

FROM THE OFFICE OF
BARTLETT FOR ND SENATE

**North Dakota Public Employees Association
American Federation of Teachers, Local 4660**

2008 Committee on Political Education Legislative Survey - Responses

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ND PEA

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Dear North Dakota Public Employees Association,

I was a North Dakota public employee as a graduate student and then faculty from 1986 to 2004, while teaching and researching engineering topics at North Dakota State University.

GOVERNMENT

What is your vision for North Dakota and how do you view the state in the next ten years? My vision for the North Dakota is for the State to gradually return to acting like a free and independent state based on the Tenth Amendment, rather than a subsidiary of a federal government, which as Karl Marx envisioned is inefficiently confiscating and redistributing the wealth of individuals. This would return the free-market to agriculture, medicine, education and more. With the return to a free-market economy, North Dakota would see the countryside repopulated with small farms and businesses which have disappeared as a result of laws protecting corporate monopolies and ruining small farms, businesses, and families, along with the moral climate.

Historically, government has provided services that are not profitable but that are necessary in a civilized world. What do you believe is the proper role of North Dakota government?

The role of North Dakota civil government should be limited to protecting people from bad people and bad government, and executing judgment upon those doing evil.

North Dakota's economy is robust; however, North Dakotans are still struggling to make ends meet. North Dakotans may be facing measures on the ballot in November 2008 that will decrease the State's funding. Do you support a tax policy that adequately funds government at a level necessary to provide the quality services for the citizens of North Dakota and if so, please describe the policy.

I support adequately funding a very limited civil government, such that the total tax cost of government (federal plus state plus local) costs less than 10% of a person's income through a sales tax. Otherwise, the government is usurping the roles of God, the church and the family with, disastrous consequences on the pocketbooks and morals of our State.

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

NDPEA believes the public employees should be subject to the same collective bargaining laws as employees in the private sector. Across the country, private sector workers, federal employees and public employees in 38 states including Montana, Minnesota and South Dakota can engage in meaningful quality improvement initiatives because of established collective bargaining laws.

North Dakota's public employees should be free to decide to have collective bargaining for the purpose of negotiating a contract.

I strongly agree that people should be free to contract individually or by voluntary groups. The employer likewise needs to be free to reject any contract they desire.

COMPENSATION

Cost of Living

In the 2007 Legislative Session, the Legislature approved a salary package for state employees of 4% each year of the biennium and a \$10 million equity pool, which was a step in the right direction. At that time, state pay scales were moved to reflect 95% of the market in an effort to make state hiring more competitive. However, with the state's robust economy, the market has moved dramatically – energy expansion in the West and technology expansion in the East have increased private sector salaries significantly. Consequently, public employees salaries have fallen critically below the market. Employee personal incomes have not kept pace with the rest of the state. The cost to live in North Dakota is comparable to other metropolitan areas. Coupled with increased out-of-pocket health costs, increased fuel prices, rent, day care, and groceries, state employees continue to lose purchasing power.

An across the board salary increase should be implemented for both years of the 2009-2011 biennium, based on the market demands as revealed in the June 30, 2008 Human Resource Management Services Division report to the State Employee Compensation Commission. This report reveals that North Dakota state employee classified salaries are 8-13% behind the average market.

I strongly disagree to an across the board salary increase which places the burden on the taxpayer. A tax burden that could become extreme and cause more property to be confiscated by the government due to our immorally planned unconstitutional Federal Reserve currency. If our money was still backed by gold and silver, we would not have a cost of living increase. There is, therefore, constitutional authority for the ND Legislature to stop inflation by acting like a state (Tenth Amendment) and using a North Dakota currency. There are thousands of local currencies now in operation in the United States, so that is not new, only doing it statewide may be new.

I strongly support using this opportunity to decrease the size of government for the sake of freedom and appropriately paying the government employees involved in protecting people from bad people and bad government and executing judgment upon those doing evil. All other services are an outgrowth of the humanism and Marxism philosophies where big government is the goal to manage a dumbed down mass of people. Please read "The Deliberate Dumbing Down of America" by Charlotte Iserbyt for legal evidence of this point.

Recruitment, Retention, Turnover & Outmigration

1. The 2008 Human Resource Management Services (HRMS) Division June 30, 2008 report shows:

a. That the State is experiencing turnover at a rate of 23% for employees with less than one year of service.; and

b. That State salaries are 8-13% behind the average market.

2. The Office of Management and Budget reported to the Budget Section on June 19, 2008, that the state's ability to attract employees is a number one concern going into the 2009 Legislative Session.

3. NDPEA strongly believes that unless we increase public employee salaries to a level that is competitive with the market, we will fail to effectively recruit and retain quality state employees.

