



BIZVOTES QUESTIONNAIRE



INFORMING THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY AND ENCOURAGING
POLITICAL AWARENESS AND ENGAGEMENT.

2011 Loudoun County Chamber of Commerce Virginia General Assembly Candidate Questionnaire 33rd Senatorial District

1. What is the biggest issue/challenge you believe Virginia faces in the upcoming term?

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Reviving our economy and getting unemployed Virginians back to work.

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The biggest challenge facing Virginia is our economic recovery and the impact of the federal government's handling of the national economic issue will impact Virginia uniquely due to its proximity to the Capitol city. The federal government will be working to address the excessive budgets. Cuts in Federal government budgets will impact the private sector companies that are responding to needs for government outsourcing, and will likely be hit hard if there is any serious cutting of the federal budget. The state legislature's challenge will be to maintain an even keel.

2. How do you propose to address this challenge?

Mark Herring* (D)

I am proud that during my tenure in the Senate, Virginia has been the best state for business. I plan to keep it that way by continuing my efforts to maintain a favorable regulatory environment, ensure reasonable tax rates, maintain investments in education to make sure we have a highly skilled workforce, and make strategic investments in economic development.

Patricia Phillips (R)

A strong and growing private sector will help Virginia to weather the impact of cuts in the federal government. Small businesses create new goods and services -- they create jobs, not government. What Virginia can do is create an environment to the benefit of all business, not just selected favorites. Keeping taxes low, maintaining our right to work laws, simplifying sales tax collection policies, reducing traffic congestion so goods and service can move more efficiently are all important.



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3. Northern Virginia's economic drivers differ from much of the rest of the state. In light of that, what specific state economic development incentives would you propose/support in order to stimulate and enhance the economy of Northern Virginia?

Mark Herring* (D)

During my time in the Senate, I have championed state economic development incentives and I will continue to do so. Just this year I sponsored and got passed the Research and Development tax credit. This follows my successful sponsorship and passage of the expanded and enhanced Commonwealth Research Commercialization Fund and a more focused angel investment tax credit. I was also able to add language into the Senate budget that applies data center investment to multi-tenant data center models. I will continue to sponsor and gain passage of solutions like these to enhance our economy.

Patricia Phillips (R)

Road congestion is a huge drain on the Northern Virginia economy. The lost of time and productivity due to traffic clogged roads is significant. If businesses can make 7 deliveries instead of 5, or repairmen can make 5 appointments instead of 3, our productivity increases. Less gas is wasted, fewer accidents and repairs, the benefits are endless. A more productive workforce -- and expanded workforce pool to choose from if commute times are cut. Mobility is an indicator of economic activity. Funding for road construction and maintenance needs to come from the general revenue.



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4. Loudoun County is rich in heritage and destination resources that could be natural catalysts to promote expanded tourism. What programs or initiatives would you support to enhance and/or create economic opportunities for County businesses in the tourism/business travel industries to ensure we are fully leveraging our tourism resources?

Mark Herring* (D)

Residents of Loudoun County will benefit economically and in quality of life from a robust tourism industry that welcomes all visitors - business, groups, and leisure. I support an integrated and properly funded marketing, promotion and development strategy that realizes Loudoun's potential as a visitor destination. The marketing campaign should focus on both traditional and non-traditional sectors that have the ability to generate the most tax revenue, attract more businesses, and generate more overnight stays. The program must also have performance metrics to ensure accountability.

Patricia Phillips (R)

We need to address transportation problems so that business and recreational travelers will have good experiences when they come to Loudoun County. Recently my business held a workshop bringing 50 people from around the country through Dulles Airport to Ashburn. Several participants commented about the traffic and delays getting to the meeting. When I hold meetings in Chicago and LA, I don't hear those complaints. I'm convinced that our road congestion is a major drag on our economy.

5. What specific opportunities would you initiate/support to positively benefit Loudoun's business community in the upcoming term?

