

Kenneth Alexander, 89th District

2009 Virginia House of Delegates Candidate Questionnaire

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

A proven record of leadership and a longstanding relationship with Norfolk are the unique qualities that have served me in my tenure as a member of the House of Delegates. Before my election to the House of Delegates in 2001, I served as president of the Beacon Light Civic League and the Beacon Light Community Development Corporation, as vice-chairman of the Norfolk Planning Commission, and on the executive committee of the Greater Norfolk Corporation. These experiences provided me with a tremendous sense of connection to the City of Norfolk, its citizens, and institutions. It also presented a series of opportunities that have cultivated me as a leader and a productive member of the General Assembly. In addition, I am the owner of a successful small business whose success is predicated on being attentive to families, providing consistent quality service, and managing a myriad of relationships.

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

In the Hampton Roads region, in particular, alleviating traffic congestion will require more than just expanding existing roads and highways. This summer has brought awareness to the repairs that are required to our existing transportation infrastructure. In addition, as growth patterns change and new developments become more compact we must explore ways to move people through the region without relying on cars as a primary mode of transit. I am very open to empowering regional authorities to pursue rail projects. Further, I believe that residents in Hampton Roads are open to providing revenue for transportation projects if they are assured that they will realize tangible and substantive value. Though the current economic environment makes discussing the prospect of raising taxes untenable, if citizens are sold on the need to provide revenue for projects essential to repairing roads and providing critical solutions I think small increases in regional sales taxes are possible. In addition we should explore an increase of taxes on gasoline purchases statewide. The Northern Virginia Transportation District already benefits from a 2 cent per gallon tax on top of the \$0.374 per gallon tax that the Commonwealth levies. The national average is \$0.45. We should also examine the 25 fuel uses that are eligible for refunds according to the Virginia Motor Fuel Law.

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?

Education and the economy pose significant challenges for the Commonwealth. However, we should not immediately approach them strictly as funding issues.

Some of the worst performing school districts have the highest spending per student. This is a signal that more funds should be dedicated to classroom expenses, not that more money should be dedicated to education in general. Encouraging economic growth and development, which creates jobs and opportunities for wealth creation, often involves tax cuts and realigning the Commonwealth's budget priorities. Given the recent budget shortfall, that our Governor is working diligently to close, and the current state of the economy, we have to be pragmatic in our approach. In the next session of the General Assembly, I am looking forward to a discussion on how the Commonwealth is going to take advantage of opportunities in creating green jobs, improving infrastructure (i.e., bridges, roads, and tunnels), broadband deployment to rural and underserved communities, worker retraining, and attracting new industries to Virginia.