



Senator Creigh Deeds
2009 Democratic Candidate
for Virginia Governor

Q: Would you talk to me about how you got here today; running for Governor of the Commonwealth?

A: “I was elected the Commonwealth Attorney for Bath County in 1987, and in 1991 was elected to the House of Delegates. I served there for 10 years until I was elected in 2001 in the special election to state Senate, where I am presently. In 2005 I ran for Virginia Attorney General and lost in a close race; today I am the Democratic candidate for Governor. I will spend my time focused entirely on education and creating opportunity. I have what it takes to jumpstart our economy and create success not only for the already prosperous regions of Virginia, but for every corner of our state. State government is in the infrastructure business; if you build the infrastructure of the state economy, you allow the private sector to prosper and create the jobs, wealth and revenue you need for success.”

Q: How do you intend to protect Virginia’s business community from legislation like cardcheck that threatens Virginia’s right to work law?

A: “The right to work law is an important part of Virginia law that I strongly support. Our status as a right to work state gives us a competitive advantage over other states and has brought thousands upon thousands of jobs to Virginia; we must protect it. What I can

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tell you about cardcheck, or the Employee Free Choice Act, is that it is currently in Congress, and as introduced, I do not believe it has a chance of passing. The secret ballot is what insures the integrity of every electoral process, so I am convinced the cardcheck portion of the bill is dead. In any case, I will oppose anything that puts Virginia at a competitive disadvantage and I have confidence in Senators Warner and Webb to do the same.”

Q: What is your feeling on project labor agreements in commercial construction?

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Q: Would you support mandating green building practices on a state level for businesses in commercial construction?

A: “Some of the legislation at the federal level concerns me. I cannot support any legislation that will increase energy costs and make American businesses less competitive in this economic environment. I do not think we can say to the private sector, ‘You have to do this;’ rather, mandates should be controlled by the marketplace. Over my four-year term, I propose to cut our state energy consumption by 20 percent by performing annual energy audits. I have also recommended mandatory renewable portfolio standards that I believe are achievable. I have looked at what other states are doing and where the marketplace is going and propose the portfolio standards because I think they are necessary to ensure the creation of a market for renewables; I believe that is our next economy.”

Q: What are your plans for Virginia’s budget crisis?

A: “We have a responsibility to balance our budget and be as frugal as we can with the public’s money. This past session we

dealt with a nearly three billion dollar budget shortfall that was only balanced because of stimulus money and we are likely facing another unprecedented shortfall in the coming year. What I have proposed is zero based budgeting for state agencies. A panel, run by the private sector, will be set up to review the work of state government, requiring every agency to justify its processes and expenditures each year. This process will allow us to trim three to five million dollars a year. We can also save by conducting energy consumption audits. I am not interested in mandating regulations, but rather in becoming more efficient and finding new ways to save money. As families and businesses trim back, the Commonwealth needs to do the same.”

Q: Would you talk to me about your plan for Virginia’s transportation?

A: “The unique thing about being a Virginia governor is you get four years without the option of re-election. Political capital will never be higher than in that first year, which is when I intend to address transportation. My plan will be long-term in scope, statewide and creative in nature. By long-term I mean that it will take a multi-angle approach and ultimately answer the question, ‘What kind of Virginia do we want to live in?’ In terms of statewide, we will build the consensus we need to solve the problem. Finally it will be creative in nature with proposals for short-term, innovative ways to reduce congestion, including tax credits to incentivize telecommuting, flextime scheduling and using public transportation to get to and from work.”

Q: How does your plan intend on paying for this long-term, statewide, creative transportation plan?

A: “If you look at my record, I have not been afraid to vote for proposals that I think make sense and address the issue. We have tried many different things over the past several years and they have not worked. What I want to do is bring people together including people who are for me *and* against me; as long as they are willing to work. We are going to get this transportation issue fixed next year and we are going to develop a consensus around a series of ideas to fund a 21st century transportation system.”

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Q: Is raising taxes an option when it comes to solving the transportation and budget problems?

A: “I have no plans to raise any specific tax. I worry about identifying a specific plan right now because it can create a lightning rod that causes division. The method of paying for a transportation solution has to have a logical nexus to transportation itself. My opponent’s plan is a collection of ideas that have been tried and defeated or ideas that are too far off in the future to be real money. I will *not* support a plan that takes money out of public education or state responsibilities.”

Q: What message would you like to convey to Virginia’s business community?

A: “These are tough times and in some respects, unprecedented, but we will get through them. We have to be bold and aggressive in our search for jobs and businesses, and maintain our outstanding business climate by keeping Virginia a low tax state and incentivizing growth and entrepreneurship in the private sector. I have a plan to give a tax credit for every job created; you create a job, you create a taxpayer, ultimately creating more wealth for the Commonwealth. I also intend to take advantage of some of the tax cuts imposed at the federal level, extending them to the state level. We have to work towards building a smart workforce through education, and we need to search out ways to keep our jobs, protect our existing employers and recruit smart businesses. We have to constantly be thinking about why this is the best place to do business and how we are going to keep it that way.”

Q: What do you see as Virginia’s greatest challenge moving forward?

A: “We always have to be a step ahead. We are challenged to ensure our people are equipped for the changing economy and that our infrastructure is equipped to support economic growth. We do have big challenges, but I think we can meet them and thrive in the 21st century economy.”