

WHERE THE CANDIDATES STAND ON IMPORTANT ISSUES

GEORGE W. BUSH

JOHN F. KERRY

BUSH

NATIONAL SECURITY

KERRY

- ★ In response to the tragic events of September 11, 2001, the Bush administration established the Department of Homeland Security, which brings together key governmental agencies and offices with the goal of providing a united front against terrorism.
- ★ The President also signed into law the USA Patriot Act, which gives U.S. law enforcement more tools to prevent terrorist attacks.
- ★ President Bush backs the 9/11 Commission's recommendation to create a national intelligence director who would serve as his top adviser on combating terrorism.
- ★ He has also announced that he will establish a National Counterterrorism Center to strengthen the country's ability to fight the war on terror.

- ★ Kerry vows to strengthen America's military by adding 40,000 troops to the Army, doubling U.S. Special Forces, and modernizing military technology.
- ★ At home, he will provide "first responders," such as firefighters, with the necessary tools to protect the U.S.
- ★ Kerry also promises to beef up security at sites vulnerable to terrorist attacks, such as nuclear plants and trains. He and running mate John Edwards vow to make U.S. ports, borders, and airports more secure without violating Americans' personal liberties.
- ★ Kerry supports the creation of a new post for a national intelligence director.
- ★ Kerry will build a coalition of powerful allies to help strike down global terrorists.

BUSH

THE ECONOMY

KERRY

- ★ During his first term as President, George W. Bush passed three tax cuts, driven by the belief that the U.S. economy will grow if Americans have more money in their pockets to spend and invest.
- ★ In 2003, he passed the Jobs and Growth Act, providing states with \$20 billion in aid to create more jobs.
- ★ If re-elected, he has promised to provide an additional \$500 million—this time, for Jobs for the 21st Century, an initiative aimed at helping educate and train highly skilled workers in schools and community colleges.
- ★ By exercising fiscal discipline and reducing waste, the President promises to cut the national deficit in half over the next five years.

- ★ Kerry's plan for a stronger U.S. economy begins with a pledge to create 10 million new jobs.
- ★ In addition to adding new jobs and investing in new technology, he would raise the minimum wage to \$7 an hour.
- ★ Kerry promises to exercise fiscal responsibility and cut the federal deficit in half during his first four years in office.
- ★ Kerry says he will reward businesses that create jobs in the U.S., instead of sending jobs overseas, with tax cuts.
- ★ Kerry has assured voters that he will cut taxes for 98 percent of all Americans, while rolling back President Bush's tax cuts for the country's wealthiest citizens.

BUSH

HEALTH CARE

KERRY

- ★ During his first term as President, Bush created a Medicare Prescription Drug Benefit to help senior citizens pay for much-needed medicines.
- ★ He also promised to establish or expand 1,200 community health care centers to serve millions more Americans by 2006.
- ★ Future health care reform plans include the Cover the Kids campaign, which will aim to provide many more American children with affordable, quality health care.
- ★ President Bush has also proposed allowing Americans to shop across state lines for health insurance so that they may find the best rates available.

- ★ Kerry believes high-quality health care is vital to keeping American families healthy, and necessary for keeping the nation strong. Under the Kerry health care plan, 95 percent of Americans—including all children—will have access to the same affordable health care that members of Congress currently enjoy.
- ★ The Kerry plan also calls for a reduction in the cost of family health care insurance premiums—up to \$1,000 per family each year. In an effort to reduce the cost of medicine for Americans, Kerry supports allowing safe prescription drugs to be imported to the U.S. from Canada.

BUSH

EDUCATION

KERRY

- ★ In his first year in office, Bush passed the No Child Left Behind Act. The new law focused on improving the performance of America's schools. It also provides students in failing schools with the opportunity to attend better public schools.
- ★ If re-elected, the President has promised to build on the success of the NCLB Act.
- ★ Other proposed educational reforms include providing states with \$250 million per year to broaden their ability to measure students' reading and math skills.
- ★ Bush has also said he is committed to expanding financial aid to help more students afford college.

- ★ As President, Kerry vows to create a National Education Trust Fund to ensure that American schools receive the funding they need.
- ★ Under his educational plan, more teachers will be hired, class sizes will be reduced, and preschool opportunities and after-school programs will be expanded.
- ★ The Kerry plan will also provide billions of dollars to repair, construct, and modernize America's school facilities.
- ★ Kerry's educational reforms also target college students by offering them a tax credit on up to \$4,000 of tuition per year.

BUSH

THE ENVIRONMENT

KERRY

- ★ To lessen U.S. dependence on foreign oil, President Bush has proposed drilling for oil in 1 percent of Alaska's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, which his administration claims could produce 1 billion barrels of oil a day for nearly 20 years.
- ★ If re-elected, he is committed to seeing the passage of the Clean Skies Initiative, which is aimed at reducing dangerous power plant emissions.
- ★ Bush has pledged to provide record funds over the next decade to protect America's precious water supplies and lands.
- ★ He has also vowed to update America's electricity grid in an effort to avoid a recurrence of last year's blackout, which affected 50 million Americans.

- ★ Kerry vows to clean up contaminated industrial sites, ridding American communities of dangerous toxins that pollute the nation's waters and skies.
- ★ If elected President, Kerry says he will pass a Conservation Covenant with America to protect the country's environmental treasures, including its public lands and national parks.
- ★ He has also promised to work with states to protect wetlands, oceans, and local coastal communities.
- ★ Unlike Bush, Kerry opposes drilling for oil in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. Instead, he pledges to free America from its dependence on oil by developing clean, renewable fuel sources, such as ethanol.