

## **Progressive Democrats Questionnaire 3/25/08**

### **Candidate and Campaign Information:**

Candidate Name: Harry Taylor

Address: PO Box 6065

City, State, Zip: Charlotte, NC 28207

E-mail Address: harry.taylor@harrytaylorforcongress.com

Office for which you are running: US House of Representatives, NC-9<sup>th</sup> District

Date of Election: May 6 and November 4

Registered Political Party: Democratic

Campaign Manager: Susan Green Phone: 704/773-2917

Fax: 704/749-2375

Campaign Consultant: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Campaign Address: PO Box 6065, Charlotte, NC 28207

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List endorsements from organizations and/or individuals:

Progressive Democrats of America, local affiliate

EENR: Edwards Evening News Reports (John Edwards' Bloggers)

Black Political Caucus of Charlotte-Mecklenburg

How would you describe yourself politically (i.e. progressive; moderate democrat, etc.)?

Progressive Democrat

List elective or political party offices you have held, including committee appointments:

None

What is your primary occupation?

Commercial Real Estate Broker, self-employed

Why are you running for Congress? (100 word limit)

By virtue of a town hall meeting confrontation that I had with George Bush, in Charlotte on April 6, 2006, I've learned how powerful a single voice can be. Many voices can be powerful beyond all measure. By helping others to believe they can empower themselves, we could have a government that works for peace, for access to health care, for education, for effective action that addresses climate change and energy independence.

### ***Issues Specific to Office:***

What experiences have prepared you to run for Congress? My business career has been spent in bringing people with opposing interests together to successfully complete win-win transactions, and build building, managing complex processes with people to satisfactory completion. For twenty-five years I have worked with disadvantaged youth thru organizations such as Big Brothers, Youth Homes, Communities-in-Schools, Outward Bound, and Habitat for Humanity. I fulfilled a 6-year commitment to Air Force Reserve and Colorado National Guard.

If you receive the endorsement of Progressive Democrats of America, how do you intend to use it? On website, in media, on brochures, in conversation...any and every place where it will gain traction for my campaign

Please list the top three issues on which you will take leadership if elected: Ending occupation of Iraq in responsible fashion, addressing climate change and energy independence, access to quality health care for all

Do you agree with Congress' decision to reauthorize the Patriot Act?

Why or why not? I did not like it or agree with it from the very beginning. I didn't trust the people who offered it and am certain it infringes on the rights and freedom of us all. We need to protect our country and those who live here, but our own peace and security can only truly come from honest effort to include all people. This is not an easy task, but can be accomplished if we work toward it.

If elected, which committee(s) would you prefer to serve on and why:

1-House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming

2- House Committee on Science and Technology:

Subcommittee on Energy and Environment

3-House Committee on Natural Resources

Subcommittee on National Parks Forests and Public Lands

4 - House Committee on Small Business  
Subcommittee on Regulations Healthcare and Trade

I will vote against war, against violence and the use of force until every single other alternative has been completely exhausted. I'll vote for conservative balanced budgets that can be properly managed. I'll vote for fair trade, for good health, for superb education, for anything and everything that addresses climate change and pragmatic plans to achieve energy independence.

***Federal Issues:***

**1) Iraq:**

PDA supports an immediate start to a rapid and complete withdrawal from Iraq of all troops and military contractors, and has championed legislation that would withhold funding for any other military purpose there. In addition, PDA believes that the U.S. must revise its strategy for the region by removing these forces from the Mideast entirely, rather than just "redeploying" them within the region. PDA advocates a shift in U.S. foreign policy from reckless unilateralism toward cooperation and diplomacy--so that people of other countries know us more by our helping hand than our slugging arm. Furthermore, PDA supports the redirecting of resources allocated for military spending to human needs.