I strongly disagree that base salary and salary equity is a priority for the 2009 legislature. The priority should be on implementing a money system in North Dakota that does not lose value at the rate of inflation, now at about 16%. Couple this with the rightsizing of government intrusion into the lives of North Dakotans and we would have a population in-migration explosion.

I strongly disagree with encouraging the growth of government by enticing pay scales. Downsizing government and paying less than the market is entirely appropriate toward limiting the growth and burden of non-producing government. People who are gifted and have a heart to work in government will rise to the task without financial incentive. To think that the financial is the driver is to echo the thoughts of Karl Marx with respect to class differences.

I will strongly oppose the idea of addressing salary inequities, both on the basis that employees have agreed to their respective salaries and because this will delay addressing the root problems of inflationary money and an overgrown government. Employees are already free individually and by group to negotiate for a new contract.

BENEFITS

Health Insurance

- 1. Health care costs continue to increase at rates greater than the Consumer Price Index (CPI) and there is not evidence that state employees are over-using their current health insurance plan.**
- 2. State employees have absorbed these escalating costs by paying increased out-of-pocket expenses (deductibles, co-insurance and co-pays).**
- 3. These spiraling health care costs continue to erode the wages of state employees. According to the 2008 Central States Compensation Association 10-State Health Premiums survey data, North Dakota's health insurance premium is lower than the average premium paid in the ten-state region.**
- 4. In past Legislative Sessions, some legislators have considered ways to further shift the cost of the insurance to the employees through Health Savings Accounts and high deductible health care plans. NDPEA opposes any further shifting of costs to the employees. NDPEA also opposes the establishment of Health Savings Accounts and high deductible health care plans.**

I understand the in-the-box reasoning of the NDPEA, but strongly disagree with their position. The employees should have the freedom to spend their money where they desire and not have the state managing their health affairs. Neither should the NDPEA support the health care monopoly by restricting the use of employee earned health care dollars to allopathic medicine via a given insurance plan.

I will strongly oppose the currently fully funded health insurance plan for state employees that will continue the current-cost sharing agreement between the state employees and the state. People need to take responsibility for their own health care. Give them their money and let them choose on the free market where to spend their health care money, which would significantly increase their salaries and motivate them to stay healthy and learn more about the health care alternatives.

Retirement

1. The North Dakota Public Employees Retirement System (NDPERS) has developed an excellent retirement program that meets the needs of the short-term and long-term employees, balances the needs of employees and retirees, and provides for a secure retirement. There has been a movement to change from the secured defined benefit retirement to a stand alone defined contribution program, robbing public employees of their earned benefits. NDPEA has opposed and continues to oppose such a change.

I will strongly encourage legislation that gives each employee the freedom to choose where they put their retirement money such that they can have full access and control of their own money and don't get trapped into the NDPERS age 55 access limitation.

2. Since 2001, there have been no percentage increases for the PERS for Highway Patrol retirees. Although retirees have received a one time payment as passed last Legislative Session, these payments do not provide the long term inflation adjusted benefit increase necessary to help maintain the value of a retirement income over time.

I will work toward eliminating inflation through a North Dakota currency based on gold and silver, which is better than continually adjusting for inevitable inflation. If hyperinflation comes to the United States, like in Argentina and other countries, the dollar would become worthless and retirement promises could not be kept. The real solution is to address the inflation.

3. The 1989 Legislature started the Retiree Health Credit Program. The purpose of the program is to help PERS retirees in purchasing health insurance coverage from PERS. It was recognized at the time that the cost of health insurance was becoming increasingly unaffordable for many retirees. The retiree health care credit has diminished in value throughout the years and has not kept up with the rising health care premium costs.

I strongly disagree with supporting legislation to increase the retiree health credit. This is motivated by the health care monopoly and pharmaceutical industry to make money. The state should not be supporting this monopoly, but protecting its people by keeping the promises already made and addressing the root problem of inflation with a North Dakota currency and opening up the free market in medicine which would significantly lower costs and increase quality, as with all other products.

PRIVATIZATION/CONTRACTING OUT

1. Decisions to contract public sector services should be open to public debate through the legislative process.

I strongly agree with having open discussion, but contracting out leads to a government controlled by contractors and not the people.

2. Do you support public agencies being required to clearly demonstrate long-term financial savings to ensure quality of services to the state and its citizens, and guarantee wages and benefits at industry levels that do not undercut state employee compensation and benefit rates, before privatizing public sector services?

I strongly disagree with government by contract. The government's limited role should not be contracted out to corporations with a profit motive as compared to protecting the people role of civil government. I also strongly disagree with the government obstruction of free market prices and wages.

EMPLOYEE RIGHTS

1. Would you support legislation that provides greater protection for whistleblowers and empower the Attorney General's office to enforce such laws?

