

Bobby Mathieson, 21st District

2009 Virginia House of Delegates Candidate Questionnaire

1. Specifically, what unique qualities and/or qualifications will you bring to the office you seek?

I bring a unique perspective to the House of Delegates from my career in law enforcement serving the city of Virginia Beach and the Commonwealth of Virginia. As a police officer, I worked vice and narcotics and walked a beat, keeping the citizens of Virginia Beach safe every day. I also served as the school resource officer at my sons' middle school for several years, where I got to see the struggles our children face and the amazing job teachers do to help bring them up right. As a leader in the Virginia Beach Police Benevolent Association, I fought tirelessly for more cops on the street and more funding for public safety, working hand in hand with local firefighters and teachers. I then had the honor of serving Governor Mark Warner as his deputy director of the Department of Criminal Justice Services, where I was able to continue my public safety work: serving on the sex offender task force, working to reduce bias-based policing, overseeing a department of over 300 employees dedicated to improving the criminal justice system in Virginia. In short, there is no one out there who knows Virginia Beach neighborhoods better than I do, and there is no one running for the House of Delegates more qualified to keep families safe.

2. What transportation changes or improvements do you advocate and how specifically would you pay for them?

Obviously something needs to be done to relieve traffic congestion in Hampton Roads. I have looked at all the options, from a third crossing to expanding lanes in the tunnel to an overhead crossing on the HRBT. But I'm not an engineer, I'm a public servant – I will support what the traffic engineers and the state planners determine is the best solution.

As far as funding, all the options have already been discussed – we just need to come to a statewide agreement on it, since transportation IS a statewide issue. I think we are getting close to this agreement: Rural legislators and their constituents are now feeling the transportation pain too: closed rest stops, unmaintained rural roads, overgrown grass. We are now able to bring the rural legislators to the table, and we therefore will be able to have a breakthrough in discussions next year.

3. Aside from transportation, what do you believe are two other important challenges facing the Commonwealth? Specifically, what responses do you propose and how will you pay for them?

- 1) Job creation. The best way to pull us out of this recession is getting people back to work. The unemployment rate has doubled in the past year, folks are losing their homes and people are afraid. We in state government need to do three things to create jobs: keep Virginia the best-managed state in the nation; attract sustainable green industry jobs, the jobs of the future, through tax credits and incentives; and cut taxes for small businesses so they can reinvest in the economy, keep their staff employed and maybe even expand out. I led in the fight to pass a bill

that would have done just that, HB 2588, which would have eliminated the grocery sales tax on food, cut taxes for middle class families and businesses, and been revenue neutral.

- 2) Keeping education fully funded during these hard times. As I said before, I have always been a strong supporter of education. I stood side by side with teachers when I was the school resource officer at my sons' middle school and saw how hard they work. We have an excellent education system in Virginia Beach, and a flagship university system – as the proud father of a Virginia Tech grad and an ODU student, I see that firsthand. When we look at our budget, we need to realize that fully funding education isn't just a moral issue, it's an economic one. Every dollar invested in education today will make our workforce economically competitive for the jobs of the future and make sure Virginia stays on top. This past session, we had to make some hard choices and tighten our belts with our budget, just like every Virginia family does. But we kept education spending whole by targeting wasteful spending for elimination, reducing the size of state government, and making sure we are efficient in everything we do. It's hard, but that's why the voters of the 21st District gave me the honor of continuing my service to them in the House of Delegates, and that's why I want to go back: to take my unique knowledge of Virginia Beach neighborhoods and use it to protect the public and bring jobs to middle class families.