

## ACT! for America Candidate Questionnaire

**Candidate Name:** Larry Stafford

**Candidate Political Party:** Libertarian

**Candidate Signature:** *Larry Stafford*

**Office Sought:** US Senate for Illinois

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/or export radical Islamic ideology and terrorism, 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. The Open Fuel Standard Act, legislation with bi-partisan sponsorship which would require that starting in 2012, 50% of new automobiles, and starting in 2015, 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

X Oppose

\_\_\_\_\_ Undecided

Comments: Though this sounds like a good law, experience tells us that even laws that look good on paper have unexpected and usually undesirable side effects even if the law is perfectly implemented. More often than not, laws that seem to have no possible downside are used by politicians as tools to promote their own personal agendas and pet causes. Before any law is passed, every legislator that touches it will add riders, earmarks, pet projects, and "pork" to the bill – little of which is ever related to the original bill.

Politicians and lawmakers are not experts on energy, economics, or technology. Instead of having politicians telling industry HOW to solve a problem – often sending them in the complete wrong direction or limiting their ability to innovate – lawmakers should be removing the restrictions that prevent automakers from properly responding to market forces. This is a problem that will be solved by the free market IF lawmakers let those forces act without artificial pressure brought to bear by imposing deadlines or expensive incentives.

High petroleum costs, dwindling supplies, and consumer pressure will give automakers all the incentive they need to produce vehicles that use alternative or renewable fuels.

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

Support                       Oppose                       Undecided

Comments: For all the reasons stated above. Additionally, the President does not have the authority to do this. "Executive Orders" do not have the force of law and have been misused for decades. Congress is responsible for writing the laws of our land, NOT the president.

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- c. Expansion of offshore oil and natural gas exploration and drilling.

Support                       Oppose                       Undecided

Comments: America has plenty of untapped and likely, undiscovered energy reserves that need to be tapped to give industry and Americans time to make an orderly transition to alternative fuels.

Though we are concerned about the environment, we believe that with proper caution, offshore drilling can be done safely and without damage to the environment. Oil companies must also accept full financial responsibility for cleanup and restoration of any pollution or environmental damage they cause while exploring and drilling.

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- d. Opening up a small section of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) to oil exploration and drilling.

Support                       Oppose                       Undecided

Comments: Examples set by environmental and conservation groups prove that wildlife refuges and oil or gas wells can not only coexist, but also produce income to maintain these wildlife refuges. As in the previous question, oil companies remain fully responsible for cleanup and restoration of pollution or damage they may cause.

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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?

Support                       Oppose                       Undecided

Comments: We oppose any law prohibiting, restricting OR encouraging investing in foreign countries – whether they are alleged to be sponsors of terrorism or not.

Companies that invest in countries suspected of sponsoring or harboring terrorists will quickly find that public opinion is against them and they will lose investors. This will encourage investment companies to choose investments that are compatible with their customer's desires.

Likewise, investment companies will be responsible for protecting their own investments. US military and diplomatic resources should not be used to insure a company's investment at the cost of taxpayers. Investment companies will be responsible for their own insurance and protection. This will encourage them to select the countries they invest in carefully.

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3. Materials distributed in some American mosques advocate the overthrow of America's constitutional form of government and replacing it with Islamic law, known as sharia law. Many such materials also call on Muslims to take up the cause of holy war against all unbelievers. Would you support or oppose congressional hearings to review such materials that are now in the public domain, to determine if they violate federal laws applying to terrorism or sedition?

\_\_\_\_\_ Support                      X Oppose                      \_\_\_\_\_ Undecided

Comments: America has always been the place where people fleeing religious oppression have always flocked to escape this form of discrimination. Though we are concerned about terrorism, targeting a certain segment of our population based on their race or religion is completely as un-American. This is the land of free speech and free thought. This includes writing and sharing your ideas.

Of course, any conspiracy or taking action to actually harm the United States or its citizens should be prosecuted under existing law – whether this harm comes from Muslims, Catholics, Neo-Nazis, the Militia Movement – or any group. Racial or religious “profiling” of Muslims is repugnant to the values Americans value.

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4. Many Muslims in England and Western Europe are pressing the countries where they live to create a separate court system for them, where they would be governed by Islamic sharia law, instead of the law of the countries in which they live. Would you support or oppose allowing Muslims in America to live under their own Islamic court and legal system in such areas as family court, instead of the court and legal systems of the United States and the state in which they live?

\_\_\_\_\_ Support                      X Oppose                      \_\_\_\_\_ Undecided

Comments: In the United States, justice is to be equal and fair for all. As residents of the US, we are all accountable to the same set of rules, regardless of our country of origin. Living and working here in the US places you under the existing court and justice system. People who are not willing to comply with US laws and have their actions or disputes judged by our court system do not belong here. If the laws of another country or religion are preferable to them, they should move to the country that they prefer. Again, this appeals to people of all ethnic backgrounds or religions.