**Will you pledge to support such immediate and total withdrawal from Iraq of the military forces, including supporting legislation towards this goal? *Yes. Unequivocally.***

**In addition, will you forswear any preemptive military attacks upon any nation? *ABSOLUTELY!***

**Will you commit to fully support investigations into the White House's false claims justifying the invasion of Iraq, and would you support impeachment of Bush, Cheney and other administration officials for these and other high crimes? *While I'd love dearly to see those people pay for what they done to my country, and to all humanity, I fear we will not have the luxury of pursuing that. There are too many other areas that need to be addressed and resolved. Much as I hate the thought of letting them get away with their criminal behavior, I think we need to move past them in a fashion not unlike what Nelson Mandela accomplished in South Africa with the Truth Commission. Having said that, in some fashion our country MUST make clear that we will never again tolerate such abuses by a chief executive.***

**Have you participated in or spoken at any events, demonstrations, meetings or teach-ins opposing the Iraq war and occupation? *Yes, a number of times. I'm very outspoken.***

**Have you organized any such events? *No.***

## **2) Health Care:**

There are over 46 million uninsured people living in America, the majority of which are working Americans. Every year, nearly 18,000 people die unnecessarily as a direct result of their lack of health insurance. Millions, with health insurance, maintain inadequate, overly expensive coverage and face the peril of denials of claims or termination of benefits if a family member becomes seriously ill--one of the leading causes of bankruptcy in the U.S. While spending twice as much on health care as any other industrialized country, our system performs poorly, spending more money for less coverage, maximizing profits by finding ways to deny care. The private insurance bureaucracy expends one-third of health care money on waste, administrative paperwork, advertising and corporate profits. The current Medicare program for senior citizens spends under 4% of its budget for its overhead costs. Meanwhile, poor health, escalating health insurance premiums and spiraling health care costs impair our economy and job creation in the U.S.

PDA has endorsed HR 676, the National Health Insurance/"Expanded and Improved Medicare-for-All" Act. To guarantee comprehensive health care for all, PDA supports the replacement of the current profit-driven system, publicly financed, privately provided health care program. This "Medicare for All" national plan would save more than \$350 billion per year, enough new money to provide guaranteed comprehensive health care for all. This system would insure portable and uniform benefits regardless of income. With no deductibles or co-pays, this plan would encourage preventive care and restore a doctor and patient controlled health care system affording choice of providers and fair, publicly negotiated payment for both treatment and medication.

**What is your approach to the health care crisis? We must find a fair & sensible way to deliver quality care to all our citizens. Part of that effort absolutely MUST be to convince people that a good portion of their health responsibility falls to them with regards to their own changes for a healthier lifestyle. There is a direct correlation between the lack of any physical education in schools and the size and weight of those who matriculated after physical education was abandoned from nearly all school curriculums. We're now paying a great price in the form of substantial extra health costs.**

**What is your view of Guaranteed Health Care through an Expanded and Improved Medicare-for-All system? I find it an interesting concept and worth serious study. I believe the Canadian system is effective (regardless of right-wing media say about it) and that it is worth researching. On the other hand, I do have a concern that its size might become unwieldy and an easy mark for corruption.**

**If elected, would you support a publicly financed, privately provided national health care program, which insures access to comprehensive health care for all in the U.S.? Yes.**

**Would you support a not-for-profit, doctor-patient controlled system which would eliminate the private health insurance industry (with protection for eliminated workers) as**

the intermediary determining access and the level of care? **Maybe. I'd have to be convinced that such a system would be in the best interests of patients, doctors, hospitals, pharmaceutical companies, etc. I believe strongly in incentives and initiative. I'm not certain it is realistic to expect to change what we have by creating a new system that doesn't reward hard work and effort, skill, and creativity.**

Would you support the government's ability to negotiate fair prices for treatment as well as drugs, as it does for those covered by the Veteran's Administration's plan? **Yes. Absolutely**

### **3) Economic Justice:**

The current generation has seen unprecedented levels of economic disparity, both among individuals (the richest 1% of Americans own almost 35% of all wealth; the bottom half, only 2.5%) and in the ratio of CEO pay to employee wages. Thirty-seven million people (equal to the population of California) are living in poverty in the U.S. These immoral levels of poverty, which disproportionate impact communities of color and women, can be significantly reduced through concerned legislative effort - including a living wage for all workers, expanded earned income tax credits, childcare assistance and housing vouchers. Specifically, the federal government must fulfill its promise of resources to Hurricane Katrina survivors so they can return to rebuild their communities in the Gulf Coast.

