



BEARINGDRIFT
VIRGINIA'S CONSERVATIVE VOICE

Claudia Tucker, candidate, 22nd Senate District

2011 GOP Senate Candidate Questionnaire

> Are you satisfied with VDOT's efficiency and effectiveness? Do you think they need more funding or greater efficiency? What are your ideas for improvement?

No. As the audit performed by Governor McDonnell showed, VDOT has a habit of sitting on large sums of cash that can and should be put towards immediate transportation projects. State agencies should not have piggy banks filled with taxpayer dollars. VDOT is one area in particular in the myriad of state services that we can expand public private partnerships – and also reduce the size and scope of the state workforce. Cuts are never easy, especially eliminating jobs – but if they're jobs that the private sector could and should be doing, then it is an unfortunate consequence – and one of the tough choices that must be made.

There things that VDOT could be doing to make life easier on Virginians. These are simple things like working major projects at night so they don't interfere with daily commutes. Clearing construction zones (to the point it can be done safely) on the weekends to free our highways for the travelling public.

We also must fight to ease environmental regulations. It is absolutely absurd that it take nearly a decade and billions of dollars to build an overpass. It should not take a lifetime to build a third crossing in Hampton Roads or a Charlottesville bypass on Route 29.

> Do you think Virginia should embrace education reform? Is our current public education system sufficient, or do you think it needs a substantial rethinking and overhaul? If you support reform, what specific reforms do you favor?

100% Yes. Our current public education system is administration heavy. When the greatest thinkers of our time were educated, many only had a chalkboard and books – and great teachers. We need to let

teachers teach, reduce the size of the administration and the dollars they rob from the classroom. I support a mandate that over 65% of education funding be directed the classroom – but that must be more specific. I support that 65% number being directly applied to educating students.

I am also a firm supporter of school choice, vouchers and charter schools. Parents have the right to educate their children where they feel their child will get the most benefit. If that's a private school, why should they pay twice? The state should refund the portion of their taxes gone to public education for them to fund their child's education at a private school.

> Should new highways be funded through existing revenues, tolls, fuel taxes or some other method? Be specific.

Existing revenues and tolls. I have no problem with placing tolls on new road ways – as long as there is a sunset clause that mandates the removal of the toll when construction costs have been recovered.

> Do you favor term limits for Virginia legislators?

No. The voter is the term limit and having worked with legislatures that have adopted them, I see the dysfunction that ensues-power rests with staff and not the elected officials, and through the legislators ignorance of the process, legislators make stupid mistakes.

> Explain why you are a better choice than your opponent?

I am the only small business owner in the race. The only farmer and the only one with private sector experience running a business, working for a Fortune 50 company and operating a small family farm. We need more business owners in the legislature who've seen the heavy hand of government regulation stifle growth – not more lawyers who've written those regulations for years.

> Does Virginia government spend too much, too little or just enough?

Virginia spends too much. Our budget has swelled beyond the growth in inflation. If it's in the yellow pages, government shouldn't be doing it. There are plenty of places to cut, and plenty of programs that can be consolidated.

> Name one law you would patron a bill to repeal?

I would repeal the BPOL tax. This is a tax paid by businesses on gross receipts, rather than actual profit or net revenue. If a company has receipts of \$1 Million dollars, but expenses of \$100,000 – their earnings should be taxed, not their expenditures.

> When Virginia receives a surplus, what should it do with the revenues?

I don't agree with the premise of this question. Virginia never receives a surplus. Sometimes Virginia might take more than it needs from her taxpayers – but that's the proper phrasing for this question. It's the people's money that is taken so when there's money left over, the state took more than it needed. It should ensure the rainy day fund is full, our obligations are met and return the rest to the rightful owners – the taxpayers of the Commonwealth.

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> What areas of government do you feel are best left to private markets or individuals to provide?

See my “yellow pages test” above – if it's in there, government shouldn't be doing it. We should contract our paving services, rather than hiring pavers, paying them for life through VRS and owning the equipment. VDOT is a prime example, but so is the Department of General Services – the Commonwealth's handyman – now we couldn't eliminate it entirely, but would it be cheaper to hire someone to fix a leak or put them on our payroll with full benefits?

> Do you consider the Virginia Constitution (as adopted in 1971 and amended since) to grant too much power to state government? If not, why not? If so, what powers given to Richmond would you propose to be restricted or repealed by constitutional amendment?

In some areas, yes.

> When does life begin? When should life be protected under the laws of the United States and the Commonwealth of Virginia?

Life begins at conception. As a mother, when I heard the heartbeat through the ultrasound – it was never a question.

> In Virginia, is there too much gun control or too little? What laws would you like to see changed and how?

The natural answer is always too much – but I think Virginia does a pretty good job supporting our rights to keep and bear arms. I would like to see the castle doctrine passed authorizing lethal force inside one’s home.

> Do you support the Dillon Rule?

The Dillon rule needs to be modernized – some things should be uniform throughout the state, like right to work laws – so that companies who locate in Virginia have assurances localities won’t change the rules of the game, but Williamsburg shouldn’t be required to see approval from big brother to pass a local ordinance on grass cutting. Some things, like then restaurant smoking ban should be left to the localities. While other things, like concealed carry permits need to be uniform across the state – so people don’t unknowingly violate laws when they cross county lines.

> Would you support school choice legislation, including legislation to allow parents to receive a tax credit up to a certain amount if their children are not in public school?

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Yes. I think parents should receive the full amount it costs to educate their students in the public school back as a credit, or an “opt out” check from the Commonwealth.