

RESPONSES DATED 9-22-09 BY DELEGATE WILLIAM K. BARLOW TO THE
2009 HOUSE OF DELEGATES' CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE OF CATHY
LEWIS

1. Question: Specifically, what qualities and/or organization do you bring to the office you seek?

Answers by Delegate Barlow

1-A. I strongly believe in working in a bipartisan way in an attempt to reach a consensus on important issues which need to be resolved for the benefit of our citizens.

1-B I have approximately eighteen years of experience in the state legislature, having first been elected to the House of Delegates in 1992.

1-C I believe I bring a sense of vision to the office. I work hard to accomplish things that will have far reaching benefits to our citizens. I don't mind taking on causes that may temporarily be defeated, but ultimately will be successful, and which will improve the lives of our citizens. For example, for many years I have introduced bills to either restrict or completely ban smoking in restaurants. Each year my bills on that subject were killed in committee. Finally, in the January 2009 session, we were successful, my bill being one of several that was rolled into the bill which will become law in December 2009.

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

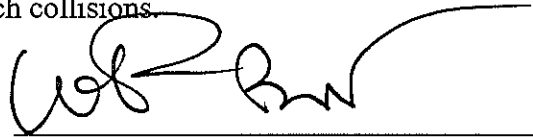
Answer of Delegate Barlow: The two projects which would do the most good would be the widening of Interstate 64 on the Peninsula and in south Hampton Roads the building of a new interstate type highway, roughly paralleling Highway 460, from the Hampton Roads area to Petersburg. Such a "new 460" would not only be a tremendous benefit to south Hampton Roads, it would also greatly benefit the Peninsula, because much of the traffic which now goes north to I-95 does so by way of crossing Hampton Roads via the Hampton Roads Bridge Tunnel, and then up the Virginia Peninsula. On the other hand, if we had a new interstate type road from south Hampton Roads to Interstates 95 and 85 at Petersburg, much of the traffic from south Hampton Roads would travel west to I-95 and I-85 at Petersburg resulting in significantly reducing the present congestion at the Hampton Roads Bridge Tunnel and on I-64 on the Peninsula. In regard to funding methods, most everything should be on the table, including, but not limited to, a gas tax (also known as a "user fee"), sales tax, and tolls.

3. Question: 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?

Answers of Delegate Barlow

3-A. REDISTRICTING: One of the major problems facing our Commonwealth (and many other states) is the problem of gerrymandering, which has traditionally been done on a partisan basis regardless of which party was in the majority at the time. This gerrymandering results in districts that have odd shapes, many of the citizens within the districts do not have a community of interest, and the districts are designed to be firmly in the control of one party or the other rather than being competitive in elections. I have introduced bills on several occasions to significantly reform and improve the redistricting process, but each time the bill has been defeated. However, if we could pass such a bill, it would strengthen democracy in our Commonwealth tremendously and there would be little or no difference in the cost of doing that as opposed to the costs of the present defective system. Therefore, we would not have to raise taxes to effect a significant improvement in the lives of our citizens.

3-B. Another way we can improve the lives of our citizens, without raising taxes, is by passing a law to make the failure to wear a seatbelt a primary offense rather than a secondary offense, with the person found guilty of that having to pay a civil penalty. Health care costs are very high, and continue to rise, yet a major factor in health care expenses being so costly are the many injuries and deaths in motor vehicle collisions where passengers don't bother to hook their seatbelts. I introduced such a bill last session, but it was killed in committee and other legislators had their bills meet the same fate. However, if we could pass such a bill it would result in a significant improvement in the lives of our citizens, will not cost our citizens more (in fact it will lower their health care costs), will result in less disruption in jobs, and reduce hardship within families which are the victims of such collisions.



William K. Barlow, Member of the
House of Delegates, 64th District