

ACT! for America

2010 Federal Candidate Questionnaire

Candidate Name: Roland Straten

Candidate's Political Party: Republican

Candidate's Signature: 

Office Sought (such as California U.S. House District 15): US House District 8, NJ

Please print or type all information.

1. It is becoming increasingly evident that American dependence on foreign oil, especially oil from countries that support and export terrorism and radical Islamic ideology, poses a growing threat to our national security. There has been considerable discussion of alternative energy such as wind and solar, but neither provide any significant solution for the liquid energy needs of our transportation sector, at least for the foreseeable future. Would you support or oppose each of the following proposals to help move America's transportation sector away from foreign oil dependence and thus better protect our national security?

- a. Open Fuel Standard legislation, which would require, within five years, 50% of new automobiles, and within seven years, 80% of new automobiles, sold in the United States, be flex-fuel vehicles warranted to operate on gasoline, ethanol, and methanol, or be warranted to operate on biodiesel.

Support Oppose Undecided

Comments: I support the first part – Open Fuel Standard Legislation – but have serious reservations regarding mandating specific fuels. The real answer to this problem is an “all of the above” energy policy that allows American companies to innovate and to develop our own domestic sources of energy. Too often, we limit what we can do domestically and at the same time subsidize foreign energy production. Some recent examples include our financial support for Brazilian deep oil drilling and the fact that China is drilling off the coast of Cuba, while we prohibit American companies from utilizing American resources. This is counter-productive. In general, I oppose Federal Mandates on industry. However, given the security concerns, I certainly would examine carefully individual legislative proposals that would promote use of domestically produced alternative fuels. Ideally, consumer demand should drive free market solutions and innovation. The trick is providing education and incentives to spur consumer demand and to ensure that government intervention to support one alternative does not place limits on innovation or encourage political corruption of the process. Too often Congress writes legislation to protect or benefit friends of incumbent politicians.

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- b. A presidential Executive Order mandating conversion of the federal automotive fleet from gasoline to domestically-produced natural gas.

X Support _____ Oppose _____ Undecided

Comments: However, I would not limit this to natural gas and would open the mandate up other domestically produced energy sources and alternatives. Again, when we mandate specific product development from Washington, we stifle innovation, risk political corruption and rarely come up with the best solution. I would rather see a more general mandate to reduce purchase of foreign oil along with removal of artificial, politically motivated restrictions on development of our own natural resources.

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2. American companies are prohibited from doing business in or with nations that have been determined to be sponsors of terrorism. However, some federal and state public pension funds, partially funded with tax dollars, invest in foreign companies that do business in and with terrorist-sponsoring countries. Would you support or oppose legislation that would prohibit federal pension funds from investing in foreign companies that do business in and with terrorist-sponsoring countries?

X Support _____ Oppose _____ Undecided

Comments: Again, education and incentives are the key, as well as transparency. Pressure from the public may be the most powerful tool in this particular battle, as it was regarding investment in companies that supported apartheid. This is an instance where my belief in pushing decision-making down to the level of government closest to the people conflicts with national security concerns. The requirement that we make these liberty-restricting choices is the real tragedy of the failures that culminated in the 9/11 attacks on our soil. We need to talk more about that and the need to recognize that the first obligation of government is to protect its citizens and their liberties. Given the current situation, security must take precedence since security is a pre-requisite for liberty (conversely without liberty we can never be truly secure). However, I would tread carefully here. This is why we must elect representatives who will read legislation and pay attention to details. In the proposal above, I think we certainly should restrict federal

pension monies from such investments and would push for restrictions on investment of taxpayer-funded portions of state pension monies.

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3. Islamic sharia law, as applied in various Islamic countries, includes provisions that a woman's testimony in court is only equal to half a man's testimony; that criticism of Islam or the prophet Mohammed is a criminal offense; that adulterers can be stoned to death; that men can have multiple wives; and that men can marry girls as young as age nine. Great Britain currently has an estimated 85 sharia courts, and there are now some Muslims in America calling for sharia law to be implemented here. Would you support or oppose the application of sharia law in civil and criminal actions in the United States?