Mark Herring* (D)

In each of my six years in the Senate, I have brought home at least one bill that has positively benefitted the business community and made Loudoun a better place to work and live. In the upcoming year, I would like to secure funding to plan the George Mason campus, expand the current data center incentives, and secure additional funding for critical transportation projects.

Patricia Phillips (R)

The state should focus on its role to build and maintain the infrastructure that all businesses will benefit from including roads to reduce congestion; universal availability of broadband; a focus on science, technology, engineering and math in our secondary and college curriculums to provide an educated workforce. Assuring a steady and cost-efficient energy supply is also important to business.



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6. Both public and private advocates for transportation worked to secure a \$4 billion funding package that by definition will provide revenues over the next three years. But after that we face a severe drop off of revenue to address the road, transit, rail, port and airport improvements needed to support our quality of life and growing economy. Do you believe that a top priority should be assigned to securing new, long term, sustainable regional and statewide transportation funding in the 2012 General Assembly session? If so, how? If not, why?

Mark Herring* (D)

Yes. I was proud to be a chief co-patron of the \$4 billion dollar budget and bring much needed short term funds to Northern Virginia. Long term success will take sustained leadership from the Governor, the Speaker of the House, and the Senate Majority Leader, and I will continue to advocate for it and work to bring together the critical majority necessary for success.

Patricia Phillips (R)

I think we can re-prioritize the 3% of the budget to transportation and make a long term commitment to fund maintenance and construction from the general fund. Currently less than 1% of the general fund money goes to transportation. Yet everyone benefits from an efficient transportation network, not just the people who pay the gas tax. There is no reason why transportation funding should be limited to dedicated funding streams. Increasing gas taxes to raise the same revenue would hurt rather than help our economy. Re-prioritizing 3% of the budget into transportation can be done.



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7. For the past decade, northern Virginia's economic growth and job creation has generated significant tax revenues for the Commonwealth. Meanwhile, northern Virginia's local governments have become increasingly dependent on local property taxes to fund the increased needs of a growing population, such as schools, public safety, human services and transportation. How would you propose to help high growth jurisdictions, like Loudoun County, to balance their tax base, diversify their revenue sources and/or gain access to additional broad-based revenue sources to support the increased costs of a growing population?

Mark Herring* (D)

More of the revenue produced by Northern Virginia should stay here, and more of the revenue produced by Loudoun County should stay in Loudoun County. In six years as your State Senator, I have fought to get our fair share from the state in order to alleviate the immense pressure on localities, and have delivered hundreds of millions of dollars for transportation, education and other services. I have also focused on tax credits and incentives, passing numerous bills into law that also ease some of the burden on our county. I have been successful in this effort because I have actively worked with all parties involved and have never forgotten that as one of the members of the Northern Virginia delegation, I am your steward. It will be my privilege to continue work with you and fight for our fair share in Richmond.

Patricia Phillips (R)

By design, Virginia is responsible for building and maintaining all roads in Virginia. Unfortunately the past legislatures have failed to fulfill that responsibility, forcing many jurisdictions to fund their own road improvements. Even then the localities are still burdened with approvals by VDOT that hinder the progress. The State needs to fulfill its responsibility and fully fund transportation which will help Loudoun County's budget. Expansion of private schools can help relieve the burden of the growing school age population. Refundable tuition tax credits should be piloted in high-growth areas like Loudoun in order to space out the capital infrastructure requirements.



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8. Please briefly describe what specific policies/initiatives would support to promote improvements to the education of Loudoun's children and how you would fund these policies/initiatives.

Mark Herring* (D)

As a County Supervisor, I helped fund and construct 16 new schools. My wife and I have two children in public schools and I support fully funding the revised Standards of Quality to ensure the highest quality education for all of our children. Our students require an educational system that allows them to compete and win on the international stage. For this reason, I definitively oppose my opponent's reckless proposal to cut statewide education funding by \$148,554,000. In contrast, during my six years as your Senator, I have nearly doubled Loudoun's state funding from approximately \$118 to \$224 million and led the successful effort to reverse \$35 million in state cuts to Loudoun schools in 2010.

