

FROM THE OFFICE OF
BARTLETT FOR ND SENATE

**North Dakota American Federation of Labor - Congress of Industrial Organizations
Committee on Political Education**

2008 Candidate Survey - Responses

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ND AFL-CIO Operating Committee
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Dear North Dakota AFL-CIO,

Thank you very much for asking these important questions and allowing me to state my positions and rationale on labor issues that affect North Dakota individuals and government. My responses flow from an understanding of the historic American case for freedom in markets, as well as the freedom to contract between individuals with minimal government intrusion, which also minimizes the tax burden upon families.

Here are your questions followed by my responses:

1. Are you or have you ever been a member of a local union?

No, I have not been a member of a local union, but have observed union operations while an engineering student working for Cadillac Division of General Motors, as well as in academia. The effect of the union at GM was debilitating upon productivity in three specific cases that I observed.

a. I was the engineer directing a union mechanic to complete the installation of strain gauges on engine brackets in a new v8 engine design. I picked up a wrench to tighten a bolt, since the mechanic was nowhere to be found and didn't want to damage the strain gage. For the act of tightening a bolt, I was written up by union officials, even though I was a mechanic by previous training and knew by the science and practice of how not to damage the strain gage.

b. Union foremen had a reputation at Cadillac of spending most of their time sitting and drinking coffee and gossiping. During my work as a process engineer in the engine manufacturing plant of Cadillac Motor Car in Detroit, I observed that regularly the union officials spent most of their day on unproductive work in the coffee room. This does relate to the reason that a significant portion of the

United States manufacturing capability has now been lost to more productive foreign competition.

c. One day a new machine was to be installed for machining engine blocks at the new Cadillac Lavonia, MI manufacturing plant. There were ten people standing around waiting for each other to do their small respective union jobs. One mechanic to turn wrenches, one electrician to plug the machine in the wall, one foreman to oversee the electrician, one foreman to oversee the mechanic and others. All things that could have been more efficiently done by one person with freedom.

2. What is your position on allowing federal, state, county, and city employees the right to collective bargaining?

My position on allowing federal, state, county and city public employees the right to collective bargaining is based on basic individual freedom. Any group should have the right to unionize as a basic right of people to organize as they like. At the same time, no special benefits or privileges should be legislated to benefit the unions. I would not want to deny any group of workers the right to organize or negotiate for the best set of working conditions. The employers likewise need to remain free to hire and fire individuals as they see best for the sake of business productivity.

3. What is your position regarding an employee's right to organize or join a union for the purpose of bargaining a contract?

The freedom to contract is an unalienable right and the key to North Dakota prosperity. This freedom to contract should not be infringed upon, and employees (individuals or groups) and employers should be free to contract with one another for mutual benefit. Government regulations should not interfere with this free-market decision process, but only provide a legal system to judge those who break contracts.

The framers of the US Constitution expressly prohibited government interference with private contracts in the original Constitution. Article I, § 10 states that "No State shall pass any law impairing the obligation of contracts."

4. The unemployment benefit system is essential for supporting workers and their families between jobs. We feel that North Dakota's unemployment system benefits are inadequate and eligibility very restrictive. Do you agree or disagree?

I disagree and would vote to incrementally eliminate the unemployment benefits system because it creates state dependents, which works against individual initiative and the state's interests as defined in the US Supreme Court case *WI v. Yoder* in 1972. People can support themselves without government handouts. Families and churches know their place in helping the poor and needy, which is a role that the government should not usurp.

If elected, will you support legislation to improve the unemployment benefits of our state? How?

Promises already in place need to be kept, but the tendency toward a nanny state needs to be reversed slowly and incrementally, which will lower taxes and encourage individual responsibility. 2 Thessalonians 3:10 has not been improved upon by socialist regulations, "If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat." Therefore, the state employee unemployment benefits program should be dropped for the improvement of individual livelihoods. Also note that all employers should be free to offer or not offer any benefit package they choose to attract employees without legislative interference.

5. How can the state help create high wage jobs in North Dakota?

Remove regulations preventing businesses and people from coming to North Dakota. The homeschool laws are a great example of laws which have kept thousands of entrepreneurial minded people, for twenty years, from coming to North Dakota. Getting the government out of the way of business is the key to creating high wage jobs in North Dakota. Economic Development is not a proper role for inefficient, non-producing tax-paid government. State involvement in economic development is a philosophy derived from Karl Marx. Therefore, to get back to American liberty and free enterprise, North Dakota should terminate all its interference and expenses in economic development - including the elimination of the State Bank.

6. Would you support legislation on the use of public funds that are given to companies/corporations for economic development? What kinds?

No. Public funds should not be given to companies or corporations for economic development.

Do you agree that corporations and companies that accept economic development grants and tax exemptions from state and local government should be required to pay a living wage equal to that of the regional market and provide suitable healthcare benefits being accountable for the jobs they may create?

