



In a healthy democracy, respect is shown for the religious freedom and beliefs of every person. However, in our country today, religion is often used to divide and—more disturbingly—as a means to take away the rights of other people. In our pluralistic democracy, it is critical that those running for public office model how best to integrate their faith with their responsibility to all people, if elected.

The **Faith & Democracy Caucus Project** of the Interfaith Alliance of Iowa Action Fund explores the important issues around religious freedom and how the faith and beliefs of candidates would inform their policy decisions. The answers below were provided and approved by the candidate listed and the content was not edited in any manner. We encourage voters to consider the responses of all the candidates and follow up with each candidate to foster positive conversation on these critical issues.

.....**GOVERNOR STEVE BULLOCK**.....



1. Should candidates share their personal religious beliefs when running for public office?

Our faith informs our values and our worldview, but for some of us, faith is a very private matter. Candidates should feel free to share their personal religious beliefs - no matter what they be - while running for office, but it should not be a requirement.

2. How will your faith or values influence your views on public policy?

My faith, my family, the community I grew up in, the belief that there is a higher power, and that we are called to do good things for one another impact my views on public policy. I often reflect on Matthew 25:40: "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me."

When I make decisions, when I ask questions and seek information, it is done with the intent of finding a solution that serves people -- that is driven by my faith.

3. What are the proper boundaries between religion and government?

The First Amendment guarantees freedom of religion in the United States and our government has a responsibility to preserve that right for all Americans. There should be a clear separation between religion and government, and personal faith cannot justify laws that marginalize,



exclude or discriminate against others in a community or our country.

4. How will you protect the rights of people, especially the rights of those in the minority?

America was founded in part by people who wanted to avoid religious persecution. We need to continue to preserve the rights of all people, especially when they are in the minority. Our diversity is one of America's strengths and we need to fight to protect that no matter whether it is religion, race, gender, or sexual orientation. I will ensure that my government protects the rights of all, and that the Justice Department is vigilant in this pursuit.

5. How will you balance the principles of your faith or beliefs with your obligation to defend the Constitution, particularly if the two come into conflict?

As President, you take an oath to defend the Constitution. That cannot be violated.

At the same time, my faith informs my values, and my desire to be a servant to others. If done well, my faith and the obligations of our Constitution will not be in contradiction.

6. How would you seek to balance the conflicting religious and civil rights of citizens?

Religious and civil liberties are often discussed as in conflict with each other, but this doesn't have to be the case. We have to be uncompromising in our dedication to American's civil rights. But an individual's personal religious views cannot be used to justify ideas and laws that exclude, marginalize or discriminate against others.

7. How would you reduce the influence of politics from our federal courts and make them less partisan?

Federal court decisions have serious and significant consequences throughout America. Looking at some of the most consequential court cases of the last few years like Citizens United, Obergefell v. Hodges, and Gill v. Whitford, it is clear that those appointed to federal courts hold significant power over how we live our lives. Each of these cases was decided by a single vote, reminding us that there is no more critical responsibility than selecting judges at all levels that will share our values.

I have appointed nearly half of Montana's judges during my tenure as Governor. While I do not ask litmus test questions when appointing the judges, all of my appointments have been people who share my values. We should be appointing judges based on their qualifications, not their political beliefs.

8. Should public funds be used for private educational choices at the K-12 level? If so, name the specific ways.

I do not support the use of public money for private education. Our public schools are not sufficiently resourced, which is why I have proposed doubling federal investment in K-12 education to regain America's competitive education advantage. This will include helping local districts with wage and loan repayment incentives to recruit and retain highly qualified teachers

and principals to teach in low-performing or high-poverty schools. Our money should be focused on public schools.

9. How would you protect a woman's right to reproductive health care, including abortion and contraceptive choices?

A woman's right to make deeply personal healthcare decisions should be made by her in consultation with her doctor and - if she chooses - her family and faith. It should not be made by the government.

As Governor of a state with a Republican legislature, I fought to protect this right and as President I will continue this fight.

As President, I will reverse recent changes to Title X that ban funding recipients from referring women to abortion providers. The government should not be deterring medical professionals from providing comprehensive healthcare advice. I also oppose the Hyde Amendment and would urge Congress to change this.

10. What priority actions would you take in addressing the immigration crisis at the southern border?

America's greatest strength has been the promise of freedom and opportunity. Almost all of our families have been immigrants at one point, coming to this country in search of a better life for our families. Immigrants today are no different—escaping violence, persecution, or devastated economies. And they're here finding jobs, starting businesses, paying taxes, going to school, and serving our country in the military or in our communities.

As President, I will take several actions to address the immigration crisis at the Southern border:

- + Ensure families remain together until their claims have been adjudicated so that we no longer separate families and throw kids in cages.
- + Restore the Obama-era pilot program ended by Trump that allows refugee applicants to apply for asylum in their home countries.
- + Restore aid to organizations working to shelter at-risk people living in Northern Triangle countries.
- + Use the right mix of people and technology to support the CBP.

11. How would you promote civility and civil dialogue in the public debate of issues that are dividing our nation?

As a Democratic governor in a state with a Republican legislature, working across the aisle is the only way I have been able to advance key progressive priorities, including Medicaid expansion, banning dark money from our elections, as well as critical investments in public education, and reforming Montana's criminal justice system. I did this not by name calling or attacking, but working with legislators in both parties to make change happen. Imagine if this is how Washington worked? As President, I will work across the aisle to get things done and not malign the other side because ultimately we need to do what is best for the American people, not just for sound bites on TV.

We as elected leaders have to recognize that our kids learn from our words and our deeds. And our kids are watching. At some point, this President's going to have to answer whether are we giving something for our kids to aspire to and be inspired by and I think all of us running, are going to have to do the same.

The Interfaith Alliance of Iowa & Action Fund is grateful for the opportunity to provide the candidate responses to our Faith & Democracy questionnaire. This effort is solely meant as a tool to educate voters on the candidates' positions on these important issues. In no way is the publication of any candidate response to be seen as an endorsement of their candidacy for public office.

