



Responses to U.S. Senate Race Survey

In anticipation of the November 4th general elections, the Virginia Catholic Conference (VCC) sent (via certified mail, return-receipt requested) an 11-item questionnaire on August 26th to all four candidates for Virginia's contested U.S. Senate seat. The VCC is the public-policy representative of the Commonwealth's Catholic bishops and their two dioceses.

Instructions included within the questionnaire advised that the candidates' "agree" and "disagree" responses would be displayed via a chart on the VCC's website (www.vacatholic.org), and that Virginia's 220 Catholic parishes would be permitted to download the chart display and provide copies to parishioners. Each candidate was invited to return a completed, signed questionnaire no later than Friday, October 3.

Of the four candidates, two submitted responses on or before October 3. At regular intervals before October 3, a VCC staff member also made five phone calls to the campaign offices of both candidates who did not respond, and encouraged the submission of responses in conversations with and voice messages for campaign officials. Following further attempts after October 3, the VCC received confirmation from both non-responding campaigns that responses would not be submitted.

Displayed below is the set of 11 items provided to the candidates, followed by a chart that includes the names of all four candidates in alphabetical order and the "agree" and "disagree" answers of the two candidates that submitted responses.

HUMAN LIFE

1. Federal policy should continue the current restrictions on the use of federal taxpayer funds for abortion.
2. Federal policy should continue the current restrictions on the use of federal taxpayer funds for research that destroys live human embryos (embryonic stem cell research).

HEALTH CARE & CONSCIENCE

3. Federal agencies and states that receive federal funds should not discriminate against health care providers who do not perform or participate in abortions.
4. Our health care system should be reformed to ensure that there is affordable, accessible health care for all, especially for low-income families with children and for persons with disabilities.

FAMILY LIFE

5. An amendment to the U.S. Constitution that would provide a national, legal definition of marriage as only the union of a man and a woman should be advanced to the states for ratification.

6. The law should continue to permit American citizens and legal permanent residents to petition for close family members – such as children, parents, and siblings – who are living abroad to come live in the United States.

IMMIGRATION & INT’L POLICY

7. Undocumented aliens who have been living in the United States for a number of years and who do not have criminal records should be able to earn legal status by paying fines, paying back taxes, and agreeing to learn English.
8. Congress should increase the number of visas available to refugees who are fleeing persecution abroad, and appropriate adequate funds for the U.S. refugee admissions program.
9. Congress should annually increase development assistance to reduce global poverty.

EDUCATION

10. Current federal law provides certain educational benefits to students and teachers in private and religious schools on a basis equitable to what public school students and teachers receive. These benefits should be continued and expanded.
11. Federal financial assistance should be offered to low-income parents to choose the schools that they believe are best suited for their children.

Candidate/Party	HUMAN LIFE		HEALTH CARE & CONSCIENCE		FAMILY LIFE		IMMIGRATION & INT’L POLICY			EDUCATION	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
James S. “Jim” Gilmore (Republican)	A	A	A	A	A	A	D	A	D	A	A
Glenda Gail Parker ¹ (Independent Green)											
William B. Redpath (Libertarian)	A	A	A	D	D	A	A	A	D	D	D
Mark R. Warner (Democrat)											

¹ Ms. Parker contacted the VCC on October 14 and informed a VCC staff member of her campaign's general policy of not providing responses to candidate surveys.