



My DEBATES

★ 2008 PRESIDENTIAL DEBATES ★

As the official companion to the 2008 Presidential Debates, My Debates helps you: find out which issues are important to you, learn where each Presidential candidate stands on them, then decide which candidate best represents your interests. Read through the following issues and check which position is most aligned with your viewpoint. Look on page 3 to learn which candidate you agreed with most. Then watch the debates to see them discuss the issues that are most meaningful to you.



ABORTION

This debate centers on Roe vs. Wade, the Supreme Court ruling legalizing abortion, and the Partial Birth Abortion Ban Act, which bans most late-term abortions.

Which position do you most agree with?

- (A) Overturn Roe vs. Wade. Uphold the Partial Birth Abortion Ban Act. Extend additional legal protections to the unborn.
- (B) Uphold Roe v. Wade. Overturn the Partial Birth Abortion Ban Act.
- (C) Neither. / I don't know.



FREE TRADE

The 1994 North American Free Trade Agreement removed restrictions on free trade, which lowered prices for U.S. shoppers but also led to job outsourcing.

Which position do you most agree with?

- (A) Free trade needs more regulation. Amend NAFTA to tighten environmental and labor regulations.
- (B) Free trade is opportunity. Use NAFTA as a template for similar trade agreements to be pursued around the world.
- (C) Neither. / I don't know.



IMMIGRATION

The candidates offer similar solutions on the issue of illegal immigration but differ on timing priorities.

Which position do you most agree with?

- (A) We should not act hastily. Border security is only effective if used in conjunction with broader policy reform.
- (B) Secure the country's borders immediately before enacting additional policy reform.
- (C) Neither. / I don't know.



GUN POLICY

Both candidates support the right to bear arms, but their positions differ on the reinstatement of the Federal Assault Weapons Ban, which expired in 2004.

Which position do you most agree with?

- (A) Reinstatement the ban and hold gun manufacturers partly responsible for criminal acts committed with their products.
- (B) Do not restrict the purchase of assault weapons. Gun manufacturers should not be held liable for crimes that involve their products.
- (C) Neither. / I don't know.



SAME-SEX MARRIAGE

Both candidates are personally opposed to same-sex marriage but would leave its legality to the individual U.S. states. They do, however, have some differences.

Which position do you most agree with?

- (A) Support the Defense of Marriage Act, which defines marriage as the legal union between one man and one woman. Do not take a position on civil unions for same-sex couples.
- (B) Repeal the Defense of Marriage Act, which defines marriage as the legal union between one man and one woman. Support civil unions for same-sex couples.
- (C) Neither. / I don't know.



HEALTH CARE

With health care and Medicare costs on the rise, voters are demanding reform.

Which position do you most agree with?

- (A) Drive down costs in the private sector. Offer tax credits to purchase health savings accounts. Increase competition between health care providers.
- (B) Expand and reform public programs. Require employers to either provide health benefits or contribute to a public program. Mandate health coverage for children.
- (C) Neither. / I don't know.



WAR IN IRAQ

As the war in Iraq continues into its sixth year, debate among the candidates now focuses on how and when to end it.

Which position do you most agree with?

- (A)** The use of military force in Iraq was unnecessary and troops should have been pulled out by now. Start pulling the troops out at a pace of one or two combat brigades a month. Have all combat brigades out of Iraq within 16 months.
- (B)** Deploying troops to Iraq was necessary and more troops should be sent as needed. Pulling the troops out could lead to further instability and conflict. There should be no timetable for withdrawal before 2013.
- (C)** Neither. / I don't know.



TAXES

In the midst of an economic downturn, voters have been paying close attention to the candidates' tax policy.

Which position do you most agree with?

- (A)** Extend President Bush's tax cuts through at least 2010. Require a 3/5th majority in Congress to raise taxes. Reduce corporate tax rate from 35% to 25%. Allow companies to deduct expenditures in equipment and technologies.
- (B)** Eliminate President Bush's tax cuts. Instead cut income taxes by \$1000 for middle class families. Increase taxes for people making more than \$250k a year. Eliminate taxes for seniors making less than \$50k a year.
- (C)** Neither. / I don't know.



ENERGY

With oil prices soaring, both candidates hope to break the U.S. from its reliance on foreign oil and develop new sources of energy. Their strategies differ.

Which position do you most agree with?