_____ Support X Oppose _____ Undecided

Comments:

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4. Some American banks and investment firms are participating in an Islamic form of financing known as "Sharia-Compliant Financing." Under the rules of Sharia-Compliant Financing, a bank or investment firm is required to have a Sharia advisory board that dictates where and how funds are invested. The bank or investment firm is also required to give a percentage of its profits to Muslim charities as directed by the sharia advisory board, which raises concerns because numerous Muslim charities

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have been identified by the federal government as having ties to terrorist organizations. Would you support or oppose a government investigation of Sharia-Compliant Financing to determine if it violates federal treasury, banking, securities and/or anti-terrorism laws?

X Support _____ Oppose _____ Undecided

Comments: Unfortunately, for the vast majority of peace-loving Muslims, the threat from those who have hijacked their religion makes extra scrutiny necessary. I would go a step further and look into ways to curtail operations of terrorist

supported charitable fronts. Tolerance does not mean we ignore those who threaten lives to gain political power.

5. Would you support or oppose amending U.S. humanitarian refugee law to (1) require all humanitarian refugees to swear under oath that they will not support or advocate a theological totalitarian form of government to replace our constitutional government, and (2) require the deportation of any refugee who violated this oath?

X Support _____ Oppose _____ Undecided

Comments: We might also look into how we are defining “humanitarian refugee.” In addition, we need to look into our processes for deporting legal and illegal foreign residents who violate our laws and/or present real threats to our safety and sovereignty. The entire process is a mess of bureaucratic red tape and various branches and offices of the government work at cross-purposes to each other. We need to stand up for our American principles and stop apologizing for them in the name of political correctness. These principles united freedom-loving people from all over the world under the American flag for generations and allow a lot of room for differing perspectives on policy. It’s time we united around them again.

6. Iran continues its march toward the development of nuclear weaponry, and it is becoming increasingly likely that Iran will acquire nuclear weapons in the very near future. If diplomacy and sanctions fail to “persuade” Iran to end its drive to develop nuclear weapons, would you support the use of targeted military force to cripple Iran’s nuclear weapons program before it is capable of using or exporting such weapons of mass destruction?

X Support _____ Oppose _____ Undecided

Comments: Provided we’ve exhausted all other means, including increasing our support for Israel’s right to defend her citizens and borders, and calling the U.N. to task for its corruption and failure to enforce sanctions. While we dither with the UN, Iran and others continue to advance their weapons capabilities. We need leaders with the courage and fortitude to call a duck a duck.

7. In 2008 a police officer who ticketed a Muslim was threatened with a lawsuit from an Islamic organization claiming discrimination. Would you support or oppose **ACT! for America federal candidate questionnaire, page four...**

legislation protecting first responders from such lawsuits filed by organizations known to be consorting with or providing support to terrorist organizations, or who have been indicted as a conspirator or co-conspirator with terrorist organizations?

Support Oppose Undecided

Comments: We need legislation to address our overly litigious society in general, as well.

8. The United States currently uses the prison at the U.S. Guantanamo Bay Naval Base in Cuba to house enemy combatants and other terrorists who threaten our nation. President Obama made the closure of this modern and secure facility one of his top priorities, though it has not yet been closed. Do you support or oppose the closure of the Guantanamo Bay Detention Facility and the transfer of its detainees to prisons in the U.S.?

Support Oppose Undecided

Comments: It doesn't get much play in the press, but even liberal commentators have come to realize that there was never any "good" solution. Again, this harkens back to my earlier point, we need to talk about the deeper threat to our principles and values presented by the successful attack on our soil and our citizens, as well as what we need to do to ensure it never happens again.

