

North Carolina FreeEnterprise Foundation
2010 Questionnaire
Candidates for North Carolina General Assembly

Please complete and return
by June 11 Deadline

XRE

SECTION I. Candidate Personal Profile Information

Name: Samuel L. (Sam) Edwards Office Sought (circle): Senate House District #: 118
Party (circle): Democrat Republican Other: _____
Address: 493 Camelot Drive City: Waynesville State: NC Zip: 28786
County of Residence: Haywood Length of Residence in County: 28 years (25+3)
Home Phone: 828-456-2558 Work Phone: 828-456-2558 Mobile Phone: 828-226-6756
Email: edwards4nch118@dnet.net Fax: N/A
Gender: Male Race/Ethnicity: Caucasian Religion: Anglican Catholic
Place of Birth (city/state): Waynesville / NC Date of Birth: 06/08/1954
Marital Status (circle): Married Single Divorced Separated Number of Children: 2
Occupation: Priest; Educator; Writer Employer: Self & St Peter's Anglican Church
Military Service: none High School: Tuscola Senior High School (1972)
Colleges/Universities Attended: Brevard College, Brevard, NC; The American University, Washington, DC
Degrees: Jr College Diploma in Music, mel (1974); B.A. in Religion, mel (1976); M. Div., cl (1979)
Previous Elected/Appointed Offices: none

SECTION II. Candidate Campaign Information

Name of Campaign Committee: Committee to Elect Sam Edwards
Campaign Email: edwards4nch118@dnet.net Campaign Website: _____
Campaign Phone: 828-456-2558 Campaign Fax: _____
Campaign Address: 493 Camelot Drive City: Waynesville State: NC Zip: 28786
Campaign Treasurer: Janette Miller Campaign Treasurer Phone: 828-
Political Consultants: _____

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Considering your personal and professional associations, how likely are you to receive support from each of the following groups?

| | Very Likely | Likely | Unknown | Unlikely | Very Unlikely |
|--|-------------|--------|---------|----------|---------------|
| A. North Carolina Advocates for Justice (formerly the Academy of Trial Lawyers) | 1 | 2 | 3 | ④ | 5 |
| B. Medical Groups (ex. Doctors, Hospital Administrators) | 1 | 2 | ③ | 4 | 5 |
| C. Banking & Finance Industry | 1 | 2 | ③ | 4 | 5 |
| D. Utility/Telecommunications Companies | 1 | 2 | ③ | 4 | 5 |
| E. Real Estate & Construction Industry | 1 | ② | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| F. Labor Unions | 1 | 2 | 3 | ④ | 5 |
| G. Retail/Wholesale Businesses | 1 | ② | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| H. State Employees Association of N.C. (SEANC) | 1 | 2 | ③ | 4 | 5 |
| I. Insurance Industry | 1 | 2 | ③ | 4 | 5 |
| J. N.C. Association of Educators (NCAE) | 1 | 2 | 3 | ④ | 5 |
| K. Business Professionals (ex. Architects, Accountants, Engineers) | 1 | 2 | ③ | 4 | 5 |
| L. Transportation Industry | 1 | 2 | ③ | 4 | 5 |
| M. Agri-business Interests | 1 | 2 | ③ | 4 | 5 |
| N. Legislative Leadership Committees | ① | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Are there other groups not listed that you would expect to receive a campaign contribution or endorsement from? (Ex. Lillian's List, Anti-Tax Groups)

Anti-Tax Groups, Pro-Life & Pro-Family Groups, Property Rights Groups

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SECTION III. CANDIDATE ISSUE QUESTIONS & STATEMENTS

Instructions: Please respond to the following questions and statements by circling the response that best represents your position or opinion. You are invited to provide additional comments or explanations for your answers on a separate page. Please be sure to identify which question you are commenting on by noting the appropriate question number with your additional comments.

