

Founding Board

George McGovern
Fmr U.S. Senator

Barry Goldwater
U.S. Senator

Geraldine Ferraro
Fmr U.S. Representative

John McCain
U.S. Senator

Michael Dukakis
Former Governor

Bill Frist
U.S. Senator

Bill Frenzel
Fmr U.S. Representative

Peggy Lampl
Fmr Executive Director, League of Women Voters

Jim Leach
U.S. Representative

John Sununu
U.S. Senator

Charles Mathias
Fmr U.S. Senator

Edward Brooke
Fmr U.S. Senator

Barbara Lee
U.S. Representative

Claudine Schneider
Fmr U.S. Representative

Kenneth Adelman
Dir., US Arms Ctrl & Disarmament Agency, Reagan Admin.

Chaka Fattah
U.S. Representative

Jon Trachta
Attorney

Marvin Cohen
Fmr FAA Chair, Civil Aeronautical Board, Carter Admin.

William Lacy Clay, Jr.
U.S. Representative

Irene Natividad
Fmr Pres., National Women's Political Caucus

Pat Schroeder
Fmr U.S. Representative

Gordon H. Smith
U.S. Senator

Tom Chandler
Attorney

Adelaide Elm
Historian

William Clinger
Fmr U.S. Representative

Dan O'Neill
Attorney

William Proxmire
Fmr U.S. Senator

John Hagelin
Fmr Pres. Candidate, Natural Law Party

Susan Brandes
Community Activist

Mary Dent Crisp
Fmr Co-Chair, Nat'l Republican Party

Newt Gingrich
Fmr U.S. Representative

Sonia Jarvis
Fmr Exec. Dir., Nat'l Coalition on Black Voter Participation

Marianne Jennings
Professor of Business Law

Brent Steel
Political Scientist

Kyle Dell
Political Scientist

John Echohawk
Native American Rights Fund

Henry Kenski
Political Scientist

Richard Kimball
President, Project Vote Smart

(Partial Listing)

PROJECT VOTE SMART



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TENNESSEE CANDIDATES STONEWALL PUBLIC ON BASIC ISSUE POSITIONS

Great Divide Ranch, MT—Project Vote Smart released the 2008 Tennessee Political Courage Test results today showing that only seven percent (7%) of the state's primary candidates for State Legislature and twenty-seven percent (27%) of the state's primary candidates for Congress were willing to answer questions on the issues that are of top concern to Tennessee voters, such as questions regarding the employment of undocumented immigrants, the death penalty, the REAL ID Act, access to health care and the licensing of gun possession..

Richard Kimball, Project Vote Smart's President, said that national response rates for federal and state candidates have fallen dramatically over the last three elections.

The Political Courage Test asks all candidates one central question: "Are you willing to tell citizens your positions on the issues you will most likely face on their behalf?" It is conducted nationally over the last 12 months of each election season. Tennessee legislative and Congressional candidates were contacted repeatedly over four weeks and asked by prominent leaders of both major parties and by Project staff, if they were willing to provide their issue inclinations in the public interest.

Candidates advancing to the general election will have the opportunity to respond to the test again, when tested later this year.

Since 2000, Project Vote Smart has found that party leaders and consultants are advising candidates not to respond to the Political Courage Test for two primary reasons: it will limit the candidates' ability to control their campaign messages, and it will expose them to opposition research.

Kimball counters this cynical attitude. "If candidates are afraid of letting their opponents know where they stand on key issues, how can they possibly let the voters know how they will handle the job if they are hired? Candidates have lost sight of who their prospective employers are. One campaign consultant told us, 'It's not our job to educate--it's our job to win.'"

The Political Courage Test has been created, designed, and drafted by more than 200 of the nation's most prominent journalists, political scientists, and leaders of the major and third political parties.

(continued)

The results of each candidate's Political Courage Test may be obtained from:

- The toll-free Voter's Research Hotline (1-888-VOTE-SMART)
- The Vote Smart Web site (www.vote-smart.org)

Other information available through the Hotline and web site includes campaign finance data, biographical information, voting records, issue positions, special interest groups' ratings, candidate speeches and public statements, and contact information on close to 40,000 candidates and elected officials at the presidential, congressional, gubernatorial, state and local levels.

Project Vote Smart is a national research organization founded by national leaders such as Jimmy Carter and Gerald Ford, John McCain and Geraldine Ferraro. It is funded entirely through foundation grants and the individual contributions of 45,000 members.

Following are the results of the 2008 Tennessee Primary Political Courage Test.