



2026 Primary Election Candidate Questionnaire -Caldwell County-

For additional details regarding C.P.R. Inc., visit our website at www.CPRforYourCounty.org. The content in this document is provided for informational purposes and has been directly sourced from the candidates. We have made diligent efforts to present the information as accurately as possible.



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Introduction

Christian Perspective Representatives Inc. is a cooperative group of volunteers from churches who stand in unison for Biblical values and Constitutional rights, support and affirm human dignity, and value all people.

C.P.R., Inc. began in 2021 as a nonpartisan group to circumvent the loss of freedoms of our children, parents, and employees in public schools and institutions throughout our state and nation. Since we believe there is a potential for topics such as sexuality, gender identity, and extreme theories to be taught to our children in harmful and potentially damaging ways, we want to be part of the solution.

C.P.R., Inc. operates strictly on a volunteer basis. No one involved with C.P.R. receives any type of compensation.

C.P.R. does not endorse or oppose any candidates for public office or any political party. This questionnaire is being distributed electronically through our website, mainstream and social media, supporting churches, and other means. We have produced a questionnaire for: (1) Board of Education, (2) Board of Commissioners, (3) District Attorney, and (4) Sheriff races.

The purpose of our questionnaire is to inform and educate voters of each candidate's position on a variety of general topics that are relevant to C.P.R.'s mission. As a faith-based organization, the questionnaire was designed to be distributed through Churches where the topics of the questions are of the utmost interest to a Christian voter.

Questionnaire Information

The responses gathered from the questionnaire were provided directly by the candidates themselves. C.P.R. utilized a multiple-choice format for the questions, offering candidates the option to expand on their responses within a 950-character limit. Upholding the questionnaire's integrity, candidate answers are presented verbatim, without any modifications for grammar or spelling. Each candidate was contacted in an attempt to encourage their participation using the contact information obtained from the North Carolina State Board of Elections website.

If a candidate did not submit a response, the publication will indicate "Did Not Respond." In cases where a candidate replied via email, telephone, etc., but opted not to participate, the publication will note "Refused to Respond." The party affiliation of each candidate is listed beside their name: (D) for Democrat, (L) for Libertarian, (R) for Republican, (U) for Unaffiliated.

Board of Education Questionnaire

- 1) Do you believe life begins at conception and deserves legal protection?
- 2) Who has the ultimate responsibility for the education of children in public schools?
- 3) Should sexually explicit books be removed from school libraries and classrooms?
- 4) Do you support any Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) programs?
- 5) Should all classroom materials and lesson plans be publicly available to parents?
- 6) Should biological males be allowed to compete in girls' sports or use girls' locker rooms?
- 7) Should schools emphasize civics, patriotism, and America's founding principles?
- 8) Do you support the Parents' Bill of Rights (SB49)?
- 9) Should teachers and administrators be held accountable to community standards?
- 10) Do you support school choice options (charter, private, homeschool)?

Board of Commissioners Questionnaire

- 1) Have you ever been convicted of a felony or penalized for sexual misconduct?
- 2) Do you believe life begins at conception and deserves legal protection?
- 3) Who has the ultimate responsibility for the education of children in public schools?
- 4) Do you agree that excessive regulations and taxes hinder small business growth and startups?
- 5) Do you support the county enforcing public nuisance laws and cooperating with federal authorities to address illegal activity, including drug use, trespassing, and unlawful immigration?
- 6) Should county funds support DEI training, programs, statements, or policies?
- 7) Would you oppose any new restrictions on the Second Amendment?
- 8) Should the Ten Commandments or "In God We Trust" be displayed in county courthouses?
- 9) Will you defend churches and ministries from government overreach or discrimination?
- 10) How would you approach county funding for local emergency services (law enforcement, fire, and EMS)?