GENERAL BUSINESS

1. For every \$100.00 of sales, about how much profit do you believe the average North Carolina business nets? (Circle one response)

Under \$1 \$1-5 \$5-10 \$10-25 \$25-50 Over \$50

2. The current level of taxes paid by North Carolina businesses is too high, too low, or about right? (Circle one response)

Too high Too low About right

3. Have you owned or managed a business? (If so, please describe below.)

Yes No

I was for seven years the Executive Director of a large, non-profit church advocacy organization and have had charge of several congregations.

4. Do you believe that environmental laws and regulations in North Carolina are too strict, about right, or too lenient?

Too Strict About Right Too Lenient Undecided

BUDGET & TAXES

5. Reducing taxes on businesses in North Carolina will stimulate economic activity resulting in the creation of more jobs and increased tax revenue.

Agree Disagree Undecided

6. Reducing taxes on businesses in North Carolina will reduce state revenues and cause substantial harm to critical government programs and services.

Agree Disagree Undecided

7. The growth of state spending from year to year should be limited to a specific growth factor such as the rate of inflation.

Agree Disagree Undecided

8. Recurring state budget expenditures should only be funded with existing, recurring revenues.

Agree Disagree Undecided

*9. The state sales tax should be expanded to include personal and professional services such as haircuts, automotive repairs, legal services and medical services.

Agree Disagree Undecided

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10. Dedicated sources of revenue (such as the Highway Trust Fund) should not be transferred to the General Fund as a means of balancing the state budget.

Agree Disagree Undecided

11. North Carolina's personal income tax should be increased in order to provide more revenue for state programs and services.

Agree Disagree Undecided

12. The North Carolina General Assembly should make permanent the one-cent sales tax increase that is set to expire on June 30, 2011, in order to secure those revenues for future needs and planning.

Agree Disagree Undecided

EMPLOYMENT

13. North Carolina should remain a "Right to Work" state, meaning that a person cannot be required to join a union in order to get or keep a job.

Agree Disagree Undecided

14. The North Carolina General Assembly should raise the state's minimum wage above the current level of \$7.25 per hour.

Agree Disagree Undecided

15. The North Carolina General Assembly should mandate what specific health benefits coverage private-sector employers provide to their employees, even if it raises the cost of premiums.

Agree Disagree Undecided

★ 16. The North Carolina General Assembly should expand workers' compensation disability payments to workers who suffer from non-physical ailments such as stress and depression, even if it raises the cost of premiums.

Agree Disagree Undecided

17. Associations representing state and local employees and teachers should be allowed to engage in collective bargaining for wages, benefits and working conditions.

Agree Disagree Undecided

18. The North Carolina General Assembly should repeal the ability of state employees and teachers to authorize the payroll deduction of association dues (dues check-off).

Agree Disagree Undecided

19. Employers in North Carolina should be required to provide paid sick leave to all employees.

Agree Disagree Undecided

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

★ 20. State tax dollars should be used as incentives to entice large companies to locate in North Carolina.

Agree Disagree Undecided

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- ★ 21. The focus of North Carolina's economic development efforts should be on reducing the corporate income tax rate and improving the overall business climate of the state, rather than providing tax incentives to a limited number of large corporations.

Agree Disagree Undecided

ENVIRONMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE

22. North Carolina's environmental regulations should be no stricter than applicable federal requirements.

Agree Disagree Undecided

- ★ 23. Toll roads are a necessary part of meeting North Carolina's growing transportation needs.

Agree Disagree Undecided

CIVIL JUSTICE

24. It is important for a jury in a civil lawsuit to be informed of health insurance and disability insurance payments already received by a plaintiff before deciding on an award in the case.

Agree Disagree Undecided

25. If there are multiple defendants in a negligence case and one or more of the defendants is unable to pay their share of the damages, the defendant or defendants who can pay should have to pay for 100 percent of the damages awarded.

Agree Disagree Undecided

- ★ 26. The North Carolina General Assembly should repeal the state's "contributory negligence" law (which prohibits an injured person from collecting damages if the person contributed to his or her own injury) and replace it with "comparative fault" (which allows an injured person the potential to collect damages, depending upon the percentage of fault that is attributable to the person).

