



Robert McDonnell
2009 Republican Candidate
for Virginia Governor

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

A: "I have been in public life for 33 years now; as an army officer, prosecutor, legislator, the attorney general, business manager and now candidate for governor. I have had to make tough decisions and bring people together to solve problems. That is what we need in this tough economic climate; a governor who is willing to set a strong vision and inspire Virginians no matter the circumstances. What really motivates is the very present need to create jobs and opportunities for *all* Virginia citizens and strengthen the free enterprise system by relying more on private sector initiatives and less on government."

Q: In a state election, how important is it for the public to know where the candidates stand on federal issues like cardcheck?

A: "It is extremely important. A governor has to take a stand on what is best for the citizens of the state and a bill like cardcheck would be devastating to Virginia's right to work status. It would hurt us from a competitive advantage standpoint, it would kill jobs and negatively impact businesses' ability to grow. I have taken a strong stance against it and will fight it politically at any chance given; if it passes, I will look for a way to legally continue to fight.

"[Unemployment Compensation for the Part-Time Worker] would be a long-term disincentive for employers to hire part-time workers in the future. Seasonal and part-time workers would find it more difficult to get a job if that revenue had been enacted, as employers would be less likely to hire them."

My opponent has, to this point, not taken a stand on this issue. We know that he has hundreds of thousands of dollars coming in from national labor unions and I suspect he will get millions more. Additionally, he was picketing at the Hilton hotel back in January with employees, so I would make the assumption that he will stand with labor. Another way to look at it is that I have a 91 percent lifetime rating with the NFIB and he has a 92 percent lifetime rating with the AFL-CIO. The bottom line is I am making federal issues a significant part of the race. I will not stand by and watch the 10th Amendment be trampled on while the federal government dictates employment policies in Virginia."

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

A: "Project labor agreements are not good for competition. I strongly believe that our right to work law is the reason Virginia is consistently ranked as one of the number one places to do business; anything that inhibits the free enterprise system is just not good public policy. I am very concerned about this. Obviously the President and Democratic Congress have gotten significant contributions from organized labor, so it is not surprising policies like Executive Order 13502 passed."

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

A: "No. I think green building is a laudable goal, but I do not agree with mandates. Some of the technologies are still expensive and not commercially practical. There will be a time when that is not the case, but at this point I think builders should be incentivized, not mandated, to use various green technologies and work towards attaining LEED Certification. I do believe the market will eventually dictate green building practices more broadly because sustainability is responsible and will save money."

Q: If the new healthcare bill were to pass, what impact do you see it having on Virginia businesses?

A: "I am sympathetic to increasing access to and reducing the cost of healthcare, but there are other ways to go about doing that. Any new federal program that adds cost burden to the business owner and makes it harder to hire people is a bad idea."

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

A: "Virginia has a \$78 billion biennial budget that has doubled in the last 10 years or so. There are other areas of the budget, including higher education and transportation, that we have under-spent on and dramatically outpaced the average growth rate of inflation for population growth. We need an overhaul of the way we spend; we need to do major audits of state agencies to see how we can save money and be more prudent. We need to require more efficiency in certain agencies, particularly the ones that have grown dramatically in the recent past. We need accountability, transparency and our government to operate better. That is a huge part of what I would like to do."

Q: Would you talk to me about your transportation plan?

A: "I actually *have* a plan so I feel like I am off to a good start. I have taken a tough stand and developed 10 to 12 funding mechanisms that include using our Triple A bond rating to load bonds, and using 75 percent of all surplus monies and one of the three percent intended revenue growth for transportation. I have proposed new options for raising money including offshore drilling within the next three to four years. Eighty percent of the offshore taxes and royalties would go towards transportation. I have also recommended that we privatize the ABC stores currently run by the government, utilizing those revenues for transportation. I want to get people off the roads through teleworking programs and increase the speed limit to 70 miles per hour in some rural areas. Our main goals are reducing traffic congestion and developing our economy, which are our guiding principles when it comes to transportation."

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

A: "Our plan involves a series of innovative proposals to raise the money without raising taxes. I do not think laying another tax burden on Virginia citizens in an economy where families and businesses are struggling is responsible. Virginians expect us to spend their money wisely and I am willing to make those tough calls."

Q: Unemployment compensation for the part-time worker has become a political football of sorts. Would you explain why you and the majority of Virginia's business community did not support this bill?

A: "It is short-term stimulus money in exchange for a long-term, unfunded, federal mandate on businesses that would hurt their ability to create jobs in the future. It would mandate a permanent change in a business' unemployment insurance policy to cover part time workers who have never been covered before. This would be a long-term disincentive for employers to hire part-time workers in the future. Seasonal and part-time workers would find it more difficult to get a job if that revenue had been enacted, as employers would be less likely to hire them. It is yet another example of the federal government trying to micromanage the states and tell us how to run our business operations in exchange for short term funds."

Q: What do you consider to be Virginia's greatest challenge moving forward?

A: "We face many challenges, but I think the greatest is finding ways to create new opportunities for small businesses; they are the engine of our economy. Seventy-five percent of all new jobs come from small business and we put too many regulatory and tax burdens on them; we need them to thrive and grow. At the federal level there are major new programs, taxes and regulations on businesses, both large and small. My job is to fight the federal government on these policies that are overly intrusive and find new ways to promote business."