Many religions enforce certain behavior of their members above and beyond the laws of the country they live in. These typically have to do with the moral issues that are part of the religion, not criminal or civil matters that US courts handle.

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5. 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 give a percentage of its profits to Muslim charities, some of which have been shown to have direct or indirect ties to terrorist organizations. Would you support or oppose a government investigation of Sharia Compliant Financing to determine if it violates federal treasury, banking and anti-terrorism laws?

\_\_\_\_\_ Support                      \_\_\_\_\_ Oppose                      X Undecided

Comments: This is another proposal that could be applied in ways that are discriminatory to a certain group of Americans. As such, it is difficult to support or oppose without knowing precisely how these investigations would be handled.

ALL American banks should comply with existing federal treasury, banking, and anti-terrorism laws. ANY banks and investment firms that are suspected of violating these laws should be investigated – whether they give profits to Muslim, Catholic, or any other organizations – religious or secular.

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6. The FBI has a shortage of Arabic translators capable of translating intelligence that might provide leads to terrorist activity. In spite of this shortage, for the past few years the FBI has rejected most Christian and Jewish applicants who are fluent in Arabic, preferring to limit its hiring almost exclusively to Muslim applicants. Would you support or oppose a government investigation of the FBI Arabic translator program?

\_\_\_\_\_ Support                      \_\_\_\_\_ Oppose                      X Undecided

Comments: Hiring practices of government agencies is governed by federal law. All hiring should comply with these laws. If there is suspected violation of these laws, there should be an investigation, but it should not be used as a “witch hunt.” Investigations based on reports or suspicion of improper hiring practices should be investigated wherever they exist, not just in the case of the FBI’s hiring of Arabic translators.

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7. America’s humanitarian refugee law allows foreign refugees to apply for expedited

entry to the U.S. Would you support or oppose amending U.S. 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 current government, and (2) require the deportation of any refugee who violated this oath?

\_\_\_\_\_ Support                      X Oppose                      \_\_\_\_\_ Undecided

Comments: The requirements for receiving “refugee” status or asylum in the US are already quite stringent with thorough reviews by the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Justice. 80% of these requests are already denied. Enforcement of existing law governing asylum, visas, resident alien status, and citizenship is sufficient. To add additional laws is unnecessary.

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8. Abdurahman Alamoudi, who is serving a 23 year prison term on terrorism-related charges, was instrumental in the approval and placement of many of the Muslim chaplains in the U.S. prison system. Would you support or oppose a government investigation of all U.S. prison chaplains who were approved by Alamoudi to determine if they have links to terrorist organizations or suspected terrorists?

\_\_\_\_\_ Support                      X Oppose                      \_\_\_\_\_ Undecided

Comments: Since the appointments were made or substantially influenced by someone convicted of terrorism charges, this sounds like a reasonable precaution. However, it is important that such investigations not cross the line to discrimination or harassment.

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9. Iran continues its march toward the development of nuclear weaponry, and it is becoming increasingly likely that Iran will acquire nuclear weapons some time within the next three to five years. 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 destroy Iran’s nuclear weapons program before it is capable of using or exporting such weapons of mass destruction?

\_\_\_\_\_ Support                      X Oppose                      \_\_\_\_\_ Undecided

Comments: All sovereign nations have the right to develop nuclear weapons for their own defense. The United States has the military and nuclear capability to hold such nations in check by threat or use of this capability should the nation develop a nuclear weapon threaten or move to use it against the United States. Just as the US and the USSR build up nuclear arsenals to prevent war, other nations can legitimately claim this right to assure their safety from their enemies.

The United States and its allies do not have exclusive rights to develop or purchase and possess nuclear power or weapons. It is not the role of the US to police other countries militaries so long as they not attack or threaten the United States.

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10. It has become increasingly common for foreign nationals to sue American authors in foreign jurisdictions. These suits claiming defamation are filed in foreign jurisdictions because such jurisdictions do not provide the constitutional protections of free speech that exist in America. Earlier this year New York passed legislation protecting authors from such lawsuits. Similar legislation, known as the Free Speech Protection Act, has been introduced with bi-partisan sponsorship in Congress. Would you support or oppose the Free Speech Protection Act?

\_\_\_\_\_ Support                      X Oppose                      \_\_\_\_\_ Undecided

Comments: It is not the place of the United States to dictate free speech laws of other countries. Countries that sue American authors are likely to see less business, tourism, and cooperation with Americans and American companies. This will hurt their economies and put financial and diplomatic pressure on them to cease such lawsuits.

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11. Recently a police officer who ticketed a Muslim was threatened with a lawsuit from an Islamic organization claiming discrimination. Would you support or oppose legislation protecting first responders from 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                      X Oppose                      \_\_\_\_\_ Undecided

Comments: First responders need to follow policies established for their particular functions. Following these rules in all situations will protect them from frivolous lawsuits and such legal action will quickly be found to be without merit. Laws

protecting first responders could be abused, allowing and even encouraging discrimination against certain racial or religious groups.

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