Agree Disagree Undecided

GOVERNANCE

- ★ 27. The state legislature should expand the authority of cities and counties to impose a broader range of taxes and fees at the local level.

Agree Disagree Undecided

If you agree, which of the following taxes or fees would you favor? (Circle all of those that apply)

local sales tax local income tax development impact fees real estate transfer tax prepared meals tax

Other taxes or fees (please list): _____

- ★ 28. North Carolina should continue to operate under Dillon's Rule, a legal doctrine providing that municipalities and counties possess only those powers and authorities expressly granted to them by the North Carolina Constitution or the State Legislature.

Agree Disagree Undecided

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29. The North Carolina Constitution should be amended to allow voters the ability to add referenda to the statewide ballot after collecting a required minimum number of signatures (i.e., initiative and referendum).
 Agree Disagree Undecided
- ★ 30. A nonpartisan redistricting commission should be established to draw North Carolina's congressional and state legislative district maps following the 2010 Census.
 Agree Disagree Undecided
- ★ 31. The North Carolina Constitution should be amended to establish specific limitations on the length of legislative sessions in North Carolina (session limits).
 Agree Disagree Undecided
- ★ 32. State legislative leaders (the President Pro Tempore of the N.C. Senate and the Speaker of the N.C. House) should be limited to serving no more than two consecutive terms at a time.
 Agree Disagree Undecided
- ★ 33. Judges in North Carolina should be appointed by the Governor instead of elected by the people.
Agree Disagree Undecided

EDUCATION

34. State lawmakers should increase taxes in North Carolina in order to raise teacher pay to the national average.
Agree Disagree Undecided
- ★ 35. The N.C. General Assembly should grant local school boards independent taxing authority.
Agree Disagree Undecided
- ★ 36. The North Carolina General Assembly should repeal the law requiring public schools to start the school year no earlier than August 25 and instead allow classes to begin in early August even if such a change would negatively impact the state's tourism industry.
 Agree Disagree Undecided

BANKING & FINANCE

37. The government should take a greater role in establishing rates and prices for financial products and services.
Agree Disagree Undecided
38. It is necessary for the North Carolina General Assembly to increase regulations on the financial services industry in order to protect the interests of consumers.
Agree Disagree Undecided

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SECTION IV. OPEN-ENDED QUESTION

Statewide surveys indicate the top issue on the minds of voters in North Carolina is the economy and jobs. With that in mind, please explain your vision for economic growth and job creation.

The key to job creation is economic growth, and the keys to economic growth are ^① a thorough reform of the current tax system and ^② meaningful limitations on government spending.

As to tax reform, I favor immediate cuts in both corporate and personal tax rates, moving intentionally toward the abolition of the corporate income tax, followed closely by the replacement of most, or even all, state levies with a tax on consumption modelled after the FairTax (including rebate of tax on essentials). I particularly dislike the corporate income tax, since it rests on the false assumptions ^① that there is some sort of income that does not come from individual persons and ^② that corporate taxes are not costs passed on to the consumer.

As to limiting government spending, I favor the proposal to amend the state constitution to restrict the growth of government spending to the rate of population growth adjusted for inflation. (Exceptions to this could only be made by popular referendum or legislative super-majority.)

These reforms would create a very friendly business environment with consequent job growth, making N.C. an economic "Freedom Zone."

Candidate Signature:
(signature required)

Samuel R. Erback

Date: 05/22/2010

Please return completed questionnaire: by mail: NCFEF, P.O. Box 12406, Raleigh, NC 27605
by fax: (919) 896-8349
by email: info@ncfef.org

Sam Edwards (Republican Candidate – House District 118)
NCFEF 2010 Candidate Questionnaire addenda

9. Disagree. So long as the current state tax structure remains in place, I am opposed to any new taxes, including those on personal or professional services proposed or already enacted. In the first place, they appear to be targeted on only some, not all, services and thus yet again make the state a chooser of winners and losers. In addition, they give an unfair advantage to those interests that are more to effectively lobby against their imposition.

