



Project Vote Smart

One Common Ground
Philipsburg, Montana 59858

1133 E. Helen Street
Tucson, AZ 85719

Phone: 406-859-8683
Fax: 406-859-8680
E-mail: comments@votesmart.org
www.votesmart.org

Voter's Research Hotline:
1-888-Vote-Smart (1-888-868-3762)

The Reporter's Source Book

2008

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Copies available from
Project Vote Smart: (406) 859-8683

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About the Reporter's Source Book



The Reporter's Source Book (RSB) has become an indispensable resource for political journalists. Updated each election year, the RSB is distributed to reporters and media organizations across the country. It provides a directory of contact information for major issue organizations, think tanks, academic experts, and federal agencies, as well as overviews of important issues that will play a key role in the election. The RSB allows journalists to quickly research expert opinions on all sides of various issues in the public discourse.

The 2008 edition contains seven issue briefs that summarize the major issues surrounding the election. The topics of these briefs are: budget and economy, defense and foreign affairs, education, entitlement reform, environment, health care and immigration. Each brief contains a broad overview of the issue, followed by the public's perspective with poll and survey information. They conclude by providing a summary of some of the policy choices being debated in Congress, including arguments for and against each issue.

The heart of the publication is the directory of contact information. Those listed represent a selection of hundreds of organizations and experts on opposing sides of public issues who are willing to offer their assistance to reporters. Project Vote Smart has made every effort to be as inclusive and balanced as possible.

The Reporter's Source Book is not a comprehensive directory. Instead, it provides a range of organizations, individuals, and ideas across the political spectrum that can help journalists obtain the information that fuels public dialogue and drives current political issues.

Dear Reader:

After 16 years, over 100,000 Americans finished building the nation's Voter's Self Defense System. It is a great story - this long overdue system defends the voters' rights to abundant, accurate and relevant information about those who govern or those who wish to replace those who do.



It has been an extraordinary undertaking to defend our fellow citizens from the self-serving and manipulative tactics that abuse voters and poison our ability to self-govern.

I hope you will use, share and perhaps even help this crucial effort to put control back into the hands of the American People.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Richard Kimball". The ink is dark and the signature is fluid and legible.

Richard Kimball
Project President

About Project Vote Smart

Project Vote Smart (PVS) is a citizens' organization dedicated to serving all Americans with accurate, unbiased information for electoral decision-making. The following policies, procedures, and structure are designed to guarantee absolute impartiality:

- **Nonpartisan** - Project Vote Smart was inaugurated in 1992 by national leaders as diverse as former U.S. Presidents Jimmy Carter (D) and Gerald Ford (R), former U.S. Senators Barry Goldwater (R) and George McGovern (D), and former U.S. Representatives Newt Gingrich (R) and Geraldine Ferraro (D). All Founding Board members have an ideological opposite to provide balance and ensure strict impartiality.
- **Non-profit** - As a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, Project Vote Smart has been funded exclusively through private donations by over 45,000 members, and grants from private philanthropic foundations including the Carnegie, Ford and Knight Foundations. Contributions are 100% tax deductible.
- **Independent** - To guarantee its integrity and accountability as a nonpartisan and objective service, Project Vote Smart does not accept financial contributions from lobbyists, governmental organizations, corporations, labor unions, or special interests.
- **Objective** - Every candidate (Democrat, Republican, third party, or independent) is treated with equal deference, and only relevant and unbiased facts are presented. Project Vote Smart does not lobby, support, or oppose any candidate, position, or issue.
- **Reputable** - More than 5000 public libraries and approximately 250 national and local news organizations including CBS News, Cox Newspapers' Washington Bureau, Knight-Ridder, MTV, National Journal, and MSNBC have sponsored Project Vote Smart programs.
- **Thorough** - Project Vote Smart works with a bipartisan cross section of over 200 political scientists from around the country to provide maximum objectivity and depth to PVS programs and services.

The Components of Project Vote Smart

The Voter's Self-Defense System

Project Vote Smart has developed a Voter's Self-Defense System to provide citizens with the information to self-govern effectively. This unbiased, in-depth, and accurate information can be accessed in one of the following ways:

Website: www.votesmart.org

Voter's Research Hotline: 1-888-Vote-Smart (1-888-868-3762)

Project Vote Smart covers thousands of candidates and current officials including the President, Congress, Governors, and State Legislators in six basic categories:

- Background and contact information
- Issue positions, provided by candidates through our National Political Awareness Test (NPAT)
- Voting records
- Campaign finances
- Interest group ratings from over 250 liberal to conservative groups
- Public statements

The PVS website also includes:

- Information on the Federal Judicial Branch
- Biographical information for Statewide Officials and State Supreme Court Justices
- All public statements made by U.S. Senators, U.S. Representatives, and Governors
- Voter registration forms for each state
- Contact information for state and local election offices
- Polling places and absentee ballot information
- Ballot measure descriptions for each state, where applicable
- Links to federal and state government agencies, political parties, and issue organizations
- Information about PVS membership and internship opportunities

In addition to our website and Voter's Research Hotline, Project Vote Smart also provides information in published formats. The Reporter's Source Book is one of these publications. The other major publication is the Voter's Self-Defense Manual (VSDM). The VSDM is a starting point for direct access to information on elected officials. It contains a sampling of the PVS online database with information on Congressional members' voting records, interest group ratings, campaign finances, and contact information. The VSDM is a free publication available through our website at www.votesmart.org or by calling our toll-free Voter's Research Hotline at 1-888-Vote-Smart (1-888-868-3762).

Location

Great Divide Ranch Research Retreat

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Philipsburg, MT 598589

Project Vote Smart

University of Arizona

1133 E Helen Street

Tucson, AZ 85719

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