Laws should protect everyone the same and not favor state employees. Employers also need the freedom to fire people they don't like for any reason. The whistle blower can already talk to the media and police as appropriate to expose evil anywhere. They are already protected against violence, for example, by laws against violent crimes.

2. NDPEA is a strong advocate for all public employees and works diligently to improve work environments. In an effort to better represent public employees and in promoting positive relationships between employees and employers, release time for public employees is necessary. Would you support legislation that permits paid time off for an employee to work on issues that will strengthen relationships between employees and employers?

No, state employees should not be paid for playing golf! If people are not working they should not be paid, unless contracted for some benefit through free market negotiations. Learning to get along with others is something taught in the home and church, therefore no taxpayer support is needed.

Do you support an employee's right to have representation to resolve issues at work, i.e., meeting between the employee and employer?

As long as it is paid for by the employee and not the taxpayer and the employer rights are not infringed.

HIGHER EDUCATION

General

1. What is the role of higher education in North Dakota and how should that role be achieved?

The role of public higher education in North Dakota is defined by the ND Constitution in Article VIII, which is basically to secure “a high degree of intelligence, patriotism, integrity and morality...”

Fundamentally, the state control of education tends to create a communist state; in fact the state control of education is a plank of the Communist Manifesto, written by Karl Mark in 1848 toward undermining capitalism in the United States.

A careful examination of the results of public education in terms of intelligence, patriotism, integrity and morality is proof positive that the state should not be in control of education. Read the North Dakota Health Risk Survey Results to learn how 40% of the students are on drugs, immoral and 15% suicidal. The colleges are worse. This is the natural result of the state control of education where the source of morals (God and creation truth) is excluded from the dialog.

Private higher education should be the norm and totally free from state control and allowed to operate on the free market.

2. The North Dakota University System is likely to experience significant increases in operational and instructional costs during the next biennium. How do you think the Legislature should deal with those increasing costs?

- a. By raising tuition and fee payments.**
- b. By increasing the general fund appropriation to cover the costs.**
- c. Some other approach.**
- d. A combination of a, b, and c.**

Begin privatizing the university system for efficient and better results. The current university system is a failure at educating students to “a high degree of intelligence, patriotism, integrity and morality...” These Constitutional priorities designated by the people of North Dakota are not known or measured in the state colleges, which are well known for promoting Marxist ideas, which are very anti-American. I taught engineering at NDSU for 17 years and have the details.

3. What kind of strategy do you think you would support in dealing with rising costs in higher education?

Privatizing all higher education would return money to taxpayers who would then be able to create more businesses and educational opportunities based on supply and demand. The current system is a monopoly by law which increases costs while lowering quality compared to a free market product under more scrutiny by the buyer.

4. Part-time faculty should deliver no more than 30% of the credit hours at our North Dakota institutions?

I strongly disagree. Faculty employees should be free to negotiate with their employer for any mutually agreeable arrangements, not controlled by the state. (Ref. Communist Manifesto

http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/treatise/communist_manifesto/mancont.htm)

To undermine capitalism Karl Marx wanted

“Free education for all children in public schools...Combination of education with industrial production...Centralisation of credit in the hands of the State, by means of a national bank with State capital and an exclusive monopoly... Centralisation of the means of communication and transport in the hands of the State... Extension of factories and instruments of production owned by the State; the bringing into cultivation of waste-lands, and the improvement of the soil generally in accordance with a common plan.”

These or similar ideas are taught or caught through the public and higher education systems of the state of North Dakota, and are fundamentally against American liberty, justice, and the pursuit of happiness and free enterprise. For the state to control by law how many hours part-time faculty teach only pleases those who favor the government control of everything?

5. Since the 2001-03 Biennium, funding for the NDUS has fallen from 21.0% to 19.2% of the General Fund Appropriations. Considering the positive impact the NDUS has on the overall state economy, the increased cost to the students to attend higher education, and increased operational costs, do you support raising the NDUS funding back to 21% of the state’s General Fund Appropriation? Please explain.

No. The funding for the NDUS should gradually be brought to 0% of the state budget and the laws should not limit the growth of the free market in higher education, as they do now. Creativity is currently being stifled in private higher education development to guard the NDUS from competition. For example, it is currently illegal in ND to name a new institution of higher education “college” or “university” without being accredited by an organization approved by the Department of Education, which does not genuinely insure “quality.” This is not the case in Montana. When presenting a college alternative to ND Board for Career and Technical Education in 2004, I was told that I could not do it in North Dakota but could move to Montana to create the creative university concept.

Compensation

Will you support salary and benefit increases for higher education faculty and staff as part of a general effort to bring North Dakota higher education salaries and benefits in line with regional and national standards?

No. I will support the movement toward totally private higher education in North Dakota in order to save taxpayers both the financial burden of paying for higher education and the philosophical burden that has demoralized the culture.

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