If, as is my hope, the current income- and fee-based state revenue system is replaced (*not augmented*) by one based on consumption, then assessing services as well as goods could be done, so long as it applies to *all* services.

16. Disagree. Based on my understanding of the current state of scientific and medical knowledge, which strongly suggests that the origins of stress and depression have a physical component, I have to dissent from the notion implied in the question that it is possible strictly to segregate non-physical from physical ailments. However, while it is undeniable that stress and depression contribute to worker disability and lost productivity, I am inclined to oppose any further state insurance mandates for private employers. Such matters are better handled by freely negotiated contractual agreements between workers and employers than by government commands, which usually are comparable to attempting to kill flies with baseball bats: Lots of damage gets done, but usually not to the fly.

20. Disagree. Targeted tax breaks are inherently unfair to businesses that do not receive them. Of their nature, they involve government in something – choosing winners and losers among legitimate enterprises – that is no part of its proper function.

21. Agree. Actually, I favor rate reductions as a first stage toward the total abolition of the corporate income tax. As I frequently tell people, the notion that corporations pay taxes in the same way as do individuals is a convenient fiction perpetrated by government on those who do not understand that, because it is a legitimate cost of doing business, the cost of taxation is passed on to the consumer. Every dollar that winds up in the state treasury, regardless of how it arrived there, started its journey in some real person's pocket.

23. Undecided. I do not believe that toll roads are a *necessary* part of meeting the state's transportation needs, but they may well be a *desirable* element of the solution, and should be given consideration, North Carolina's long-standing aversion to toll roads to the contrary notwithstanding. If they are approved, I do not believe that funding for their construction or maintenance should be drawn from general state revenues, but that they should be self-financing. Should they be put under the management of a state turnpike authority, any operating surplus should go into the state treasury (not less than half of it into the general highway fund). If, on the other hand, they should be operated by state-chartered private corporations, any profit should be shared with the corporation stockholders (among whom, presumably, the state would loom large).

26. Undecided. While I tend to agree with this proposal, I need to know more about the details of it, including just who it is that is advocating the change. I do not want to see an alteration that will hamper genuine tort reform and unduly benefit tort attorneys.

27. Disagree. This answer is given in the context of the current system of state government, which is unnecessarily centralized. If my hope to foster a transfer to the local level of control over matters best dealt with there (devolution) is realized, this issue will have to be revisited in light of that. In no case, however, should any adjustment in taxing authority be made which does not reduce the amount of taxpayer money going to Raleigh. The best assurance of a locality – county or municipality – getting from Raleigh in proportion to what it sends there is to not to have to send it in the first place.

28. Undecided. I need to study this more closely, but can say that the degree of orderly devolution of authority from state to local units that can be achieved will influence my final position on this.

30. Agree. The commission, to have any credibility with the voters and their representatives, must be genuinely non-partisan: Ideally, it should have no active career politicians, lobbyists, or other special-interest agents, and each member should pledge not to seek office in any congressional or legislative district for at least five years following the acceptance of the commission's report.

31. Agree. The more state authority is devolved to local government, the more the sessions can be shortened. A return to the old biennial system would suit me very well.

32. Agree. In addition, I favor term limits for all legislators. I would propose that the constitution be amended to provide that each person be limited to three consecutive terms and to five terms in his/ her lifetime in each House, with a requirement that upon completing a term, he/ she be disqualified from seeking office at the state level until two election cycles had passed.

33. Disagree. The current system is adequate as it is, but could be made better by limiting judges to a single term of eight to twelve years and three in his/ her lifetime in the state judicial system.

35. Disagree. As long as our educational system is as centralized as it is, that is. Devolution to greater local control will likely change my perspective.

36. Agree. Local school boards are best equipped to make this kind of decision, and should be allowed to do so.