



2006 Voter Information Guide

Engaging Candidates on Bill of Rights Issues

During an election season, candidates for public office travel and speak to voters in their districts, so it is an excellent opportunity to ask candidates about their views and plans to protect civil rights and liberties.

There are many ways to engage candidates on issues related to the Bill of Rights in this campaign season. Some ideas include:

1. **SPONSORING A DEBATE** among candidates. Have someone from your group act as a moderator. If the candidates decline your invitation, you can hold a debate among members of your community who support different candidates.
2. Asking candidates to fill out a **QUESTIONNAIRE** surveying their opinions on various civil rights and liberties issues.
3. **DISTRIBUTING FLYERS** when candidates speak in your area. This is particularly important for candidates who have poor public records supporting civil liberties.
4. **ASKING QUESTIONS** during candidate speeches and information sessions. Political functions offer a great opportunity to engage candidates and to make sure other people in your community hear the candidates' answers to your question.
5. **WRITING LETTERS** to candidates about what you consider flaws of laws and policies enacted to counter terrorism since 9-11 or those currently under consideration, informing him or her of your community's efforts in restoring civil rights and liberties, and asking the candidate to make civil liberties an issue in the 2006 election by speaking about it in various public appearances. The more members from your group who send a letter, the more effective this tactic will be.
6. **REGISTER TO VOTE!** Voting is our greatest political asset.

Using Your Resolution as Political Leverage During this Campaign Season

If you have passed a resolution in your area, this gives you an extra tool with which to educate candidates for public office on the issues and to encourage them to take action to restore civil liberties. When candidates visit your area, ask them to uphold your resolution and to take affirmative steps toward seeing it

implemented. **If you are trying** to get a resolution passed in your area, ask the candidate to endorse the resolution. This action may give you extra leverage to get it passed. It can also lead to increased media attention for your resolution efforts.

**Bill of Rights
Defense Committee**
8 Bridge Street, Suite A
Northampton, MA 01060

<http://www.bordc.org>
413-582-0110
info@bordc.org



Tuesday, November 7th, 2006 is election day.

Numerous issues are at stake in the 2006 election, not the least of which is our civil rights and liberties. BORDC encourages you to actively participate in democratic processes and to educate your neighbors and elected officials on issues that concern you.

Included in this Pamphlet:

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The Bill of Rights Defense Committee encourages communities to take an active role in an ongoing national debate about the USA PATRIOT Act and other antiterrorism measures that threaten civil liberties guaranteed by the Bill of Rights.

Candidate Questions

Some ways you can question candidates are:

- In **Candidate Questionnaires**: We suggest that groups select 2-3 questions about issues that resonate with local voters.
- At **Candidate Town Hall Meetings and Debates**: We suggest that you ask questions that are specific enough to prevent a candidate from skirting around the issue. Also give the audience enough background to inform them why the question is important.
- At **House Parties for Candidates**: Members in your community may be holding house parties for candidates during the election season. These fundraising events provide great opportunities for you to informally engage a candidate in conversation using one of our sample questions, or one of your own questions, as a leadoff.



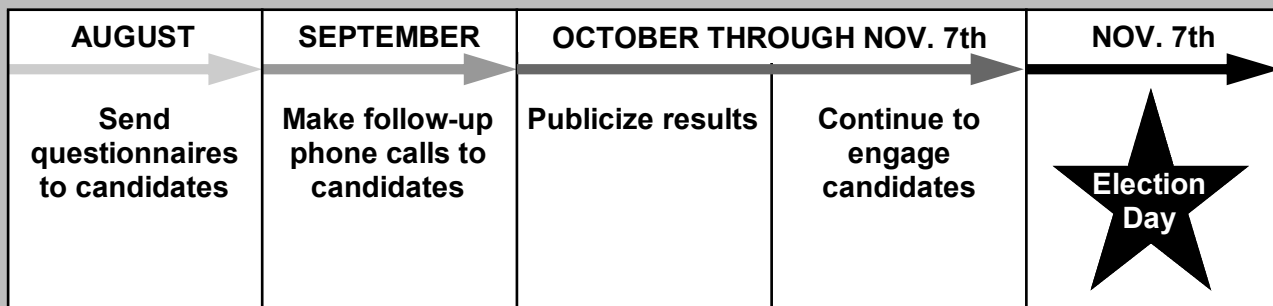
After you receive answers to your questions, you can publicize the results to help educate voters in your area about the candidates who seek their vote. You can send out press releases to local media, make announcements at community meetings, pass out literature, and post the results on your website. The more voters know about the candidates who want to represent them, the better informed their decisions will be on November 7th.