Tax burdens on the middle class can be eased if the wealthy pay their share. In addition to working to roll back Bush's tax breaks for the wealthy, PDA endorses the Equity in Income Act, limiting the amount of CEO compensation afforded federal corporate tax deductions. In emphatically supporting the workers' right to organize, we also endorse the Employee Free Choice Act, which establishes unions in any workplace where a majority of workers sign union cards to join. In the global arena, PDA supports anti-sweatshop legislation and fair trade agreements which protect workers' rights as well as the environment, while opposing wage-reducing "free trade" agreements that protect only corporate rights to exploit unprotected labor. PDA also advocates for humane and comprehensive immigration reform, which insures a fair, attainable path to citizenship and the rights of undocumented workers in the workplace, affirming the dignity and integrity of immigrant families.

What is your position on "Fair Trade" versus "Free Trade" agreements? **Free trade is exploitive and cannot be sustained. We absolutely MUST operate on a Fair Trade basis.**

Will you have pledge to reverse the tax cuts on the wealthiest Americans? **Yes.**

Do you support the right of workers to organize, in any situation? **Yes...but in a right-to-work circumstance. Above all else we Americans cherish personal freedom. I am against legislation that allows a union or municipality to force union enrollment.**

What is your relationship to labor nationally and in your district **I have spoken before my**

local Labor Council and feel confident I will gain their endorsement.

**Do you have union endorsements and supporters in your district? Having requested the required questionnaires and interviews, I do expect to be selected for endorsement.**

**What is your approach to bringing communities "out of poverty"? Scholastic education, including mentoring (as presently coordinated by Communities-In-Schools); proper sex education; address tendency of communities of color to become "convenient" location in which to dump toxic waste or locate polluting industries; work to establish wage levels that are truly "living" wages. (No one in this country who works at full-time employment should be living below poverty levels); find effective method to deal with child care so single mothers can be productive in the workplace.**

**Would you support the legislation of the "out of poverty" caucus? Yes. In fact that would be a fulfilling caucus on which to serve.**

**What efforts would you support to provide meaningful resources to Katrina survivors? I am embarrassed by the way FEMA handled this disaster. But I am well aware that there are logical limits to rebuilding anywhere and everywhere. I believe the geographic location of New Orleans is problematic and that it will always be at risk, even if the levies are raised to 70' or 100'. We should not be rebuilding, or encouraging rebuilding, if the land on which we are doing that is or will be at risk of flooding.**

**Do you support comprehensive and humane immigration reform as outlined above? Yes. Absolutely.**

Have you reached out to immigrant communities and advocates in your district? **Yes.**

#### **4) Clean, Fair, Transparent Elections:**

The U.S. election system is in crisis. Not only are the usual corrupting factors of money and corporate lobbying as rampant as perhaps at any time in U.S. history, but the new millennium – along with the fallout from the contested 2000 election - have ushered in a qualitative change in the conduct of our elections: Centuries of tradition in which citizens, government officials and Party representatives oversaw physical evidence of voter intent have fallen to the rise of the machines. This sea change, from paper to ephemeral electrons, brings much more than the implicit demand to trust the invisible: the move to computers means that 85% of America has ceded control of its elections to third-party vendors, whose legal claims regarding proprietary software bring corporate control of the entire voting process. PDA thus supports federal legislation that would ban the use of touch-screen ("DRE") voting machines.

