

Virginia Media Alert:

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Immediate Release

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"Transparency Pledge" Results Released Jefferson Institute asks Candidates to Pledge Support For Openness in Government

10/26/2009 -- The Thomas Jefferson Institute for Public Policy, the state's leading non-partisan foundation focused at improving state and local government, released the results of a survey today on Government Transparency taken by candidates running in this fall's elections.

"In an era of scarce resources, it is vital that state and local governments be open and transparent to the public in their financial dealings," said Michael Thompson, president of the Institute. He went on to say, "the public needs to be aware of government finances so it can better hold these public institutions and officials accountable."

The Jefferson Institute asked all candidates to sign the "2009 Government Transparency Pledge" below or, if the campaigns take the position not to sign pledges, to show agreement with this pledge. Linked below are the results of that survey to the six statewide candidates, Delegate candidates, candidates for the Board of Supervisors and School Board candidates.

This survey was mailed to all candidates and will be updated on a daily basis.

Michael Thompson, President of the Institute, said upon the release of this survey, "It is heartening that so many leaders in the Republican and Democratic Parties are committed to the idea that our state and local governments should be open and transparent in their financial dealings. Those who responded also supported a more open process in announcing meetings and posting minutes from these meetings. There will clearly be support to promote a more transparent government here in Virginia. It will now be up to those who are elected on November 3rd to move in this direction."

[Results of the survey to State Candidates are here.](#)

[Results of the survey to Local Candidates are here.](#)

[Results of the survey to School Board Candidates are here.](#)

The Jefferson Institute is working on an analysis of county and city websites in Virginia and will release that study next month.

The text of the pledged sent to all candidates requesting their support:

**Thomas Jefferson Institute for Public Policy's
*2009 Government Transparency Pledge***

I pledge to support efforts to make government more transparent for the voters to whom I am responsible.

It makes sense to have government budgets placed "on line" on websites that are easily accessible by the voters. This should include proposed budgets and approved budgets in enough detail so that the voters know how their money is being spent.

Government Requests for Proposals (RFPs) and government contracts should be placed on line so that the taxpayers can see where and how their money is being spent.

Calendars for government meetings should be on-line early enough so that those interested in attending meetings can do so. Minutes and video, where possible, of meetings should be on government websites.

I pledge to do all I can to open-up government to more transparency and do it in a way that makes access to government spending as easy as possible.

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