

The Candidates Stance on 11 Key Issues

Written by Westside ID85

Tuesday, 28 September 2004 06:08 -

GEORGE W BUSH

Republican

Profile

JOHN KERRY

Democrat

Profile

RALPH NADER

Independent

Profile

IRAQ

Bush: Post-war violence and the prison abuse scandal shook public support for the Iraq invasion, but Bush says war was right because Iraq knew how to make WMD and could have told terrorists.

Kerry: Supported invasion of Iraq and would be ready to send more troops. Would like a US-led Nato force to take responsibility for security. Has accused Bush of exaggerating WMD threat.

Nader: Calls for withdrawal from Iraq "quagmire" and an end to the "US corporate takeover" of Iraqi economy. Says case for war was "faulty and fabricated" and Arab / Muslim peacekeepers are needed.

WAR ON TERROR

Bush: Created Department of Homeland Security. Has tripled security funding and pushed for 2001 Patriot Act, which boosts official powers to monitor citizens and detain terrorism suspects.

Kerry: Would reform domestic intelligence putting National Guard in charge of homeland security. Wants amendments to Patriot Act, to increase rights of detainees. Would focus anew on Afghanistan.

Nader: Says war on terror is eroding civil liberties and due process of law, while exposing US Muslims to arbitrary surveillance. Wants to repeal Patriot Act and to end military tribunals for civilians.

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DEFENCE

Bush: Under Bush defence budget has become bigger in real terms than at any time since the Korean War. He still plans to spend more. Wants first part of missile defence system ready by end 2004.

Kerry: Says he would recruit more soldiers, raise salaries and invest in new equipment - but makes no commitment to increase the military budget. Opposes national missile defence.

Nader: Criticises military "overspending". Says he would cut funding of "wasteful, redundant" military-industrial complex and use the money for socially useful spending.

GAY MARRIAGE

Bush: Wants Congress to amend constitution to define marriage as between a man and a woman only. Has no problem with states passing laws allowing civil unions for gays.

Kerry: Opposes Bush's proposed constitutional amendment. Also opposes gay marriage, but says states should have power to decide whether to allow it.

Nader: Supports same-sex marriages because gays should be treated equally under the law. Says Bush is trying to "mandate inequality".

ABORTION

Bush: Opposes abortion except in cases of rape or incest, or where a woman's life is in danger. Signed into law a ban on late-term "partial-birth" abortion.

Kerry: Supports woman's right to choose, though opposes third-trimester abortions unless for health reasons. Would appoint only pro-choice Supreme Court judges.

Nader: Supports access to "safe and legal" abortion. Opposes attempts to restrict birth control or abortion through legislation or constitutional amendment.

EDUCATION

Bush: His No Child Left Behind Act ties federal school funding to results of student tests. Favours federally funded vouchers to help parents afford private schools.

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Kerry: Would provide \$27bn to "fully fund" No Child left Behind Act. Would recruit more teachers, and pay the best more. Against vouchers for private education.

Nader: Says No Child Left Behind Act puts too much emphasis on testing. Would guarantee pre-school education for all children. Wants schools to teach citizenship.

ENVIRONMENT

Bush: Scorned Kyoto global warming pact but wants more spent on hydrogen fuel technology. Backs "environmentally sensitive" oil exploration in Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

Kerry: Wants to sign up again to Kyoto pact on cutting greenhouse gas emissions. Promises to invest in hydrogen-based energy technology and other clean, renewable fuels, including ethanol.

Nader: Warns of "tremendous economic threats facing humanity" caused by environmental damage. Backs renewables, more efficient energy use and end to "subsidies" for oil, nuclear and coal industries.

HEALTH

Bush: Proposes tax credits for low earners who take out health insurance, to help cut numbers without access to health care. Has introduced a prescription drug benefit for elderly people.

Kerry: Proposes opening up the existing health care programme for federal government employees to all adults, and giving money to states to help them reduce the number of uninsured children.

Nader: Wants government-financed universal health care, delivered by non-profit companies. Would abolish health-insurance industry and bar profit-making organisations from health sector.

BUDGET / TAXES

Bush: The US had a budget surplus in 2000 but now has a huge deficit. Bush has proposed steps to halve it by 2010 - but wants Congress to make permanent tax cuts he made in 2001-2003.

Kerry: Promises to cut budget deficit by repealing Bush tax cuts for high earners and pegging federal spending increases to the rate of inflation, except in areas of defence, security and education.

Nader: Would make rich people and businesses pay more tax. Industries "we dislike" would pay

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most - ie polluters, the alcohol, tobacco and gambling industries and makers of "extreme luxuries".

JOBS / TRADE

Bush: Promises to enforce trade agreements so that US producers compete on a level playing field. Proposes spending more on training at community colleges and vocational schools.

Kerry: Promises to create 10 million jobs by 2009. Would review all trade agreements in first 120 days in office, to check that exporting countries meet labour and environmental standards.
Nader: Proposes creating jobs through public infrastructure projects. Wants equitable trade that promotes higher rather than lower environmental standards and better working conditions.

GUN CONTROL

Bush: Backs law to give gun manufacturers immunity from lawsuits brought by victims of gun crime. Against extending ban on assault weapons, which is due to expire in September.
Kerry: Proposes the mandatory introduction of child safety locks. Would close loophole whereby people who buy hand guns at shows are exempt from checks into their background.
Nader: Proposes trigger locks, gun licensing and strong enforcement to prevent guns falling into the hands of criminals. Says certain weapons should be banned.

Source: [The Drum Collective](#)