone in Washington who is on their side.  In 2014, I would like to see Congress go through the regular budget process. This will force both chambers to make long-term decisions about the direction this country is headed and rein in our debt. Congress can start by passing No Budget, No Pay.

As Nevada veterans face one of the biggest backlogs in the nation, I will continue to push for a wide variety of reforms that will help tackle the veterans’ disability claim backlog, and help White Pine veterans receive the benefits they earned and deserve.

4. **What do you feel your biggest accomplishment of 2013 was? By the same token, do you have a biggest disappointment from the year?**

As far as the biggest accomplishment of 2013, I think that, as a whole, the amount of legislation that we have been able to pass out of the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee has been fulfilling. I am proud to report that President Obama signed the Stolen Valor Act into law. The Committee has also agreed to adopt several measures that I have introduced, including a provision that requires greater cooperation from other federal agencies so that the VA can process claims more quickly. A provision that I introduced to secure education benefits for surviving spouses of service members who die in the line of duty has made significant progress through the Committee, as has a measure to help the surviving spouses manage their veteran-owned business or a disabled-veteran-owned business. Along with my colleagues, I have also tackled the need to for housing for homeless veterans, and especially our women veterans and their dependents.

I have also been honored to join with Senators from both sides of the aisles on some major issues, such as reforming the housing finance system and creating an infrastructure bank. These are the kinds of big challenges that we face in Washington D.C. that can make a difference back home.

Perhaps the biggest disappointment of this year has been seeing just how much of a negative impact ObamaCare has made on Nevadans families and businesses. From the beginning, this has been a deeply flawed law, but it is still extremely difficult to hear from my constituents about the hardship this legislation is causing.

5. **You have a large amount of support here. What are some legislation that you took part in that people may not know about that may positively affect the area?**

There is a lot of legislation that I work on every day to help promote innovation and job growth. When I evaluate legislation I apply what I call the more, higher, or less test.  Does this bill provide more services, at a higher quality, for less cost?  If the federal government approached problems through an entrepreneurial perspective, we could have a more efficient government at less cost to the taxpayer.

One example would be the BRIDGE Act, which I have been working on with a group of Senators from both sides of the aisle, including Senator Warner of Virginia. One of the federal government’s main responsibilities is to ensure our transportation infrastructure needs are met. Right now, the state of Nevada has identified the need for nearly $3 billion dollars to fund the most important transportation projects in the state. The State has asked Congress for about $500 million of it. We must find ways to ensure the federal government can meet its obligations to help fund important transportation projects. Right now, we are not meeting that challenge. The BRIDGE Act leverages private investment dollars in our nation’s infrastructure. It is a smart, innovative solution that will allow us to finance our infrastructure needs responsibly.

6. **What sort of feedback have you gotten from people in White Pine County? Does your office receive phone calls, letters, emails ,etc.?**

It’s really an honor to serve the people of White Pine in the United States Senate. One of the things I look forward to most each week is hosting a telephone town hall. During those calls, I get an opportunity to take questions from people in Ely and throughout White Pine. These calls provide immediate feedback about what I need to be doing in Washington D.C. to help you.

In addition to the numerous calls and letters I receive, I also always look forward to visiting White Pine, often near the Labor Day festivities or while attending Lincoln Day events. Lynne and I will be attending the Fire and Ice Show in January, and we look forward to speaking with attendees there about what they want to see change in Washington D.C.

**7. The public seemed, as a whole, fed up with Congress in 2013. What can everyone do to change that?**

Work together for the good of the American people. The “do nothing” status quo in Washington must be done away with. Missed deadline after missed deadline have been the pattern throughout this Congress. One thing I am sure we can all agree on is that Congress can’t continue kicking the can down the road threatening the fiscal sustainability of future generations. If nothing changes, either our nation’s ever-increasing debt or rampant inflation will crush our economy. We have to end this cycle of inaction and indecisiveness.