

Post & Courier Election 2020 Candidate Questionnaire

Name: Senator Chip Campsen

Office Sought: Senate District 43

Incumbent: Yes

Employment: Fort Sumter Tours; SpiritLine Cruises; Greyline of Charleston; Campsen Law Firm

Previous Offices Held or Sought: SC House District 112, 1996-2002; SC Senate District 43, 2004-20

1) My passion is protecting our coastal quality of life. I protected hundreds of thousands of acres through the Conservation Bank and Conservation Incentives Act, including Morris Island and Boone Hall. I protected beaches through the Beachfront Management Reform Act, and our coast from offshore drilling by state law and federal advocacy. I've authored constitutional amendments restructuring government, protecting property rights and guaranteeing public access to natural resources. I enabled absentee ballot voting during COVID-19, indexed tax brackets to inflation, reduced capital gains taxes, and created the Future Scholar 529 Plan with over \$4 Billion in private accounts to fund education.

2) The greatest near term challenge is safely restarting our economy in the wake of COVID-19. We must contain the virus while returning to normal economic output and opportunities. Otherwise many businesses, jobs and people will not survive.

The greatest long term challenge is managing growth, and the lack thereof. Exponential growth in our coastal and urban areas impairs quality of life and strains budgets. Paltry growth elsewhere impairs educational and economic opportunity, likewise straining budgets. Growth should be preceded by transportation infrastructure, not the other way around. Economic development incentives and education funding should target low growth regions.

3) Selling Santee Cooper would be the largest public works disposition in our nation's history. A decision of this magnitude cannot be delayed without collateral damage.

I insisted and prevailed in hiring an investment banking team to secure the best purchase offer, management offer, and Santee Cooper reform proposal for an up or down vote of the legislature. Unfortunately, COVID-19 cut the session short before we could act but can't let Santee Cooper languish.

Making my budget proviso currently protecting our coast from offshore drilling permanent law is important. Congress has not acted. I helped convince the Trump administration to reinstate the drilling moratorium, but it's uncertain it will last.

Coastal industrialization from offshore drilling will impair our coastal economy, threaten our natural resources, and diminish our quality of life. We must stop it permanently.

I assisted Mayor's Riley and Tecklenburg secure over \$110 Million from the Infrastructure Bank for the Spring/Fishburne Drainage Project, mitigating flooding over 220 acres of the peninsula. Before COVID-19 I had another \$20 Million to interconnect the Hospital District - so citizens could get to the emergency room, or visit sick loved ones, regardless of the rain or tide. This remains a top priority.

4) Quality teachers yield quality education. And we must offer quality pay to attract quality teachers. Before COVID-19 the Senate was on track to fund the annual step increases (\$50 million) plus a \$3,000 raise (\$213 million), bringing teachers' pay above the southeastern average. The Senate kept the step increases in the post COVID-19 budget. The House needs to follow suite.

We must reform and consolidate our antiquated school funding formulas that punish Charleston and Beaufort Counties through the index of taxpaying ability calculation in the Education Finance Act formula. A Senate subcommittee is working on those formulas now.

5) Former Attorney General Daniel McLeod opined emergency powers present an "extraordinary opportunity for abuse". His was prescient. We have tasted his warning through business closures, school policy, boating policy and access to public resources.

Emergency powers vest with the governor, who may delegate them to others with conditions. In late March I encouraged the Governor to follow this model. My advice was heeded in part, but much remained unaddressed.

Consequently, this summer I introduced bills dealing with emergency powers at all levels. The subcommittee upon which I serve will have a final report ready for action next session.

6) The final week of the session Senator Goldfinch and I passed the Office of Resilience and Resilience Revolving Fund to mitigate flooding. We must now fund them. I amended a bill authorizing hospitality tax revenue for flood mitigation with additional time for local land use planning. We must assure flood mitigation dollars are used wisely, and land use plans incorporate Dutch Dialogues principles for addressing sea level rise.

We must support increasing renewables as opined in my recent solar Op-Ed and pass my LiDAR bill that makes flood elevation data accessible for planning, public works and real estate transactions.

7) With the economy and state revenue forecasts in uncharted waters due to COVID-19, it is prudent to hold in abeyance changes to taxes and fees in the near term until we have more clarity as to the status of our economy and state budget forecasts.

8) It is appropriate to reduce taxes when the state has surpluses of new recurring money. When taxes are reduced it is best to do so in a fashion that advances principles of tax equity, such as my Taxpayer Inflation Protection Act (TIP). Our tax brackets were indexed to just ½ the rate of inflation. The TIP fully indexed brackets to inflation, stopping the windfall state coffers received from inflation. It is a matter of equity for all taxpayers, but as a percentage of income, its greatest positive impact is on lower income taxpayers.

9) The instances I've worked across party lines are too numerous to count. My budget proviso protecting our coast from offshore drilling passed by a bi-partisan vote of 40 to 4. Senator Malloy (D-Darlington) and I were lead cosponsors of the 2010 Sentencing Reform Act that facilitated alternatives to incarceration for non-violent offenders, closed 4 prisons, reduced crime and recidivism, and saved taxpayers almost \$1 billion. I authored laws currently authorizing voting through the normal absentee process during the pandemic. I created the basic structure of the 2016 Ethics Reform Act working closely with Governor Haley and Senator Hutto (D-Orangeburg).

10) This election is about stewardship. Stewardship of our coast, culture, history, natural resources and quality of life. No one in South Carolina has done more to protect these resources. Hundreds of thousands of acres are protected in perpetuity by laws I authored. Laws protecting our beaches, natural resources, history, wildlife and way of life have my fingerprints all over them.

The Lowcountry is under tremendous development pressure. Over twenty years ago I determined to protect our coast so ensuing generations could experience a semblance of my lifetime of adventures exploring South Carolina's magnificent coast. And I'm not done yet!