**Will you pledge, if elected, to support only voting methods in which ballots are cast on paper? Absolutely!**

**Do you pledge to support “Clean Money” public financing of public elections? **Yes. Absolutely!****

**Would you accept public financing for your current campaign? **Yes. We will never have fair elections until private and corporate money is removed from the process.****

**Do you support the restoration of voting rights to past felony offenders? **Yes, under some sensible condition. I don't believe a convicted felon who has paid for his/her criminal activity should be denied a franchise to vote for the remainder of his/her life.****

**Do you support same-day voting registration? **Yes. Absolutely.****

**Would you oppose the onerous requirement of official photo identification before affording citizens access to the polls? **Yes.****

### **5) Environment/ Global Warming:**

No issue reveals more clearly the flaws of the U.S. political-economic system than global warming - the dominance of greed and corporate power over the public good, and the near-sighted focus on the short-term over the welfare of future generations. It is known that the U.S. has the natural resources to power the entire country solely from clean, “alternative” sources of power- whether with solar cells that would require a miniscule fraction of the California desert, or from wind turbines on the Great Plains and in the Great Lakes. It has also often been said that we need a new Apollo Program for clean energy (if not Manhattan Project), in which science, industry and government would cooperate on a crash course to produce novel results in a limited period. Immediate action would include raising the auto fuel economy and impose mandatory caps on carbon pollution while investing in public transportation, energy conservation technologies and alternative energy development--in the process, creating new jobs which pay well. .

PDA calls on the Democratic majority in Congress to lead boldly in reducing our country's oil dependence and use of fossil fuels.

**Will you pledge to take an uncompromising leadership role on legislation to enact the enormous changes and sacrifices that will be required to stem Global Warming? **Yes. Without question and without reservation.****

**Will you pledge to enact an Apollo Program for clean energy? **Yes. It is a great idea, and coalitions are the best way to drive these sorts of change.****

**What kind of personal vehicle do you currently drive? Is it rated ZEV, or PZEV? **I have driven a Prius since 2005.****

## **Finance:**

Please estimate your campaign costs: [Whatever it takes to win!](#)

The incumbent spent \$ 1.2 million in 2006 against an unknown who took 33% of the votes with a budget of \$ 9,700. By 4<sup>th</sup> quarter 2007 we surpassed the latter figure by a multiple of 6. The protracted and expensive Democratic presidential primary competition has absorbed funding and media interest which otherwise would have come to a congressional campaign in the most populous district in North and South Carolina. Consequently we are running a very sophisticated grassroots campaign. We build on the more than 20,000 emails, letters, phone calls and personal contacts I received after my April 6, 2006, confrontation with George Bush in Charlotte. Details are on video at: [www.harrytaylorforcongress.com](http://www.harrytaylorforcongress.com) What we spend in the primary election is a function of revenues from April fundraising events.

Primary Election: \_\_\_\_\_ General Election: \_\_\_\_\_

How much money have you raised to date? [\\$60,000 as of 12/31/07](#) \_\_\_\_\_

Please list independent expenditures that may impact your race:

[527's like the Swift Boat critics of John Kerry in 2004](#)  
[Republican National Committee trying to protect a sure "Bush" vote \(Rep. Sue Myrick\)](#)  
[Climate change/global warming disbelievers](#)  
[Proponents of war with Iran](#)  
[Proponents of endless war of occupation in Iraq](#)  
[National Right to Life Committee](#)  
[Gun Owners of America](#)  
[NC Family Policy Council](#)  
[Operation Rescue](#)  
[And more](#)

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For *Creative Loafing's* analysis see:

[http://charlotte.creativeloafing.com/gyrobase/is\\_it\\_harry\\_taylor\\_s\\_moment\\_/Content?oid=281489](http://charlotte.creativeloafing.com/gyrobase/is_it_harry_taylor_s_moment_/Content?oid=281489)

For the youtube clip of Harry Taylor's confrontation with George Bush:  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SnOFri7fRDU>

For *Creative Loafing* Best of Charlotte Local Hero Harry Taylor  
<http://charlotte.creativeloafing.com/gyrobase/Content?oid=oid%3A182128>