District Attorney Questionnaire

- 1) Have you ever been convicted of a felony or penalized for sexual misconduct?
- 2) Do you believe life begins at conception and deserves legal protection?
- 3) Should crimes involving child abuse, sexual exploitation, or trafficking be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law?
- 4) Should repeat offenders of crimes against children face enhanced charges or sentencing when allowed by law?
- 5) Should violent crimes be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law whenever legally possible?
- 6) Do you oppose “catch-and-release” policies that quickly return repeat offenders to the community?
- 7) Should drug trafficking and fentanyl-related crimes be treated as top prosecution priorities?
- 8) Should victims’ rights, especially those of children, be prioritized in charging decisions, plea agreements, and sentencing recommendations?
- 9) Should the District Attorney publicly report prosecution outcomes to ensure transparency and accountability?
- 10) Do you support faith-based or restorative justice programs for non-violent offenders who voluntarily participate?

Board of Education Candidate Responses

Teresa Branch (R)

Did not respond

Brandon L. Cornett (R)

Did not respond

William (BJ) Fore (R)

Did not respond

Mark Gerson (R)

- 1) Do you believe life begins at conception and deserves legal protection?
Answer: Yes.
- 2) Who has the ultimate responsibility for the education of children in public schools?
Answer: Parents. I fight HARD for parents rights! Thankfully we don't have boys in girls sports, but I will NEVER let that happen if I can stop it. I was the KEY force to remove inappropriate and pornographic books from our schools. I ran for the school board when parents were kept OUT of schools during the Covid SCAM and I'll fight HARD to NEVER let that happen again!
- 3) Should sexually explicit books be removed from school libraries and classrooms?
Answer: Yes. As I noted above, I was A KEY person to remove ALL the inappropriate/pornographic books from our schools.
- 4) Do you support any Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) programs?
Answer: Do not support. This is a far left goal to destroy our culture, our schools and our freedoms. It's one of the KEY issues I ran on--NO DEI, or other racist programs!
- 5) Should all classroom materials and lesson plans be publicly available to parents?
Answer: Yes. Yes, see above, I put parents rights FIRST. I have two kids in Granite Falls Elementary and want parents to have FULL control over what their kids see/ are taught in schools.
- 6) Should biological males be allowed to compete in girls' sports or use girls' locker rooms?
Answer: No. I will fight to my last dying breath to keep boys/men out of girls/women's sports and locker rooms!
- 7) Should schools emphasize civics, patriotism, and America's founding principles?
Answer: Yes. I have tried to bring more patriatic curriculum in our schools but have had little support on the board. I want the book 1984 taught, and told our curriculum person--she did nothing about this. 1984 is what the Democrats are doing NOW.
- 8) Do you support the Parents' Bill of Rights (SB49)?
Answer: Support. I am ALL about parent's rights!

9) Should teachers and administrators be held accountable to community standards?
Answer: Yes. We KNOW there are a bunch of teachers--even in conservative districts like Caldwell County, who have been brainwashed in college to hate America, etc. They must be held to our conservative, American standards.

10) Do you support school choice options (charter, private, homeschool)?
Answer: Support. we have a very open transfer program in our county. kids can literally go to any school in our county unless it's full. I also support homeschools and private schools and charter school options.

Joe Sims (R)

Did not respond

Lesa Bolick Widener (R)

Did not respond

Meredith Jane Wilson (R)

Did not respond

Board of Commissioners Candidate Responses

Jeremy Bengé (R)

Did not respond

Steven Fekete, Jr. (R)

Did not respond

Ben Griffin (R)

Did not respond

Mike LaBrose (R)

- 1) Have you ever been convicted of a felony or penalized for sexual misconduct?
Answer: No.
- 2) Do you believe life begins at conception and deserves legal protection?
Answer: Yes.
- 3) Who has the ultimate responsibility for the education of children in public schools?
Answer: Parents.
- 4) Do you agree that excessive regulations and taxes hinder small business growth and startups?
Answer: Agree.
- 5) Do you support the county enforcing public nuisance laws and cooperating with federal authorities to address illegal activity, including drug use, trespassing, and unlawful immigration?
Answer: Support.
- 6) Should county funds support DEI training, programs, statements, or policies?
Answer: No.
- 7) Would you oppose any new restrictions on the Second Amendment?
Answer: Yes.
- 8) Should the Ten Commandments or "In God We Trust" be displayed in county courthouses?
Answer: Yes.
- 9) Will you defend churches and ministries from government overreach or discrimination?
Answer: Yes.
- 10) How would you approach county funding for local emergency services (law enforcement, fire, and EMS)?
Answer: Increase.