Patricia Phillips (R)

I believe the Loudoun County School Board is the appropriate organization to identify specific policies and initiatives to improve public education. Therefore I would work with the Administration and School Board to identify unfunded mandates from the state that could be reduced or eliminated. Education priorities will naturally vary throughout the state of Virginia and I firmly believe that more local decision making can reduce costs and increase the quality of education. Business leaders and parents can have more input at the local school board level.



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9. As Virginia continues on the road to economic recovery, Virginians are faced with a new reality with regard to the types of jobs that are available and the skills needed to compete and succeed in the global workplace. What role do you believe Virginia's higher education institutions should play in addressing these challenges and what programs/initiatives are you willing to propose to help them fulfill that role? Please address both community college and four-year institutions, and consider the role of both public and private institutions.

Mark Herring* (D)

Higher education institutions play a pivotal role in addressing our new reality. Just this year I fought off actions that threatened to end the Tuition Assistance Grants program. I was able to preserve it and ensure that our students who need these funds so badly are able to focus on their studies, not their funding. I will continue to fight attempts to degrade our educational system by gutting funding and denying low and middle income students access to higher education. At the same time, I will continue to support initiatives such as job-specific training at community colleges, public private partnerships for university based research, and increasing the numbers of top flight degrees in high demand, high paying sectors, such as technology, science and healthcare.

Patricia Phillips (R)

Students going to college in Virginia are more likely to settle in Virginia post graduation and that this is desirable. With our investment in K-12 education, it is ideal if students who want to attend Virginia's public universities and are qualified, should have a more reasonable opportunity to attend the school of their choice. To keep costs down for students and allow for more students to attend, we should identify and address the reasons such a large part of the student body does not graduate within the traditional four years. The increasing costs of college outpaces inflation; there is no incentive for our schools to keep costs low, because the normal free market forces are not in play. Also, Virginia's schools have an economic incentive to admit out-of-state students. The extra money charged for out-of-state students should be returned to the state general fund, not retained by the school. College admissions should not be biased by the extra income out-of state students bring. Geographic diversity should be valued on its own merits. This change alone would substantially increase the number of qualified Virginia students accepted into our public colleges and universities.



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10. Access to affordable health care for all businesses, including small businesses and sole proprietors, continues to be a top priority of the Loudoun County Chamber. Please describe what specific policies/initiatives you would support to help address the significant changes facing businesses from implementation of the Affordable Care Act.

Mark Herring* (D)

If businesses are to successfully implement the systems required by the Affordable Care Act, they will need state support. The reduction of burdens and implementation of cost saving options for businesses, such as providing tax incentives to offset healthcare costs, are two ways the state can help lessen the load. An overall system that lowers costs, raises quality, expands options, maximizes efficiency by utilizing healthcare information technology, expands healthcare infrastructure, and emphasizes wellness and prevention will ultimately benefit providers, insurers and consumers. Government has the responsibility to act as a partner with businesses to ensure a positive outcome in the implementation of the ACA.

Patricia Phillips (R)

The purpose of insurance is to share the risk of adverse events that cost a lot of money. Our current health insurance programs have strayed far from that goal. Skyrocketing health insurance costs plague all businesses, but especially small business because of the small pool of employees they insure. Currently insurers can dramatically raise rates whenWhile one of the employees need to use the insurance. I want to explore the potentiation for larger risk pools for small business to help keep health insurance affordable for small business to provide.



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11. What types of energy development should Virginia promote to ensure that businesses have reliable, affordable and environmentally sound, sustainable energy supplies in the future?

