



2008 VOTERS' GUIDE PART II--FACTS FOR VOTERS PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES/BALLOT PROPOSAL

ELECTION DAY

Tuesday, November 4, 2008

Polls are open from 6 a.m. – 9 p.m.

Voting is an important part of being a U. S. citizen. The people who hold office – for example, members of Congress – make decisions about things that are important to you. Voting is your chance to choose the decision makers and tell them what you want. This guide will help you through the voting process and answer questions you may have about Election Day.

Countdown to Election Day

OCT. 10: Postmark deadline to register by mail

OCT. 10: Last day to register in person

OCT. 28: Postmark deadline to apply for an absentee ballot by mail

NOV. 3: Last day to apply for an absentee ballot in person

NOV. 3: Postmark deadline to submit an absentee ballot by mail

NOV. 4: Last day to deliver an absentee ballot in person to your county board of elections

NOV. 4: ELECTION DAY. Polls are open 6 am to 9 pm.

What is on the 2008 General Election Ballot?

There will be one statewide ballot issue concerning employment advantages for disabled veterans, and possibly local ballot issues, such as approval for bond issues for local projects. Look for them carefully at the top of the ballot (they're easy to miss!), and vote "Yes" or "No" on each. There will be candidates for federal, state, and local elective offices, including:

- the U.S. President and Vice President
- your U.S. Representative
- your N.Y. State Senator
- your N.Y. State Assembly Member
- judges of various courts depending on your location
- possibly local officials, such as town council members or county district attorney.

What if you move?

Notices of change of address from registered voters received by October 15 by your county board of elections must be processed and entered in the records for the General Election. Under the provisions of the National Voter Registration Act, if you move within your county and have not had the opportunity to notify the board of elections, you can go to the polling place in your new location and vote by affidavit ballot. This ballot will be sent to the board of elections which verifies the new address. Once verified, the vote will be counted and the change of address noted.

Not sure if you are registered?

Call your county board of elections. To find the number of your county board of elections, check your phone book, check the NYS Board of Elections web site (www.elections.state.ny.us) or contact the League of Women Voters of New York State toll-free at 1-866-598-6971. Ask your board of elections three questions:

League of Women Voters of New York State, 62 Grand Street, Albany, New York 12207

Telephone: 5 18-465-4162 Fax: 5 18-465-0812

E-Mail: lwny@lwny.org Website: www.lwny.org

***The League of Women Voters of New York State is a unique, multi-issue, nonpartisan, political organization. It encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy. ***

1. Am I registered to vote?
2. Is my registration status set to “Active”? If not, to what is it set?
3. Will my name appear in the polling place roll book on Election Day?

While you can look at your registration information on the NYS Board of Elections website and find your polling place, the information that you see does not indicate your status and is not assurance that you will be on the rolls.

Not going to be home on election day? Can't get to the polls?

If you are a registered voter but will be away on Election Day or will be unable to go to the polls because of illness or physical disability, you can request an application for an absentee ballot from any county board of elections, or download an application from the NYS Board of Elections web site. October 28 is the postmark deadline for sending in your application by mail. November 3 is the last day you can apply in person for an absentee ballot. Once it has received your application, your county board of elections will give or mail your ballot to you.

Absentee Voting

Your ballot must be postmarked by November 3 or hand delivered to your board of elections by November 4. REMEMBER: You must first apply for an absentee ballot from the board of elections.

Military Voters

Your county board of elections must receive the absentee ballot application by October 24 from military persons who have not previously registered. October 28 is the last day for your county board of elections to receive your absentee ballot application if you are registered. November 3 is the last day for you to apply in person for an absentee ballot if you are previously registered.

How do I vote while I am in college?

When you are attending college at a school outside your hometown, you may vote in person or by absentee ballot in your home community if you are registered to vote there. Many states allow college students to register and vote where they attend college. Check with the town or city clerk or the county board of elections in your college community to find out if you may vote from your college address.

Can I get time off from work to vote?

NYS Law states that if you do not have sufficient time outside your working hours to vote, you may take off up to 2 hours at the beginning or the end of your shift, with pay, in order to voter. You must notify your employer no more than 10 and not less than 2 days before the day of the election that you will take that time.

Don't know where to vote?

Most boards of elections in New York State send a postcard noting that you are registered and telling you the location of your polling place. If you do not receive this postcard, call your county board of elections to verify your registration and the location of your polling place. You can also use the “look up your polling place” facility on the NYS Board of Elections web site (www.elections.state.ny.us).

At the Polling Place

Polling places are required to post a sample ballot. If you do not know how to use the voting machine, ask one of the election inspectors for assistance. If your name does not appear in the polling book and you believe you

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are eligible to vote in the district, you are legally entitled to vote using an “affidavit” (paper) ballot. Ask for one, and ask the poll worker for advisement about following up on your status. After validation by your county board of elections, your paper ballot will be counted. Be sure to bring some identification.

What ID do I Need?

A federal law requires persons who register by mail for the first time to provide identification. Identification means a current NYS driver’s license or the last four digits of your Social Security number. If you do not have either of these, you may provide a copy of a valid photo ID, or a current utility bill, bank statement, government check or some other government documentation that shows your name and address. If you do not provide identification with the registration form, you will be asked for it the first time you vote.

The Voting Machine

For 2008, most polling places in New York State will still use the mechanical lever machines. If you do not know how to use the machine, ask your poll worker for help. In addition, for the 2008 elections, as part of New York State’s implementation of the Help America Vote Act (HAVA), there will be at least one ballot marking device per polling place which will be accessible to individuals with disabilities. Ask your poll worker for assistance in using these machines.

PROPOSAL NUMBER ONE, AN AMENDMENT

Form of Submission

Amendment to Article 5, section 6 of the Constitution, in relation to additional civil service credit for members of the armed forces of the United States.

The proposed amendment would eliminate the requirement that veterans who were disabled in the actual performance of duty in any war be receiving disability payments from the United State Veterans Administration in order to qualify for additional points on a civil service examination for appointment or promotion. Under the proposed amendment, the disability must only be certified to exist by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs. The proposed amendment would also update the reference to the “United States Veterans Administration” to instead refer to the “United States Department of Veterans Affairs” to reflect current federal government structure. Shall the proposed amendment be approved?

Discussion

Applicants for many jobs in New York state and local government are required to take a civil service examination, and applicants are appointed or promoted to these positions based on their scores on the examination. Disabled veterans who were disabled in the actual performance of duty in any war also receive a defined amount of extra points on these examinations to increase their scores, giving them preferential status on the lists of those who qualify.

The purpose of the proposal is to eliminate the requirement that disabled veterans be receiving disability payments from the federal government in order to qualify for additional credit on civil service examinations.

The State Constitution currently requires two things for the disabled veteran to qualify for the additional points: 1) the veteran must be receiving disability payments from the United States Veterans Administration; and 2) the United States Veteran Administration must certify that the veteran’s disability exists at the time that the veteran applies for appointment or promotion.

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The proposed amendment would eliminate the first requirement - that a veteran who was disabled in the actual performance of duty in any war be receiving disability payments from the federal veterans department in order to qualify for additional points on a civil service examination. Instead, the proposed amendment would only require that the United States Department of Veterans Affairs certify that the veteran's disability exists at the time that the veteran applies for appointment or promotion.

The proposed amendment would also change the reference to the "United States Veterans Administration" currently in this section to the "United States Department of Veterans Affairs" to reflect the Veterans Administration's re-designation as the Department of Veterans Affairs under Federal Law.

Pro: There is a long history (indeed, since the Civil War) of veterans, particularly disabled veterans, being afforded preferential treatment in qualifying for and being retrained for positions in the civilian world. Preferential treatment is recognition of veterans' sacrifice and service to our country, and also serves to make military service more attractive. Voting against this amendment will continue the status quo, which makes it harder for disabled veterans to qualify for additional points on civil service examinations. This in turn makes it harder for them to be appointed or promoted to positions in the civil service.

Con: The League can identify no arguments against this proposal.

PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES

DEMOCRAT, WORKING FAMILIES

BARACK OBAMA

EXPERIENCE: US Senator from Illinois; Illinois State Senator; Constitutional Law Professor; Civil Rights Lawyer

EDUCATION: Harvard Law School, JD, 1991 Columbia University, BA, 1983

WEB SITE: www.barackobama.com

NOTABLE: Harvard Law Review President

AGE: 47

RESIDENCE: Chicago, Illinois

VP NOMINEE: Joseph Biden – US Senator from Delaware

Health Care Stance (According to published candidate information)

Obama will sign universal health legislation by the end of his first term, ensuring all Americans have high-quality, affordable coverage. His plan will save a typical American family up to \$2,500 annually; modernize our health care system to contain costs and improve quality; and promote prevention and public health.

Iraq and the Middle East (According to published candidate information)

Obama opposed the war in Iraq from the beginning. He will end it by withdrawing our combat troops over 16 months, calling a new constitutional convention, and urging Iraq's neighbors to work towards stability. Obama seeks a two-state solution--Israel and Palestine living side by side in peace and security.

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REPUBLICAN, CONSERVATIVE, INDEPENDENCE

JOHN MCCAIN

EXPERIENCE: US Senator from Arizona; US Representative from Arizona; Naval Liaison to US Senate; Naval Aviator

EDUCATION: US Naval Academy, BS, 1958

WEB SITE: www.johnmccain.com

NOTABLE: Decorated Vietnam Vet/POW

AGE: 72

RESIDENCE: Phoenix, Arizona

VP NOMINEE: Sarah Palin – Governor of Alaska

Health Care Stance (According to published candidate information)

The problem with American health care is not one of quality, but one of cost. I have proposed a health care plan that addresses the escalating cost of health care to ensure more American families can afford access to the finest health care system in the world.

Iraq and the Middle East (According to published candidate information)

Two generations of Americans have fought wars in Iraq; we cannot condemn a third to the same fate by letting that country become a failed state in which we must again intervene. Anchoring Iraq in a stable, prosperous region must be the purpose of American strategy in the Middle East.

SOCIALIST WORKERS

ROGER CALERO

EXPERIENCE: Writer and Activist; Former Meat Packer

EDUCATION:

WEB SITE: www.themilitant.com

NOTABLE: Nicaraguan Native

AGE: 38

RESIDENCE: Bronx, New York

VP NOMINEE: Alyson Kennedy – Garment Worker

Health Care Stance (According to published candidate information)

The federal government must guarantee lifetime medical care and retirement pensions for all. No cuts in Social Security, Medicare, or workers compensation payments.

Iraq and the Middle East (According to published candidate information)

In a bipartisan effort, the war makers in Washington are using the military and political gains they have registered in Iraq since mid-2007 to extend the deployment of U.S. troops there and expand and deepen their aggression in Afghanistan. In contrast to both Democrats and Republicans, the Socialist Workers campaign demands immediate, unconditional withdrawal of all U.S. and coalition troops from both countries, and everywhere else U.S. forces are stationed.

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SOCIALISM, LIBERATION

GLORIA LA RIVA

EXPERIENCE: Worker/Human Rights Activist; Union Organizer

EDUCATION: Brandeis University (attended)

WEB SITE: www.vote-psl.org

NOTABLE: Frequent nominee of Workers World Party

AGE: 54

RESIDENCE: California

VP NOMINEE: Eugene Puryear – Anti-war and Social Justice Organizer

Health Care Stance (According to published candidate information)

The La Riva/Puryear PSL presidential campaign believes that quality health care must be free and available to all people. Capitalist insurance companies and providers must be dismantled and replaced with publicly-owned entities that provide health care for all.

Iraq and the Middle East (According to published candidate information)

We stand for the immediate removal of all U.S. and foreign forces from Iraq. All U.S. bases and the gigantic U.S. embassy in Baghdad should be shut down immediately. Reparations should be paid to the Iraqi people for the vast destruction inflicted on their land by the launching of an unprovoked war of aggression.

GREEN

CYNTHIA MCKINNEY

EXPERIENCE: US Representative from Georgia; Georgia House of Representatives; Atlanta HIV Health Services Council; College Professor

EDUCATION: University of Southern California; Tufts University, BA, 1978

WEB SITE: votetruth08.com

NOTABLE: First African-American Georgia Congresswoman

AGE: 53

RESIDENCE: Atlanta, Georgia

VP NOMINEE: Rosa Clemente – Journalist and Activist

Health Care Stance (According to published candidate information)

The United States is the only industrialized nation in the world without a national health care system. The current system's high costs and widely recognized failures demand that bold steps be taken. The Green Party supports a universal, comprehensive, national single-payer health insurance program as the only solution to the current disastrous for-profit system.

Iraq and the Middle East (According to published candidate information)

Our government does not have the right to justify pre-emptive invasion of another country on the grounds that the other country harbors, trains, equips and funds a terrorist cell. Our commitments compel us to oppose U.S. government support for “friendly” regimes, both in Israel and in the Arab world, whenever those regimes violate human rights, international law, and existing treaties. Those same values compel us to support popular movements for peace and demilitarization.

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LIBERTARIAN

BOB BARR

EXPERIENCE: Attorney and Consultant; US Representative from Georgia; Federal Prosecutor; CIA Employee

EDUCATION: Georgetown University Law School, JD, 1977; George Washington University, MA, 1972; University of Southern California, BA, 1970

WEB SITE: www.bobbarr2008.com

NOTABLE: Privacy and Security Expert

AGE: 59

RESIDENCE: Atlanta, Georgia

VP NOMINEE: Wayne Root – Businessman, Television Producer and Host

Health Care Stance (According to published candidate information)

Regulations which mandate insurance coverage and inflate premiums should be eliminated. Controls which unduly restrict competition within the health care industry, and that limit access to insurance across state lines, should be ended. Moreover, current tax policy, which is biased towards employer-provided, comprehensive health insurance, should be reformed, encouraging individual purchase of less costly catastrophic policies.

Iraq and the Middle East (According to published candidate information)

I would put in place plans for withdrawal without undue delay. While I support an exit from Iraq as quickly as possible, I would not publicly announce a timetable to our adversaries. However, as President, I would begin to immediately and significantly begin to reduce both the military and the economic security blanket we are providing the government.

POPULIST

RALPH NADER

EXPERIENCE: Consumer Advocate and Political Activist; Attorney; Writer; College Professor

EDUCATION: Harvard Law School, LLB, 1958; Princeton University, AB, 1955

WEB SITE: www.votenader.org

NOTABLE: Founder, "Public Citizen" Organization

AGE: 74

RESIDENCE: Washington, DC

VP NOMINEE: Matt Gonzalez, Attorney and San Francisco Public Official

Health Care Stance (According to published candidate information)

The state of health care in the United States is a disgrace. For millions of Americans it is a struggle between life, health and money. The Nader Campaign supports a single-payer health care plan that replaces for-profit, investor-owned health care and removes the private health insurance industry (full Medicare for all).

Iraq and the Middle East (According to published candidate information)

The current political strategy of pre-emptive war in the Middle East is a disaster for both the American people and the people of the Middle East.

Nader/Gonzalez propose a rapid withdrawal of troops from Iraq. Nader favors a two-state solution and believes that the United States needs to highlight the broad and deep peace movement in Israel and its counterparts among Palestinians and among Americans of the Jewish faith.

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