Sample Questions

1. As an elected official sworn to uphold the U.S. Constitution, will you support and enforce our community's (proposed) resolution?
2. President Bush has issued more than 750 Constitutional challenges through his 130 signing statements—more challenges to legislation than all previous presidents combined. These signing statements express his intent to ignore sections of laws passed by Congress, such as the law outlawing U.S. use of torture, if he believes they limit his constitutional powers as President. Do you support such actions by the President?
3. Do you agree or disagree with the Supreme Court's 5-3 ruling on *Hamdan v. Rumsfeld*, which stated that Congress's Authorization for the Use of Military Force (AUMF) resolution did not apply to the military tribunals envisioned by President Bush?
4. If elected, will you work to restore habeas corpus rights for all detainees and prisoners?
5. Will you unequivocally work to abolish all forms of torture and abuse of detainees by the U.S. government, including waterboarding, stress positions, use of dogs, humiliation, sleep deprivation, and other forms of debasement?
6. The FBI and the Pentagon have been conducting surveillance on innocuous groups exercising their free speech rights, such as the Quakers and Greenpeace, and creating databases of information on groups who have no ties to terrorism. Do you believe this surveillance is justified? If not, what will you do to stop it?
7. What is your position on the President's claim that he has constitutional authority to conduct warrantless surveillance in the U.S.?
8. What is your view on whether due process protections should be afforded individuals before they are detained or deported under U.S. immigration laws?

For a complete library of questions, visit <http://www.bordc.org/questions>.

Organizing Timeline for Candidate Questionnaires



Voter Information Resources Online

BORDC's Web-page

<http://www.bordc.org/candidates>

Information on engaging candidates on issues related to the Bill of Rights.

VOTER STANCES

Voting Records of Incumbents since 2001, compiled by BORDC:

<http://www.bordc.org/votingrecords>

Project Vote Smart's voting records, issue stances, contact info for Congress members, etc.:

<http://www.vote-smart.org>

VOTER REGISTRATION

The Federal Election Commission's national voter registration form: <http://www.fec.gov/votregis/pdf/nvra.pdf>

Voter Registration by Working Assets

<https://www.workingforchange.com/vote/index.cfm?ms=VAC001>

ELECTION NEWS

The **Washington Post's** Election 2006 page with news and information on the candidates: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/linkset/2006/02/03/LI2006020301895.html>

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The **New York Times' 2006 Election Guide** gives ratings for races by state, with interactive map: <http://www.nytimes.com/ref/washington/2006ELECTIONGUIDE.html>

Source Watch provides a

comprehensive bio on each candidate by state. Information includes general background, career path, political standing on key issues, controversies, and affiliations: [http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php?title=U.S. congressional elections in 2006](http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php?title=U.S.+congressional+elections+in+2006)

Congressional Deskbook (PDF)

Contains contact information for each state's election division or the independent state election board. <http://www.thecapitol.net/Publications/CongressionalDeskbookSections/Section2.11.pdf>

The Hill, newspaper for and about the U.S. Congress: <http://www.hillnews.com/thehill/opencms/>

Laws and Other Federal Government Restrictions on Civil Rights and Liberties

Domestic Spying:

BORDC's Warrantless Domestic Surveillance webpage: <http://www.bordc.org/threats/spying.php>

Information about spying on protests and groups, from BORDC: <http://www.bordc.org/threats/spying-protesters.php>

Secrecy News' Evolution of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act: <http://www.fas.org/blog/secrecy/>

Immigrant Rights:

Immigration Reform and the election: <http://www.betterimmigration.com/candidates/2006/candidates2006.html>

Guantánamo, Torture and Enemy Combatants:

Center for Constitutional Rights: <http://ccr-ny.org/v2/home.asp>

Voting Machines:

Verified Voting: <http://www.verifiedvoting.org>

Presidential Signing Statements:

American Bar Association Task Force on Presidential Signing Statements and the Separation of Powers Doctrine <http://www.abanet.org/op/signingstatements/>



Visit <http://www.bordc.org/legislation> for more information on proposed and enacted legislation.

Visit <http://www.bordc.org/candidates> for more information and for live links.