- (A)** Lift offshore drilling restrictions and give incentives to states that permit offshore exploration. Eliminate corn-based ethanol subsidies. Pursue energy alternatives, including nuclear power. Support the gas tax holiday.
- (B)** Oppose new offshore drilling. Support ethanol subsidies. Aggressively pursue alternative energy sources, but not nuclear power. Oppose the gas tax holiday.
- (C)** Neither. / I don't know.



EDUCATION

Students and parents are demanding broader options in school choice and educational services. Both candidates support charter schools, but differ in other details.

Which position do you most agree with?

- (A)** Oppose vouchers. Create Federal grants to get more children into preschool. Give college students tuition tax credits up to \$4,000 in exchange for community service. Make community college free.
- (B)** Support vouchers. Set aside Federal money to build virtual schools. Provide up to \$4K to lower-income students to prep for college admissions tests.
- (C)** Neither. / I don't know.



ENVIRONMENT

The candidates agree that greenhouse gases have sped up climate change. Both support a mandated cap-and-trade program to greatly reduce levels of greenhouse gases by 2025.

Which position do you most agree with?

- (A)** Subsidize more sustainable sources of energy. Introduce a Low Carbon Fuel Standard that would bring low-carbon, non-petroleum fuels to the marketplace more quickly. Export climate friendly technology to developing nations.
- (B)** Subsidize alternative sources of energy, including nuclear. Provide tax incentives to drivers of cars that don't emit carbon dioxide. Push developing economies like China and India towards cleaner energy regulations.
- (C)** Neither. / I don't know.



HOMELAND SECURITY

Securing the U.S. requires a balance between protecting civil liberties and strengthening law enforcement tactics that gather intelligence, prevent attacks and dismantle terror cells.

Which position do you most agree with?

- (A)** Focus internationally to prevent terrorism. Reauthorize the Patriot Act. Create a diplomatic agency to improve the U.S.'s public standing worldwide. Help rebuild war-torn areas while spending more on defense and information gathering abroad.
- (B)** Focus domestically to prevent terrorism. Reauthorize the Patriot Act, but revise it to ensure civil liberties. Create a senior intelligence position to coordinate domestic intelligence gathering across law enforcement agencies. Secure sensitive domestic sites like nuclear power plants.
- (C)** Neither. / I don't know.



SOCIAL SECURITY

The candidates agree that Social Security needs to be reformed in order to remain viable in the future, but their solutions differ.

Which position do you most agree with?

- (A)** Radically overhaul the current Social Security plan. Allow workers to create personal savings accounts to supplement the existing system.
- (B)** Slightly modify the current Social Security plan. Revise the payroll tax system and increase the amount high-income earners pay into social security by 2-4%.
- (C)** Neither. / I don't know.



ECONOMY

The next President will have to tackle the mortgage crisis, inflation, unemployment, and the rising cost of living, and diminished consumer confidence.

Which position do you most agree with?

- (A)** Focus on individuals. Stimulate growth with family-focused tax cuts and expanded unemployment insurance. Provide federal tax credits to those affected by the housing crisis.
- (B)** Focus on business. Stimulate growth with a lower corporate tax rate and incentives for capital investment. Reform home-lending practices and resort to a federal bailout only as an emergency measure.
- (C)** Neither. / I don't know.

ANSWERS:

ABORTION: A-McCain, B-Obama; FREE TRADE: A-Obama, B-McCain; IMMIGRATION: A-Obama, B-McCain; GUN POLICY: A-Obama, B-McCain; SAME-SEX MARRIAGE: A-McCain, B-Obama; HEALTH CARE: A-McCain, B-Obama; WAR IN IRAQ: A-Obama, B-McCain; TAXES: A-McCain, B-Obama; ENERGY: A-McCain, B-Obama; EDUCATION: A-Obama, B-McCain; ENVIRONMENT: A-Obama, B-McCain; HOMELAND SECURITY: A-McCain, B-Obama; SOCIAL SECURITY: A-McCain, B-Obama; ECONOMY: A-Obama, B-McCain

Review your answers, and write in the number of times you agreed with:

_____ Barack Obama

_____ John McCain

Now get ready to watch the first Presidential Debate on Friday September 26th at 9 P.M.

Keep this scorecard handy to make sure the candidates stick to their positions. For more information, log on to www.mydebates.org.