9. Do you support or oppose trying enemy combatants in civilian, federal courts, instead of in military tribunals?

Support Oppose Undecided

Comments: As a veteran, I know that we cannot apply the standards of civilian courts to a battlefield – it would be tantamount to suicide. We can't wait until we are hit hard again to recognize that we are at war, whether we want to be or not. Additionally, bearing in mind my earlier point that our values and principles were fundamentally challenged by the success of the 9/11 attacks, any attempt to alter civilian courts to accommodate battlefield conditions puts the essential liberties of our own citizens at risk. Attorney General Holder's comments regarding the prosecution of Khalid Sheik Mohammed reveal that this current administration is not only aware of the two-tiered justice system

civilian trials of enemy combatants would create, but that they have no principled objection to creating such a two-tiered system. This is an unconscionable threat to the liberty we have fought so long and hard to preserve.

10. The Obama administration has deleted terms such as “jihadist” and “radical Islam” from its strategic assessments of the ongoing Islamist terrorist threat facing the United States. Do you support or oppose this revised definition of this threat?

_____ Support X Oppose _____ Undecided

Comments: One can't effectively fight an enemy one refuses to define or understand. While Muslims are not our enemies, and not all terrorists are Muslims, those who would bastardize the Muslim religion are the threat we are dealing with today. We need to recognize and understand the religious component to this battle and expose the propaganda techniques used by Islamist terrorists to justify their violence against innocents. Moreover, we need our own effective media campaign to expose the fact that innocent Muslims make up the majority of victims of terrorist attacks, and that we have sacrificed our own sons and daughters to protect Muslims.

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11. There is little dispute that those who want to build a mosque at “Ground Zero” have the legal right to do so, should they successfully comply with all applicable statutes and codes. Do you support or oppose the wisdom of this decision by the developers to build this mosque within the perimeter of “Ground Zero?”

_____ Support X Oppose _____ Undecided

Comments: The controversy arising out of this proposal can lead to no good solution and I suspect it has been pushed into the limelight for purely political reasons – dissention and division are friends to politicians who want to consolidate their own power. Building a Mosque at the site where monsters invoked Islam to justify the slaughter of innocents is to ignore the sensibilities of the victims. It also ignores the propaganda aspect of warfare. While some may argue that showing tolerance would gain us friends in the Arab-Muslim world, that appears to be the wishful thinking of theorists. In the real world, we do not need our enemies to love us. We need them to fear attacking us.

12. Do you support or oppose efforts to secure our southern border and to more effectively track all non-U.S. citizens who enter our country through the range of visa programs this nation offers?

X Support _____ Oppose _____ Undecided

Comments: We need a common sense approach that recognizes that the system as it currently exists is broken. We selectively enforce the laws we have in place, and we have governmental departments at different levels that circumvent the letter and the spirit of those laws as a matter of course. Right now, we have the Executive Branch of the Federal government using the courts to undermine Arizona's attempts to protect its citizens and enforce Federal law. In another case, one branch of government is suing corporations for complying with E-verify requirements demanded by another branch. The 9/11 Report painted an troubling picture of lax management of the visa program – from how they are acquired through the State Department, to our inability to track whether those whose visas have expired ever left the country, to the lack of communication with local law enforcement. Before we can fix this, we need to get our priorities straight. Either we are a sovereign nation governed by the rule of law, or we are not.

13. According to the Pew Hispanic Center, 1 in every 12 babies born in the United States have at least one parent whose presence here is illegal. This year a number of media sources have reported on the increasing practice of what is called “birthright tourism,” where pregnant non-U.S. citizens come to the U.S. to give birth so their children automatically receive U.S. citizenship. One news report revealed how an American hotel actually advertises its “birthright tourism” services. As a result, there are growing calls for congressional hearings to address this issue and examine a possible reinterpretation of the 14th amendment to the Constitution, under which “birthright tourism” is now allowed. Would you support or oppose such congressional hearings?

Support Oppose Undecided

Comments:

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14. The evidence is growing of active radical Islamist recruitment in our federal prison system. For example, four suspected terrorists brought to trial in Manhattan recently were former prison inmates. Would you support or oppose congressional hearings to determine to what extent this is happening in our federal prison system and the potential impact it has for our national security?

X Support

_____ Oppose

_____ Undecided

Comments: