

# 2012

## **PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION SCORECARD**



# INTRODUCTION

In November, voters will have the opportunity to select the person who will lead our nation for the next four years. This choice will have a profound impact on many areas of all of our lives, including the role of religion in government. In recent years, secular values have been under constant attack by religious leaders and political candidates. With the secular character of our nation's government being consistently threatened, voters must be aware of the positions of their elected leaders to better inform their decision at the ballot box. In addition to secular voters, a strong majority of Americans in general want a separation between religion and government: 54% of Americans believe that churches other houses of worship should keep out of political matters and 66% say that churches and houses of worship should not endorse candidates.

To that end, the Secular Coalition for America presents the 2012 Presidential Election Scorecard which scores the positions of the candidates for the office of President of the United States in five areas and on 17 specific issues. The candidates who appear on the Secular Coalition for America's scorecard are those who appear on the ballot in enough states to amass the required 270 electoral votes to be elected President of the United States.

# THE CANDIDATES



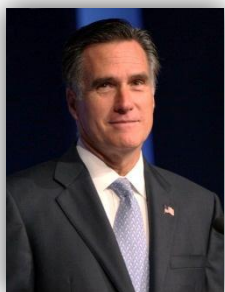
## **Gary Johnson**

Libertarian Party  
Former Governor of New Mexico  
[www.garyjohnson2012.com](http://www.garyjohnson2012.com)



## **Barack Obama**

Democratic Party  
President of the United States  
[www.barackobama.com](http://www.barackobama.com)



## **Mitt Romney**

Republican Party  
Former Governor of Massachusetts  
[www.mittromney.com](http://www.mittromney.com)



## **Jill Stein**

Green Party  
Physician  
[www.jillstein.org](http://www.jillstein.org)

# METHODOLOGY

Candidates were graded only on questions for which the Secular Coalition was able to identify the candidates' position—either through statements or previous actions. For each response, the candidates were given a grade of A, B, C or F based on the following metric:

- A:** Candidate's remarks and/or actions have consistently agreed with the positions of the Secular Coalition for America.
- B:** Candidate's remarks and/or actions have occasionally agreed with or been neutral with respect to the positions of the Secular Coalition for America.
- C:** Candidate's remarks and/or actions have been mixed, with both agreement and disagreement with the positions of the Secular Coalition for America.
- F:** Candidate's remarks and/or actions have consistently disagreed with the positions of the Secular Coalition for America.
- N/A:** The Secular Coalition for America was unable to identify the candidate's position on the topic.

To calculate the section and final grades for the candidates, grades were assigned a point value as follows: an "A" earned the candidate 3 points; a "B" earned the candidate 2 points; a "C" earned the candidate 1 point; an "F" earned the candidate 0 points; and a N/A was not included in the scoring of the section or the final grade.

To calculate the average grade for each section and the overall grade, the following scale was used:

- A** 3.00 – 2.26
- B** 2.25 – 1.51
- C** 1.50 – 0.76
- F** 0.75 – 0.00

# THE SCORECARD

<b>Government and Values</b>	<b><u>Johnson</u></b>	<b><u>Obama</u></b>	<b><u>Romney</u></b>	<b><u>Stein</u></b>
1. Recognition of the U.S. as a secular nation	B	A	F	N/A
2. Recognition religion not necessary for morality	N/A	B	C	N/A
3. Separation of church and state	A	A	F	A
4. Role of religion in decision making as president	A	F	F	A
5. Definition of religious freedom	A	N/A	C	A
6. Willingness to appoint a nontheist	A	N/A	A	N/A
<b>Section Average:</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>A</b>

<b>Health and Safety</b>				
1. Protecting religious refusal laws	N/A	B	F	N/A
2. Exemptions from generally applicable law for religious institutions/individuals	N/A	B	F	A
3. Use of religious beliefs to determine public health care policy	N/A	A	F	N/A
<b>Section Average:</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>A**</b>

<b>Education</b>				
1. Support of science-based public school curriculums	F	A	A	A*
2. Support of abstinence-only sex education in public schools	F	C	F	A*
<b>Section Average:</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>A**</b>

<b>Government Funding</b>				
1. Stance on faith-based initiatives	A	C	F	A
2. Discrimination by religious organizations receiving taxpayer funding	N/A	F	F	N/A
<b>Section Average:</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>A</b>

<b>Government Acts</b>				
1. Government participation and support of the Boy Scouts of America	N/A	C	C	N/A
2. Support of "Under God" in the Pledge of Allegiance and "In God We Trust" as the National Motto	N/A	F	F	N/A
3. Government participation in the "National Prayer Breakfast" and the "National Day of Prayer" as a government-endorsed day of observance	F	F	F	N/A
4. Opening public events with prayer and religious symbols on government property	A	N/A	F	N/A
<b>Section Average:</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>N/A</b>

<b>FINAL GRADES</b>	<b><u>Johnson</u></b> <b>B</b>	<b><u>Obama</u></b> <b>C</b>	<b><u>Romney</u></b> <b>F</b>	<b><u>Stein</u></b> <b>Inc.**</b>
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\* Indicates the Secular Coalition was able to compile an incomplete answer for the given question.

\*\* Indicates that the Secular Coalition was able to compile answers for fewer than half of the questions and that the averaged grade is incomplete.

# INDIVIDUAL RESPONSES

## I. Government and Values

	Johnson	Obama	Romney	Stein
1. Recognition of the U.S. as a secular nation	B	A	F	N/A
2. Recognition religion not necessary for morality	N/A	B	C	N/A
3. Separation of church and state	A	A	F	A
4. Role of religion in decision making as president	A	F	F	A
5. Definition of religious freedom	A	N/A	C	A
6. Willingness to appoint a nontheist	A	N/A	A	N/A
<b>Section Average:</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>A</b>

### 1. Does the candidate view America as a Christian nation, a secular nation or neither?

- **Johnson:** Question from interviewer: "If you were to be elected President would you use your bully pulpit to talk about true freedom of religion being through pluralism and that we should let everyone else follow their own faiths rather than trying to convert them?" Johnson: "Yes and I believe that I have lived my life that way I'm not stepping out differently from the way that I have lived my life."<sup>1</sup>
- **Obama:** "Whatever we once were, we are no longer just a Christian nation; we are also a Jewish nation, a Muslim nation, a Buddhist nation, a Hindu nation, and a nation of nonbelievers. And even if we did have only Christians in our midst, if we expelled every non-Christian from the United States of America, whose Christianity would we teach in the schools? Would we go with James Dobson's, or Al Sharpton's? Which passages of Scripture should guide our public policy?"<sup>2</sup>
- **Romney:** "In some circles, the bias against believers is pronounced. There are some people who would like to establish a religion of secularism in this country to replace all others."<sup>3</sup> "From the beginning this nation trusted in God, not man. Religious liberty is the first freedom in our Bill of Rights."<sup>4</sup> "But the, the founders of the nation, coming from different faiths and different persuasions, nonetheless all believed that the, the creator was an instrumental part of the founding of this nation."<sup>5</sup>
- **Stein:** N/A

<sup>1</sup> "Johnson Interview," *Patheos*, 12 October 2011,

<http://www.patheos.com/blogs/paganswithdisabilities/2011/10/full-transcript-of-qa-with-presidential-candidate-gary-johnson/>

<sup>2</sup> Barack Obama, "Call to Renewal" Speech, 28 June 2006, <http://obamaspeeches.com/081-Call-to-Renewal-Keynote-Address-Obama-Speech.htm>

<sup>3</sup> "Latter-Day Politics", *Christianity Today*, 26 September 2007, <http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2007/september/34.74.html>

<sup>4</sup> "Faith in America," *Cathedral Age*, Midsummer 2012, <http://support.nationalcathedral.org/wnc/interview/>

<sup>5</sup> Mitt Romney, Transcript, *Meet the Press*, 16 December 2007, [http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/22273924/ns/meet\\_the\\_press/t/meet-press-transcript-dec/#.TuJozvK0tog](http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/22273924/ns/meet_the_press/t/meet-press-transcript-dec/#.TuJozvK0tog)

2. Does the candidate believe that either a belief in God or an affiliation with religion is a necessary precursor for morality?

- **Johnson:** N/A
- **Obama:** "...I do not believe that religious people have a monopoly on morality, I would rather have someone who is grounded in morality and ethics, and who is also secular, affirm their morality and ethics and values without pretending that they're something they're not. They don't need to do that. None of us need to do that."<sup>6</sup> "Faith has always provided a moral framework and vocabulary for this country to come to terms with its most pressing challenges. One of the great things about this nation is that it is a place where people from all walks of life can advocate on behalf of their faith and beliefs and be open about what drives and motivates them." And in the same interview, said, "I think it is important that we not make faith alone a barometer of a person's worth, value, or character."<sup>7</sup>
- **Romney:** In a 2007 Meet the Press interview, Romney said he does believe atheists can be moral. TIM RUSSERT: "But when you say freedom requires religion, can you be a moral person and be an atheist?" ROMNEY: "Oh, oh, of course [...] on an individual basis, you have many individuals of great morality and—that, that don't have any particular faith."<sup>8</sup> "And whether the cause is justice for the persecuted, compassion for the needy and the sick, or mercy for the child waiting to be born, there is no greater force for good in the nation than Christian conscience in action."<sup>9</sup>
- **Stein:** N/A

3. Does the candidate support a mutual separation between religion and government?

- **Johnson:** Responding to a question on how he would represent minority religions, asked by a Pagan interviewer he responded, "... there should be a separation of church and state ... I happen to think that the world kind of looks down on Republicans for their social conservative views which include religion in government. I think that that should not play a role in any of this. And you know when Republicans talk about values .. you know what I bet you and I have the same values."<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Barack Obama, "Call to Renewal" Speech, 28 June 2006, <http://obamaspeeches.com/081-Call-to-Renewal-Keynote-Address-Obama-Speech.htm>

<sup>7</sup> "Faith in America," *Cathedral Age*, Midsummer 2012, <http://support.nationalcathedral.org/wnc/interview/>

<sup>8</sup> Mitt Romney, *Meet the Press*, 16 December 2007, [http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/22273924/ns/meet\\_the\\_press/t/meet-press-transcript-dec/#.TuJozvK0tog](http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/22273924/ns/meet_the_press/t/meet-press-transcript-dec/#.TuJozvK0tog)

<sup>9</sup> "Faith in America," *Cathedral Age*, Midsummer 2012, <http://support.nationalcathedral.org/wnc/interview/>

<sup>10</sup> Gary Johnson Interview, *Patheos*, 18 October 2011, <http://www.patheos.com/blogs/paganswithdisabilities/2011/10/full-transcript-of-ga-with-presidential-candidate-gary-johnson/>

- **Obama:** "Democracy demands that the religiously motivated translate their concerns into universal, rather than religion-specific, values. It requires that their proposals be subject to argument, and amenable to reason. I may be opposed to abortion for religious reasons, but if I seek to pass a law banning the practice, I cannot simply point to the teachings of my church or evoke God's will. I have to explain why abortion violates some principle that is accessible to people of all faiths, including those with no faith at all."<sup>11</sup> The constitutional principle of a separation between church and state has served our nation well since our founding— embraced by people of faith and those of no faith at all throughout our history— and it has been paramount in our work."<sup>12</sup>
- **Romney:** "In recent years, the notion of the separation of church and state has been taken by some well beyond its original meaning. They seek to remove from the public domain any acknowledgment of God. Religion is seen as merely a private affair with no place in public life. The Founders proscribed the establishment of a state religion, but they did not countenance the elimination of religion from the public square. We are a nation "Under God," and in God, we do indeed trust."<sup>13</sup>
- **Stein:** "The separation of church and state is inherently a federal issue. It's hard to duck that. That is part of our Constitution ... Government needs to be neutral in order to respect everyone's religion."<sup>14</sup>

#### 4. What role would religion play in the candidate's decision making as President of the United States?

- **Johnson:** "I don't seek the counsel of God," Johnson said. "God doesn't speak to me on what I should or shouldn't do."<sup>15</sup>
- **Obama:** "I have fallen on my knees with great regularity since that moment, asking God for guidance not just in my personal life and my Christian walk, but in the life of this nation and in the values that hold us together and keep us strong."<sup>16</sup>
- **Romney:** "I will also offer perspectives on how my own faith would inform my Presidency, if I were elected. There are some who may feel that religion is not a matter to be seriously considered in the context of the weighty threats that face us. If so, they are at odds with the nation's founders, for they, when our nation faced its greatest peril, sought the blessings of the Creator ... Our constitution was made for a moral and religious people."<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Obama, "Call to Renewal" Speech, June 28, 2006, <http://obamaspeeches.com/081-Call-to-Renewal-Keynote-Address-Obama-Speech.htm>

<sup>12</sup> "Faith in America," *Cathedral Age*, Midsummer 2012, <http://support.nationalcathedral.org/wnc/interview/>

<sup>13</sup> "Faith in America," *Cathedral Age*, Midsummer 2012, <http://support.nationalcathedral.org/wnc/interview/>

<sup>14</sup> Interview with Jill Stein, *OnTheIssues*, 21 December 2011, [http://www.ontheissues.org/2012/jill\\_Stein\\_Education.htm](http://www.ontheissues.org/2012/jill_Stein_Education.htm)

<sup>15</sup> Jamie Weinstein, and Alex Pappas, "10 Things about Libertarian Presidential Candidate Gary Johnson" *The Daily Caller*, 5 April 2012, <http://dailycaller.com/2012/04/05/10-things-about-libertarian-presidential-candidate-gary-johnson/2/>

<sup>16</sup> "President Links Economic Policies With Faith", Obama National Prayer Breakfast Speech, 2 February 2012, [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/02/02/obama-national-prayer-breakfast-speech\\_n\\_1249631.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/02/02/obama-national-prayer-breakfast-speech_n_1249631.html)

<sup>17</sup> Mitt Romney, "Faith in America," speech at Bush Presidential Library, 6 December 2007, [http://www.ontheissues.org/2012/Mitt\\_Romney\\_Principles\\_+ Values.htm](http://www.ontheissues.org/2012/Mitt_Romney_Principles_+ Values.htm)



- **Stein:** "To favor one religion is to inherently favor the others. Government needs to be neutral in order to respect everyone's religion."<sup>18</sup>

## 5. What is the candidate's definition of religious freedom?

- **Johnson:** "I really don't have any church-going friends. I mean, I do have people I associate with that go to church, but I'm going to make the observation that most people don't go to church," Johnson said. "Does that mean they don't have beliefs? No, it doesn't mean they don't have beliefs. They're like me. Those beliefs don't require church to affirm or deny. So I find myself in this very general category of socially liberal and fiscally conservative which includes the notion of tolerance. I think most people fall in that category which is very libertarian. You can do or say whatever you want as long as it doesn't adversely affect my life."<sup>19</sup>
- **Obama:** N/A
- **Romney:** "Romney: Well, I can't imagine a government telling a church who can have Communion in their church. We have a separation of church and state. It's served us well in this country. This is a nation, after all, that wants a leader that's a person of faith, but we don't choose our leader based on which church they go to. This is a nation which also comes together -- we unite over faith and over the right of people to worship as they choose."<sup>20</sup>
- **Stein:** "And the true intrusion upon religious freedom occurs when your employer forces his religious views upon you. Once we begin to use health care programs to enforce religious views, where does it stop? What if your boss belongs to a religion that prohibits blood transfusions, vaccinations, use of alcohol, medical marijuana, or even medical care itself? Can they penalize you by denying health care associated with those things? Our goal should be that every worker have access to the full range of necessary health care services regardless of whether their employer is Catholic or Hindu, Muslim or Jewish, or just prejudiced against them."<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Jill Stein, Interview, *OnTheIssues*, 21 December 2011,

[http://www.ontheissues.org/2012/jill\\_Stein\\_Welfare\\_+\\_Poverty.htm#2](http://www.ontheissues.org/2012/jill_Stein_Welfare_+_Poverty.htm#2)

<sup>19</sup> Cara Shulz, "A Day with Gary Johnson", *PNC Minnesota Bureau*, 26 March 2012,

<http://pncminnesota.com/2012/03/26/a-day-with-presidential-candidate-gary-johnson/>

<sup>20</sup> California Republican Debate Transcript, *MSNBC*, 3 May 2007,

[http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/18478985/ns/politics-the\\_debates/t/california-republican-debate-transcript/#.UCPwFWNSR\\_h](http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/18478985/ns/politics-the_debates/t/california-republican-debate-transcript/#.UCPwFWNSR_h)

<sup>21</sup> "Stein chides GOP for divisive rhetoric on contraception", *JillStein.org*, 13 February 2012,

[http://www.jillstein.org/stein\\_chides\\_gop\\_for\\_divisive\\_rhetoric\\_on\\_contraception](http://www.jillstein.org/stein_chides_gop_for_divisive_rhetoric_on_contraception)

6. **Would the candidate appoint an atheist or nontheist to serve in your cabinet assuming they were best-qualified?**

- **Johnson:** *(On appointing religious minorities)* "As Gov. of New Mexico it just wasn't an issue ever. It wasn't an issue when it came to filling my cabinet, filling the heads of agency. It was never an issue when it came to filling boards and commissions. It just wasn't an issue. And I don't expect it to be different as President of the United States. It's just not a consideration." <sup>22</sup>
- **Obama:** N/A
- **Romney:** In a 2007 Meet the Press interview, "MR. RUSSERT: So if you determined that the most qualified person for the Supreme Court or for attorney general or secretary of education happened to be an atheist or an agnostic, that wouldn't prevent you from appointing them? GOV. ROMNEY: Of course not. You, you, you look at individuals based upon their skills and their ability, their values, their intelligence. And there are many who are agnostic or atheist or who have very different beliefs about the nature of the divine than I do, and, and you evaluate them based on their skills. But I, I can tell you that I, I myself am a person of faith and, and respect the, the sense of the common bond of humanity that comes from that, that fundamental belief." <sup>23</sup>
- **Stein:** N/A

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<sup>22</sup> Johnson Interview, October 2011, Patheos, <http://www.patheos.com/blogs/paganswithdisabilities/2011/10/full-transcript-of-qa-with-presidential-candidate-gary-johnson/>

<sup>23</sup> Mitt Romney, Transcript, *Meet the Press*, 16 December 2007, [http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/22273924/ns/meet\\_the\\_press/t/meet-press-transcript-dec/#.TuJozvK0tog](http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/22273924/ns/meet_the_press/t/meet-press-transcript-dec/#.TuJozvK0tog)

## II. Health and Safety

	<b>Johnson</b>	<b>Obama</b>	<b>Romney</b>	<b>Stein</b>
1. Protecting religious refusal laws	N/A	B	F	N/A
2. Exemptions from generally applicable law for religious institutions/individuals	N/A	B	F	A
3. Use of religious beliefs to determine public health care policy	N/A	A	F	N/A
<b>Section Average:</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>A**</b>

**1. Does the candidate support protecting individual employees from being fired or disciplined, if they refuse to provide legal products or services, or otherwise fail to complete the general duties of their job, based on their personal religious beliefs?**

- **Johnson:** N/A
- **Obama:** Revised conscience clause regulations to apply only to abortion, exempted contraception and related services. He repealed a Bush-era regulation that strengthened conscience clauses by requiring institutions that receive federal money to certify their compliance with conscience laws.<sup>24</sup>
- **Romney:** "Romney vetoed a bill that would have required private hospitals to offer rape victims "morning after" pills, to prevent unwanted pregnancies. The Massachusetts state legislature overrode Romney's veto, after which Romney tried to make an exemption for private hospitals by citing a "conscience clause" in state law regarding private hospitals."<sup>25</sup>
- **Stein:** N/A

**2. Does the candidate support the exemption of religious institutions (i.e. childcare providers, hospitals, colleges, etc.) from complying with generally applicable health and safety laws?**

- **Johnson:** N/A
- **Obama:** Against pushback from religious organizations, Obama declined to greatly expand exemptions to the majority of religiously-affiliated organizations from my complying with a Health and Human Services mandate that contraceptive coverage be provided in all insurance plans. The administration did however provide exemptions for houses of worship and created a narrow exemption for religious organizations with the express mission to further a religious objective and that employs and serves primarily the religious.<sup>26</sup> Church-affiliated universities, hospitals and charities would not have to provide or pay for such coverage. Instead, the White House said, coverage for birth control could be offered to women directly by their employers' insurance companies, "with no role for religious employers who oppose contraception."<sup>27</sup>

<sup>24</sup> "Conscience Clause Rules", *Huffington Post*, 18 February 2011, [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/02/18/obama-conscience-clause-abortion-contraception\\_n\\_825461.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/02/18/obama-conscience-clause-abortion-contraception_n_825461.html)

<sup>25</sup> 2012 SCA Presidential Candidate Scorecard, December 2011, <http://secular.org/files/2012scapresidentialcandidatescorecard.pdf>

<sup>26</sup> Joan Frawley Desmond, "HHS Issues Statement Confirming Outlines of Contraception Mandate 'Accommodation'," *National Catholic Register*, 16 March 2012, <http://www.ncregister.com/daily-news/hhs-issues-statement-confirming-outlines-of-contraception-mandate-accommoda>

<sup>27</sup> "Obama and the contraception mandate," *The Christian Science Monitor*, 23 May 2012, <http://www.csmonitor.com/Commentary/the-monitors-view/2012/0523/Obama-and-the-contraception-mandate>

- **Romney:** Supported the "Blunt Amendment" which would have allowed employers to exclude any insurance benefit they deem immoral or "contrary to their religious beliefs."<sup>28</sup> Think what that [HHS Mandate on Contraception] does to people in faiths that do not share those views. This is a violation of conscience.<sup>29</sup>
- **Stein:** "...[what] the Democrats and Obama have done pretending that it's a choice between religion and reproductive health is outrageous because what they basically did was to yield, concede on the principle that religion trumped women's health. But in fact, it was the religion of the employer that trumped the religion of the employee. It was your Boss's religion telling you that your religion that you need to take good care of your family and not have more children than you can take of... The real solution here is to have a Medicare for all system that doesn't separate out the reproductive health from the rest of you."

### 3. Would the candidate use his or her religious beliefs to determine public health care policy as it relates to governing access to certain legal procedures or drugs?

- **Johnson:** N/A
- **Obama:** Declined to renew the USCCB contract to aid victims of human trafficking because the group was unwilling to meet the needs of trafficking victims—many of whom have been sexually abused or forced into prostitution—by failing to provide contraceptive coverage, based on the USCCB's religious teachings.<sup>30</sup>
- **Romney:** In response to the HHS contraception mandate, Romney indicated he would make U.S. law to comply with religious teachings. "Well, we found out when Barack Obama continued his attack on religious conscience. I don't think we've seen in the history of this country the kind of attack on religious conscience, religious freedom, religious tolerance that we've seen under Barack Obama. Most recently requiring the Catholic Church to provide for its employees health care insurance that would include birth control, sterilization and the morning-after pill. Unbelievable ... these insurance companies now have to provide these same things and obviously the Catholic Church will end up paying for them."<sup>31</sup>
- **Stein:** N/A

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<sup>28</sup> Sahil Kapur, "Romney Comes Out In Support Of Controversial Birth Control Bill", *Talking Points Memo*, 29 February 2012, <http://2012.talkingpointsmemo.com/2012/02/romney-comes-out-in-support-of-controversial-birth-control-bill.php>

<sup>29</sup> Mitt Romney, Speech in Centennial CO, 7 February 2012, <http://www.religionnews.com/blogs/mark-silk/conscience-clause>

<sup>30</sup> "Sex Trafficking and the First Amendment," *The New York Times*, 3 April 2012, <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/04/04/opinion/sex-trafficking-and-the-first-amendment.html>

<sup>31</sup> "CNN's 2012 GOP Debate on eve of Arizona Primary," *CNN*, 22 February 2012, [http://www.ontheissues.org/2012\\_CNN\\_AZ.htm](http://www.ontheissues.org/2012_CNN_AZ.htm)

### III. Education

	Johnson	Obama	Romney	Stein
1. Support of science-based public school curriculums	F	A	A	A*
2. Support of abstinence-only sex education in public schools	F	C	F	A*
<b>Section Average:</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>A**</b>

**1. Does the candidate support a science based curriculum in public schools that teaches students the theory of "Evolution by Natural Selection" and excludes the teaching of religious theories such as "creationism" or "intelligent design"?**

- **Johnson:** "All education in schools, whether it be about sex or mathematics, should be determined at the state and local level, and if freed from federal mandates, will reflect local priorities and values. Such local control, especially if combined with true school choice, will address issues of curricula and encourage parental influence thereon."<sup>32</sup>
- **Obama:** "I'm a Christian, and I believe in parents being able to provide children with religious instruction without interference from the state. But I also believe our schools are there to teach worldly knowledge and science. I believe in evolution, and I believe there's a difference between science and faith. That doesn't make faith any less important than science. It just means they're two different things. And I think it's a mistake to try to cloud the teaching of science with theories that frankly don't hold up to scientific inquiry."<sup>33</sup>
- **Romney:** "In my opinion, the science class is where to teach evolution, or if there are other scientific thoughts that need to be discussed," he said. "If we're going to talk about more philosophical matters, like why it was created, and was there an intelligent designer behind it, that's for the religion class or philosophy class or social studies class."<sup>34</sup> As governor of Massachusetts, Romney opposed teaching "intelligent design" and "creationism" in public schools.<sup>35</sup>
- **Stein:** Stein accepts/believes in evolution and science based education.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>32</sup> Joe Hunter, Statement to *ProCon.org*, 10 February 2012, <http://2012election.procon.org/view.answers.election.php?questionID=1702#gary-johnson>

<sup>33</sup> "Obama Talks to York," *York Daily Record*, 30 March 2008, <http://2008election.procon.org/view.resource.php?resourceID=1924>

<sup>34</sup> Luo, Michael, "Romney Elaborates on Evolution," *New York Times*, 11 March, 2007, <http://thecaucus.blogs.nytimes.com/2007/05/11/romney-elaborates-on-evolution/>

<sup>35</sup> Scoville, Heather, "2012 GOP Presidential Candidates on Evolution", *About.com*, <http://evolution.about.com/od/Overview/tp/2012-Gop-Presidential-Candidates-On-Evolution.htm>

<sup>36</sup> "iSideWith: Jill Stein's Issues", *iSideWith*, March 2012, <http://www.isidewith.com/2012-presidential-election2/candidates/jill-stein/stances>

## 2. Does the candidate support an abstinence-only sex education curriculum in public schools?

- **Johnson:** "All education in schools, whether it be about sex or mathematics, should be determined at the state and local level, and if freed from federal mandates, will reflect local priorities and values. Such local control, especially if combined with true school choice, will address issues of curricula and encourage parental influence thereon."<sup>37</sup>
- **Obama:** President Obama's budget for fiscal year 2010 eliminated federal funding for the teaching of abstinence-only sex education in schools.<sup>38</sup> However, in April, the Department of Health and Human Services added Heritage Keepers Abstinence Education, an abstinence-only education program, to its list of evidence-based pregnancy prevention programs that receive government funding. This decision was based upon unpublished, unreliable, and biased research conducted at Brigham Young University.<sup>39</sup>
- **Romney:** "I also promoted abstinence education in our schools. I vetoed an effort, for instance, to give young women a morning after pill, they call it, who did not have prescriptions--young, very young girls, without age limitation. So I took action to preserve the sanctity of life. But I did not violate my word, of course."<sup>40</sup> Implemented abstinence only sex-education program for 12-14 year olds. <sup>41</sup> "I fought for abstinence education. In the toughest of states, I made the toughest decisions and did what was right for America. I have conservative values."<sup>42</sup>
- **Stein:** Believes in providing birth control, social services, and adequate sex education.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Hunter, Joe, Statement to *ProCon.org*, 10 February 2012,

<http://2012election.procon.org/view.answers.election.php?questionID=1702#gary-johnson>

<sup>38</sup> "Obama Budget Eliminates Funding for Abstinence-Only Sex Education," *U.S. News and World Report*, 7 May 2009, <http://health.usnews.com/health-news/blogs/on-women/2009/05/07/obama-budget-eliminates-funding-for-abstinence-only-sex-education>

<sup>39</sup> Carmon, Irin, "Why Obama's in bed with abstinence-only education," *Salon.com*, 8 May 2012, [www.salon.com/2012/05/08/why\\_obamas\\_in\\_bed\\_with\\_abstinence\\_only\\_education/](http://www.salon.com/2012/05/08/why_obamas_in_bed_with_abstinence_only_education/)

<sup>40</sup> Mitt Romney, "Meet the Press" Transcript, 16 December 2007,

[http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/22273924/ns/meet\\_the\\_press/t/meet-press-transcript-dec/#.TuJozvK0tog](http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/22273924/ns/meet_the_press/t/meet-press-transcript-dec/#.TuJozvK0tog)

<sup>41</sup> "Mitt Romney on Families and Children," *On the Issues*, 17 June 2007,

[http://www.ontheissues.org/2012/Mitt\\_Romney\\_Families\\_+\\_Children.htm](http://www.ontheissues.org/2012/Mitt_Romney_Families_+_Children.htm)

<sup>42</sup> Republican presidential debate in Columbia, South Carolina, hosted by *Fox News*, 15 May 2007,

<sup>43</sup> "iSideWith: Jill Stein's Issues", *iSideWith*, March 2012, <http://www.isidewith.com/2012-presidential-election2/candidates/jill-stein/stances>

## IV. Government Funding

	<b>Johnson</b>	<b>Obama</b>	<b>Romney</b>	<b>Stein</b>
1. Stance on faith-based initiatives	A	C	F	A
2. Discrimination by religious organizations receiving taxpayer funding	N/A	F	F	N/A
<b>Section Average:</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>A</b>

### 1. Does the candidate support the use of public funding for religiously-affiliated organizations such as faith-based initiatives, to provide services?

- **Johnson:** [In response to the interviewer's question, "If you were to be President would you continue the White House Office of Faith Based Initiatives and partnerships that was begun with Bush and is continued under President Obama?"] Johnson replied, "Faith Based Initiatives? No I would not."<sup>44</sup>
- **Obama:** "strongly opposed" H.R. 471 (D.C. voucher program, in which an estimated 80% of public money went toward tuition at religious schools) and has not included any additional funding in the 2013 budget.<sup>45</sup> Funding data from the Bush administration shows that religious charities received 10.8 percent of the \$20.4 billion in federal dollars available in 2007. Experts believe the numbers have been similarly high during the Obama administration (despite claims faith-based funding on the 2008 campaign trail).<sup>46</sup>
- **Romney:** "As governor of Massachusetts, I worked hard to promote faith-based social-service organizations, and I appointed my wife, Ann, to lead my efforts. Clearly the boundaries between church and state must be respected, but there is a large space in which faith-based organizations can do good for the community in which they serve."<sup>47</sup>
- **Stein:** "We don't believe in substituting church programs for service that should be provided by government but we never oppose having a church do one particular thing. Should the government pull back and allow churches to provide services? That quickly becomes inherently discriminatory toward anyone not affiliated with that church."<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> "Johnson Interview," *Patheos*, 18 October 2011,

<http://www.patheos.com/blogs/paganswithdisabilities/2011/10/full-transcript-of-qa-with-presidential-candidate-gary-johnson/>

<sup>45</sup> "D.C. School Vouchers: President Obama Urges Houst to Vote No," *Secular News Daily*, 30 March 2011,

<http://www.secularnewsdaily.com/2011/03/d-c-school-vouchers-president-obama-urges-house-to-vote-no/>

<sup>46</sup> Jalweed, Kaleem, "Newt Gingrich Pushes Faith-Based Charities At A Time When Church, State Often Work Together On Welfare," *The Huffington Post*, 21 December 2011, [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/12/12/newt-gingrich-faith-based-charities-social-services\\_n\\_1140774.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/12/12/newt-gingrich-faith-based-charities-social-services_n_1140774.html)

<sup>47</sup> "Faith in America," *Cathedral Age*, Midsummer 2012, <http://support.nationalcathedral.org/wnc/interview/>

<sup>48</sup> Interview with Jill Stein, *OnTheIssues*, 21 December 2011,

[http://www.ontheissues.org/2012/jill\\_Stein\\_Welfare\\_+\\_Poverty.htm#2](http://www.ontheissues.org/2012/jill_Stein_Welfare_+_Poverty.htm#2)

2. Does the candidate support requiring religious organizations that receive public funding to comply with federal policies and regulations prohibiting discrimination based on religious belief?

- **Johnson:** N/A
- **Obama:** "I think we've struck the right balance so far, but this is something that we continue to be in dialogue with faith-based organizations about to try to make sure that their hiring practices are as open and as inclusive as possible."<sup>49</sup> In 2008 candidate Obama promised to end hiring discrimination among faith-based initiatives, but has yet to make good on this promise and has expanded faith-based initiatives.<sup>50</sup>
- **Romney:** "I do believe adoption agencies should be able to favor traditional couples"<sup>51</sup>
- **Stein:** N/A

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<sup>49</sup> "Obama Asked About Faith-Based Religious Discrimination," *Friendly Atheist*, 22 July 2011, <http://www.patheos.com/blogs/friendlyatheist/2011/07/22/obama-asked-about-faith-based-religious-discrimination/>

<sup>50</sup> "Obama Asked About Faith-Based Religious Discrimination," *Friendly Atheist*, 22 July 2011, <http://www.patheos.com/blogs/friendlyatheist/2011/07/22/obama-asked-about-faith-based-religious-discrimination/>

<sup>51</sup> Marinucci, Carla, "Campaign Trail: Romney Defends General 'Don't Ask Don't Tell' Policy," *San Francisco Chronicle*, 17 March 2007, <http://www.sfgate.com/politics/article/CAMPAIGN-TRAIL-Romney-defends-general-don-t-2569666.php>



## V. Government Acts

	<b>Johnson</b>	<b>Obama</b>	<b>Romney</b>	<b>Stein</b>
1. Government participation and support of the Boy Scouts of America	N/A	C	C	N /A
2. Support of "Under God" in the Pledge of Allegiance and "In God We Trust" as the National Motto	N/A	F	F	N/A
3. Government participation in the "National Prayer Breakfast" and the "National Day of Prayer" as a government-endorsed day of observance	F	F	F	N/A
4. Opening public events with prayer and religious symbols on government property	A	N/A	F	N/A
<b>Section Average:</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>N/A</b>

**1. Does the candidate support presidential participation in the Boy Scouts of America, which discriminates against atheists and LGBT persons?**

- **Johnson:** N/A
- **Obama:** Obama currently serves as honorary President of the Boy Scouts of America—the organization discriminates by barring those who do not believe in God from participation at both the child and adult level. "The president believes the Boy Scouts is a valuable organization that has helped educate and build character in American boys for more than a century, the White House statement said. "He also opposes discrimination in all forms, and as such opposes this policy that discriminates on basis of sexual orientation."<sup>52</sup>
- **Romney:** A Boy Scout-led recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance and a prayer set the stage for former Massachusetts governor and presidential candidate Mitt Romney's family-values appearance in Cedar Rapids.<sup>53</sup> "I support the right of the Boy Scouts of America to decide what it wants to do on that issue. I feel that all people should be allowed to participate in the Boy Scouts regardless of their sexual orientation."<sup>54</sup>
- **Stein:** N/A

**2. Does the candidate support the term "Under God" in the Pledge of Allegiance and "In God We Trust" as the National Motto?**

- **Johnson:** N/A
- **Obama:** In response to a petition submitted to the White House to remove "Under God" from the Pledge of Allegiance, "Not every mention of God in public is a breach to the wall of separation - context matters."<sup>55</sup>

<sup>52</sup> Inouye, Shin, "White House: Obama opposes Boy Scouts' ban on gays," *Fox News*, 8 August 2012, <http://www.foxnews.com/us/2012/08/08/white-house-obama-opposes-boy-scouts-ban-on-gays/>

<sup>53</sup> Mitt Romney, "Mitt Romney on Families and Children," *On the Issues*, 17 June 2007, [http://www.ontheissues.org/2012/Mitt\\_Romney\\_Families + Children.htm](http://www.ontheissues.org/2012/Mitt_Romney_Families + Children.htm)

<sup>54</sup> Gosselin, Peter, *Boston Globe*, 27 October 1994, [http://www.ontheissues.org/2012/Mitt\\_Romney\\_Civil\\_Rights.htm](http://www.ontheissues.org/2012/Mitt_Romney_Civil_Rights.htm)

<sup>55</sup> DuBois, Joshua, White House Blog (Response to citizen petition to remove God from pledge), 22 September 2011, [https://petitions.whitehouse.gov/petition/edit-pledge-allegiance-remove-phrase-under-god/v5J2fC6z?utm\\_source=wh.gov&utm\\_medium=shorturl&utm\\_campaign=shorturl](https://petitions.whitehouse.gov/petition/edit-pledge-allegiance-remove-phrase-under-god/v5J2fC6z?utm_source=wh.gov&utm_medium=shorturl&utm_campaign=shorturl)

- **Romney:** "The pledge says 'under God ... I will not take God out of the name of our platform, I will not take God off our coins, and I will not take God out of my heart!'"<sup>56</sup>
- **Stein:** N/A

**3. Does the candidate support government participation in the "National Prayer Breakfast" and the "National Day of Prayer" as a government-endorsed day of observance?**

- **Johnson:** News archives show Johnson attending Prayer Breakfasts when he was Governor of New Mexico.<sup>57</sup>
- **Obama:** As President, Obama has attended the National Prayer Breakfast every year and given an address.<sup>58</sup> During his presidency, Obama has proclaimed the National Day of Prayer annually.
- **Romney:** Romney has released prayer statements in celebration of the National Day of Prayer. His 2012 statement said in part, "On this National Day of Prayer, we are reminded of those who have sacrificed so much to give us the freedom to worship freely and to speak openly about our faith [...] it is my prayer that as we strive to better America and to protect her from those who would do her harm, the Lord will keep us strong and free and we will remain one nation under God."<sup>59</sup>
- **Stein:** N/A

**4. Does the candidate support public events with prayer and religious symbols on government property?**

- **Johnson:** "As much as I hate the fact that the ACLU would tell a community that they can't hang a Christmas tree in the lobby and play Christmas music in a public building, isn't that why we became the United States of America? Isn't that why we broke away from England?"<sup>60</sup>
- **Obama:** N/A
- **Romney:** "...I believe that we should recognize the divine with everything from celebrations in the town square, with menorahs and nativity scenes, as well as in our history books, talking about the fact that the creators did believe in a fundamental sense of, of the divine."<sup>61</sup>
- **Stein:** N/A

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<sup>56</sup> McKay, Coppins, "Forget The Economy — Romney Campaigns On God, NASCAR, And Conservative Values," *Buzzfeed*, 10 September 2012, <http://www.buzzfeed.com/mckaycoppins/forget-the-economy-romney-campaigns-on-god-na>

<sup>57</sup> *Santa Fe New Mexican* (refer to articles 7 and 12 within archives), [http://nl.newsbank.com/nl-search/we/Archives?p\\_action=list&p\\_topdoc=11](http://nl.newsbank.com/nl-search/we/Archives?p_action=list&p_topdoc=11)

<sup>58</sup> <http://www.christianpost.com/news/obama-justice-department-defends-cross-on-public-property-71589/>

<sup>59</sup> Trumbull, Mark, "On National Day of Prayer, plenty of politics," *Christian Science Monitor*, 3 May 2012, <http://www.csmonitor.com/USA/Politics/The-Vote/2012/0503/On-National-Day-of-Prayer-plenty-of-politics/%28page%29/2>

<sup>60</sup> Schelsinger, Craig, "Gary Johnson on Freedom of Religion," *The Examiner*, 23 February 2012, <http://www.examiner.com/article/gary-johnson-on-freedom-of-religion>

<sup>61</sup> Mitt Romney, Transcript, *Meet the Press*, 16 December 2007, [http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/22273924/ns/meet\\_the\\_press/t/meet-press-transcript-dec/#.TuJozvK0tog](http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/22273924/ns/meet_the_press/t/meet-press-transcript-dec/#.TuJozvK0tog)

# ABOUT THE SECULAR COALITION FOR AMERICA

The Secular Coalition for America is a 501(c)(4) advocacy organization whose purpose is to amplify the diverse and growing voice of the nontheistic community in the United States. We are located in Washington, D.C. for ready access to government, activist partners and the media. Our staff lobbies U.S. Congress and the Administration on issues of special concern to our constituency.

Our member organizations are established 501(c)(3) nonprofits who serve atheists, agnostics, humanists, freethinkers and other nontheistic Americans. Their purpose in founding the coalition was to formalize a cooperative structure for visible, unified activism to improve the civic situation of citizens with a naturalistic worldview. A number of additional organizations have endorsed our mission statement and many more have joined us as allied organizations on specific issues.

Edwina Rogers  
*Executive Director*

Herb Silverman  
*President and Founder*

## MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

- American Atheists – [www.atheists.org](http://www.atheists.org)
- American Ethical Union – [www.aeu.org](http://www.aeu.org)
- American Humanist Association – [www.americanhumanist.org](http://www.americanhumanist.org)
- Atheist Alliance of America – [www.atheistallianceamerica.org](http://www.atheistallianceamerica.org)
- Camp Quest – [www.campquest.org](http://www.campquest.org)
- Council for Secular Humanism – [www.secularhumanism.org](http://www.secularhumanism.org)
- Institute for Humanist Studies – [www.humaniststudies.org](http://www.humaniststudies.org)
- HUManists – [www.huumanists.org](http://www.huumanists.org)
- Military Association of Atheists and Freethinkers – [www.militaryatheists.org](http://www.militaryatheists.org)
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