No. Government control of a small company with regard to requiring a certain wage will put many out of business. In fact, if the minimum wage requirement was dropped and people free to contract, more businesses would start and exist without government crutches.

7. The minimum wage was increased in the 2007 legislative session. Would you support another minimum wage increase?

No. I would support deleting the minimum wage law as an economic stimulus measure.

8. Recent workers compensation reforms reduced or eliminated benefits, under-funded legal representation for injured workers and did nothing to return injured workers to good paying jobs. What would you do to change this?

I would teach people not to expect such things from government and allow them to keep enough of their own money, through eliminating property taxes, so that they could insure themselves in any way they choose or not at all. We would also need to eliminate and prevent any laws requiring such insurance. The real problem here is that people are expecting the government to be their mother, where they need to be encouraged to properly take personal responsibility for their own health and economic welfare.

9. Would you support the return of Workforce Safety and Insurance (WSI) back under the control of the governor's office?

No. WSI should not be a government activity and people should be able to choose any insurance company they desire (or none) on the free market. The bad ones would then be eliminated by lack of business and people would have more money in their pockets.

10. What is your view on the state's role in the expansion of the energy industry in North Dakota for oil, coal and renewable energy (such as the proposed state run oil refinery?)

Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels wrote the Communist Manifesto in 1848 as the then necessary steps to destroy a free enterprise system and replace it with a socialist state. Its 7th Plank promotes the "extension of factories and instruments of production owned by the state." A state owned oil refinery would please Karl Marx, but not most North Dakotans, with dire economic and liberty consequences in the long run.

11. What actions would you take to solve the healthcare crisis that North Dakotan's working families face? Would you support an expansion of the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIPS) program?

No, I would not support the expansion of the CHIPS program. Instead, I would eliminate the Department of Social Services, and allow families to keep their tax money and be responsible for their own healthcare decisions. Decisions on healthcare are always best made by individuals, families and churches - not governments.

The healthcare problem needs to be solved at its root, and the root cause for the high health care costs in North Dakota is the lack of a free market in health care and its over regulation to support a monopoly in conventional allotropic medicine. Doctors need more freedom to practice medicine in the way they choose and not be limited to the "consensus." Lay midwives need to be left alone to continue to serve people in their homes without government regulation, as they have done for thousands of years. Vitamins are food and should not be subjected to pharmaceutical level regulations. The monopoly in medicine is fighting against allowing cost effective natural alternatives to reach consumers, which works against both the health and economics of North Dakotans.

For example, cancer patients are subjected to the most expensive treatments without being offered the many alternative less expensive cures that are now validated and available. Families need to be empowered to care for their sick and dying, and the government protection of business monopolies needs to end.

"To the cancer establishment, a cancer patient is a profit center. The actual clinical and scientific evidence does not support the claims of the cancer industry. Conventional cancer treatments are in place as the law of the land because they pay, not heal, the best. Decades of the politics-of-cancer-as-usual have kept you from knowing this, and will continue to do so unless you wake up to their reality."

John Diamond, M.D. & Lee Cowden, M.D.

12. Under what circumstances, if any, would you support the use of vendors/contracting out to do the work normally done by government employees?

Government first needs to be right-sized to do what it was designed to do. Government is only needed to defend people from both bad people and bad government. Every other government function usurps the more efficient private enterprise at taxpayer expense. Using tax money to contract government services only serves to create a tyrannical socialist state where the government controls everything and the businesses have a conflict of interest. I would not support a vended government for any circumstances.

13. What would be your top three priorities for legislation that would assist North Dakota workers and their families if elected to serve in the next legislative session?

★ More Freedom

★ Fewer Regulations

★ Lower Taxes

by returning the Christian foundations of America to ND lawmaking.

Two specific bills planned for 2009 would:

- a. Eliminate the present immoral property taxes in order to restore private property rights and right-size government.
- b. Introduce a resolution on state sovereignty based on the Tenth Amendment to cease and desist federal mandates in all areas of North Dakotan life.

Both of these bills aim toward significant increase in freedom, fewer regulations and lower taxes. They impact many areas including energy, education, agriculture, healthcare and more.

AFL-CIO Worker’s Bill of Rights

As a faculty at NDSU for 17 years, I was denied my Constitutional right to free speech and freedom of religion. As a Christian, I was not allowed to share my faith in class or teach a course that I developed titled Christian Scholarship: The Christian Philosophy of Science, Mathematics, Engineering, Technology and Education. I left NDSU in order to regain my freedom to speak. The laws of our land have come under the control of anti-Christian “politically correct” cultural Marxist philosophies and need significant reform.

I cannot sign the AFL-CIO Worker’s Bill of Rights because it implies the control of employers by legally forcing them to pay certain wages rather than being free to contract. The other aspects, speaking of Constitutional freedoms and rights to assembly and speak, are inalienable rights that I endorse.

SIGNED _____

DISTRICT _____

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