Mark Herring* (D)

It is in our county's best interest to have a long term energy policy that includes a diverse mix of solutions that recognize that our local economy is, and will continue to be, tied to our ability to ensure that both commercial and residential consumers that have a steady and affordable supply of energy. I voted for the Virginia Energy Plan. The county should develop an energy plan consistent with the VEP that delivers conservation and efficiency results through a mix of traditional and renewable energy, and is in compliance with all environmental laws and regulations, while minimizing the financial impact on consumers and businesses. This energy policy should be based on metrics and established methodologies. As your Senator, I will work with our Northern Virginia delegation to coordinate state and local policies and protect against potentially detrimental legislation.

Patricia Phillips (R)

While coal will continue to be the backbone of Virginia's energy supply for the foreseeable future, we need to take advantage of Virginia's other energy resources - uranium, oil, and gas. Virginia needs to encourage the safe exploration and use of these resources while insuring our environment is protected. Renewable energy sources - wind, solar, tidal - can be encouraged by creating an economic climate that is friendly to start-up companies, and regulations that consider actual costs as well as benefits .



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12. The Chamber believes that there is a state role in ensuring the availability of technology infrastructure in Virginia. That being said, what funding and/or policy initiatives would you support to expedite deployment and reduce the cost of broadband access in Virginia in under-served areas, such as western Loudoun County?

Mark Herring* (D)

The availability of technology infrastructure today and in the future is critical to both industry and our residents. State and local policies that encourage, support and sustain the expansion of broadband services to underserved areas of the County, the integration of broadband deployment into our transportation strategy, and the connection of our business parks with data centers are needed. Additionally, strategic placement of towers that support wireless access will be critical to bring areas such as western Loudoun County up to the level of our best served areas, both now and in the future. Investment in this necessary technology infrastructure should be promoted through public private cooperation.

Patricia Phillips (R)

I believe the technology infrastructure is as important as the transportation infrastructure in terms of providing an environment where businesses have an opportunity to succeed. Public private partnerships may provide an opportunity for government and business to work together to provide public and commercial services. I cannot commit to funding priorities until they can be weighed along with other program funding requests. In determining priorities, the costs and benefits of competing proposals need to be weighed, with funding allocated accordingly.

13. Please briefly describe what best qualifies you to hold the office for which you are running.

Mark Herring* (D)

In my time as both a member of the Board of Supervisors and as your State Senator, I have effectively worked with the business community, the citizens of Loudoun County, and representatives of government at all levels. I have served in the majority and minority, under Republican and Democratic governors, and delivered consistent and meaningful results because I have proven that I put our county above politics.

Patricia Phillips (R)

My business and volunteer activities provide excellent experience for serving in the state Senate. As an expert in the National School Lunch Program, I've gained experience about how federal programs work, through state agencies and are administered at the local level. It's also given me experience working with many businesses large and small so that I understand how business makes decisions. I gained negotiating skills helping government and industry solve problems. I learned the state legislative process while serving in a volunteer capacity with a state women's organization.



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14. What is the chief factor that differentiates you from your opponent(s) (if you have one)?

Mark Herring* (D)

The primary difference between me and my opponent is that I have a proven track record of delivering results on the issues that are critical to Loudoun County. From jobs to roads to education funding, my accomplishments are tangible. I have achieved this because I am willing to work with all parties that have our best interest in mind.

Patricia Phillips (R)

I believe in focusing government on core responsibilities, so that business can focus on commerce and industry, charities can focus on charity, schools on education, and families on personal responsibility. These divisions maximize effectiveness of all functions and preserves individual liberty, creativity and responsibility. I believe in government of the people, by the people and for the people. My democrat opponent has never contradicted his party's approach of ever expanding government control. Their approach kills jobs & results in less freedom, higher taxes and more dependency.

15. Do you have a web site where more information about you is available? What is that web site address?

Mark Herring* (D)

www.MarkHerring.org

Patricia Phillips (R)

www.PatriciaPhillips.org

If you have any questions regarding this questionnaire, please contact Tony Howard at 571-209-9020. This questionnaire has been sent to the list of candidates provided by the Board of Elections. Thank you.