Corey Moore (R)

Did not respond

Alex Moss (R)

Did not respond

Faith Naff (D)

- 11) Have you ever been convicted of a felony or penalized for sexual misconduct?
Answer: No.
- 12) Do you believe life begins at conception and deserves legal protection?
Answer: No.
- 13) Who has the ultimate responsibility for the education of children in public schools?
Answer: Parents. Parents have the ultimate responsibility for ensuring their children receive an education. However, if the question is asking who has ultimate responsibility for the content of said education, then I believe that falls between the teachers and the school boards.
- 14) Do you agree that excessive regulations and taxes hinder small business growth and startups?
Answer: Refuse to Answer. I would need an example of what is considered excessive regulation in order to accurately answer this question. As presented, it is too vague.
- 15) Do you support the county enforcing public nuisance laws and cooperating with federal authorities to address illegal activity, including drug use, trespassing, and unlawful immigration?
Answer: Support.
- 16) Should county funds support DEI training, programs, statements, or policies?
Answer: Refuse to Answer. This question is also too vague to meaningfully answer. What does "DEI" mean in this context? What are examples of DEI programs to the person asking? There is a great deal of disagreement in America on what "DEI" even means. I take each issue one at a time and base each on the details pertinent to it. I do not make blanket decisions based on buzz words.
- 17) Would you oppose any new restrictions on the Second Amendment?
Answer: Refuse to Answer. Again, too vague. What would you consider to be a restriction on the Second Amendment? I'm a proud gun owner and daily carrier, so I am pro Second Amendment. But as I stated earlier, I do not give hard answers to vague questions. Each issue should be considered individually with its pertinent facts.
- 18) Should the Ten Commandments or "In God We Trust" be displayed in county courthouses?
Answer: No.

19) Will you defend churches and ministries from government overreach or discrimination?
Answer: Refuse to Answer. So many of these questions are very vague. What are examples of overreach and discrimination in this context? Personally, I would be wary of any politician willing to so blindly answer these kinds of questions. Details matter. Facts are key.

20) How would you approach county funding for local emergency services (law enforcement, fire, and EMS)?
Answer: Refuse to Answer. Funding for what specifically? Higher pay for our hard-working first responders? I would support that. Just like with your other questions, it depends on the specifics.

Gonzalo Vazquez Napoles (R)

Did not respond

Roger Patterson (D)

Did not respond

Donnie Potter (R)

Did not respond

Jinnifer Whittington (R)

Did not respond

District Attorney Candidate Responses

Taylor A. Rockett

- 1) Have you ever been convicted of a felony or penalized for sexual misconduct?
Answer: No. I have never been convicted of a felony nor have I ever been penalized for sexual misconduct.
- 2) Do you believe life begins at conception and deserves legal protection?
Answer: Yes. The Bible says God knows us before we are formed in the womb. If we have souls before being “formed in the womb,” then “life” has certainly begun at conception! All human life deserves protection under the law.
- 3) Should crimes involving child abuse, sexual exploitation, or trafficking be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law?
Answer: Yes. Those who will harm children and the innocent should not be roaming the streets freely. These predators pose a threat to our very way of life, and it is the absolute obligation of law enforcement and prosecutors to keep these individuals out of society in accordance with the rule of law. My office will vigorously prosecute those who harm or seek to harm the most vulnerable members of our society.
- 4) Should repeat offenders of crimes against children face enhanced charges or sentencing when allowed by law?
Answer: Yes. I believe ALL habitual (repeat) offenders should be prosecuted as such where allowed by law. Children are our greatest commodity, or as the Bible puts it: “Children are a heritage from the Lord” and they must be protected at all costs. Individuals who commit crimes against children should be prioritized for aggravated and/or habitual sentence enhancements any time such is available. If North Carolina law gives us the option to put repeat offenders in custody for a longer period of time, there is no excuse for us to not do it!
- 5) Should violent crimes be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law whenever legally possible?
Answer: Yes. Violent crime threatens the very fabric of our society. If the evidence shows that you have committed a violent crime, you will be prosecuted for it to the greatest extent possible. A civilized nation governed by the rule of law, cannot tolerate or be soft on violent crime, period.
- 6) Do you oppose “catch-and-release” policies that quickly return repeat offenders to the community?
Answer: Yes. Unfortunately the District Attorney alone can’t unilaterally put an end to this cycle. Judges and magistrates play a significant role in this process also. However, I, if elected as District Attorney, pledge to argue for substantial bonds where appropriate, indict cases expeditiously, and prosecute vigorously those who repeatedly violate our laws.
- 7) Should drug trafficking and fentanyl-related crimes be treated as top prosecution priorities?

Answer: Yes. In my current position as Assistant District Attorney, I am assigned to the prosecution of large scale narcotics crimes. The truth is, the use, abuse, and distribution of illegal drugs exacerbates the commission of all other crime. Drug crimes perpetuate violent crime and property crime and are directly related to dozens of deaths in our district annually. The prosecution of such offenses MUST be prioritized.

- 8) Should victims' rights, especially those of children, be prioritized in charging decisions, plea agreements, and sentencing recommendations?

Answer: Yes. The Victims Rights Act (aka Marsy's Law) requires the District Attorney's office to communicate with victims of specified crimes and make them aware of their rights. As a prosecutor, I have always made every effort to keep victims informed and educated about the judicial process in general and about the status of their case. If elected, I will establish office policies that ensure victims' phone calls are returned within a reasonable time and that their questions are answered and their concerns are addressed.

- 9) Should the District Attorney publicly report prosecution outcomes to ensure transparency and accountability?

Answer: Yes. Elected officials work for We The People, and We The People should know what our leaders are doing! Transparency is the key to accountability! Additionally, the outcomes of prosecutions (except in juvenile cases) are public record in North Carolina. So, even if a District Attorney did not publish those results, any civilian can obtain disposition information from the Clerk of Court.

- 10) Do you support faith-based or restorative justice programs for non-violent offenders who voluntarily participate?

Answer: Support. This is a bit tricky. While I am a born-again Christian and I believe that the power of God can transform anyone, the Constitution does not allow the Government to advocate for, or require, faith-based programs in accordance with the First Amendment. However, in certain cases where a defendant requests to attend a faith-based or restorative justice program in an effort to lessen his possible criminal penalty, my office will review the facts of the case, speak with the charging law enforcement agency, and speak with victims to determine if these are appropriate options/resolutions for that particular case.

Mitch Walker (R)

- 1) Have you ever been convicted of a felony or penalized for sexual misconduct?

Answer: No.

- 2) Do you believe life begins at conception and deserves legal protection?

Answer: Yes.

- 3) Should crimes involving child abuse, sexual exploitation, or trafficking be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law?

Answer: Yes. When we have sufficient evidence to support these types of charges, I will pursue stiff sentences for these offenders.

- 4) Should repeat offenders of crimes against children face enhanced charges or sentencing when allowed by law?
Answer: Yes. When allowed by law, absolutely.
- 5) Should violent crimes be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law whenever legally possible?
Answer: Yes.
- 6) Do you oppose “catch-and-release” policies that quickly return repeat offenders to the community?
Answer: Yes. Catch and release policies for repeat offenders are unacceptable. New guidelines for judicial officials enacted through Iryna’s law has helped address some of the repeat offender release issues.
- 7) Should drug trafficking and fentanyl-related crimes be treated as top prosecution priorities?
Answer: Yes. Drug Trafficking should be treated as a high priority for two main reasons: 1) Fentanyl is a deadly threat to our communities everyday. 2) The distribution of narcotics in our communities is often the source of many other types of crimes that threaten our communities.
- 8) Should victims’ rights, especially those of children, be prioritized in charging decisions, plea agreements, and sentencing recommendations?
Answer: Yes.
- 9) Should the District Attorney publicly report prosecution outcomes to ensure transparency and accountability?
Answer: Yes. Yes, I believe providing transparency is important, as long as doing so doesn’t compromise victim or witness privacy.
- 10) Do you support faith-based or restorative justice programs for non-violent offenders who voluntarily participate?
Answer: Refuse to answer. These type programs are more appropriate for a case by case analysis rather than a blanket support or non-support.