

Avram Friedman
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Dear members of the North Carolina Family Policy Council:

I have reviewed the candidate survey you've sent me.

I mean no disrespect, but I've decided not to complete the survey as written, because I feel neither most of the questions nor the answers would allow me to accurately express my conscience on these issues.

I was born and raised in the Jewish tradition and I maintain my faith, religious beliefs and set of moral values. I believe these values are shared by most people in the Christian community. Indeed, Jesus was a Jew and I believe the Christian faith is built upon the foundation of Judaism.

I feel it is inevitable that we bring our faith and beliefs with us in whatever endeavors life has in store for us, including into public life, simply because those beliefs are engrained into our hearts and minds from early childhood. But, I do feel that elected officials in a democratic and free country have a responsibility to attempt to separate personal beliefs from the objective law of a religiously diverse state and nation.

Rabbi Hillel stated, "That which is hateful to you, do not do to your neighbor. That is the whole Torah; the rest is commentary." (The Torah is the book later translated into the Christian "Old Testament"). I use this phrase as my moral guide in making decisions and you can expect me to continue this process should I be elected.

In the matter of abortion, I am personally opposed. I would advise any pregnant woman who is contemplating an abortion to re-think and consider adoption as a better alternative. I would support a mandatory 48-hour period of delay for this purpose. But, ultimately I feel it has to be recognized that no one can or will be able to make this decision except the woman herself. From experience, prior to *Rowe v Wade*, we know that women determined to seek abortion will find a way, sometimes with horrible consequences to herself and her family, due to sub-standard, back-alley, un-regulated and unsanitary procedures. We cannot and should not return to this dark period of history. In this case, we should not and cannot attempt to impose our own personal beliefs on women faced with this extreme moral dilemma. To me, such an imposition would constitute doing something to my neighbor that I would not want done to me. Also, we know from historical experience that a prohibition on abortion simply doesn't work.

On homosexuality, I am not a homosexual. The thought of the homosexual "act" is difficult for me to understand and makes me feel ill. But, I am not here to judge others and I don't care what consenting adults do sexually behind closed doors. I don't feel threatened or that my family is threatened by people who admit they are homosexuals. I feel threatened by people who resort to violence to get their way. I feel threatened by people who use intimidation to get what they want. I feel threatened by people who pollute the air and water without regard to their neighbors. I feel threatened by hatred and intolerance. But, I do not feel particularly threatened by people who regard sexuality in a different way than I do, as long as they don't use tactics of intimidation to attempt to involve me or my family in their practices. I have never observed such tactics coming from the gay people I've known in my life. I don't pretend to know the answer to the question of how a person becomes gay, whether biological or taught. It may be some combination of factors. But, in administering my

responsibilities as an elected public official in a free and diverse state and nation, I would make decisions based on the principles of fairness and equality to all people.

On the matter of prayer in public schools or state institutions, I'm not sure why this is an issue. People, including students have always been free to pray in whatever way or tradition they choose. One quote I remember hearing (I don't remember the source) is "As long as there is testing in the public schools, there will always be prayer in the public schools." Humorous, but true. There is no problem with individual prayer in the public schools. A problem only arises when a figure of authority, a teacher, a student or group of students attempts to impose their tradition, beliefs or form of prayer on other students through intimidation or by creating an intimidating set of circumstances that mandates all students to participate whether or not it violates their rights or their own religious belief system.

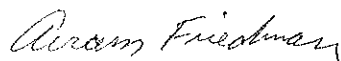
I see nothing wrong with a basic outline of different religious traditions being taught in the public schools to promote understanding and tolerance. I think the concept of "creationism" should be taught along with Darwinian evolutionary theory and other theories and concepts that have to do with the possible origins of humanity, life, the earth and the universe. Thought, debate, creativity, opposing and differing concepts are good for young minds to contemplate. These enhance the educational system. This promotes freedom, American ingenuity, progress, ideas to solve problems we face as a nation.

The danger occurs when the separation of church and state is violated by one group of people who attempt to institutionalize their system of beliefs as the religion of state. If this ever happens America will no longer be a free and democratic state. It would become a theocracy. Despite my deep personal religious beliefs, I am opposed to the concept of America becoming a theocracy based on my religion or anyone else's.

For a further understanding of my political positions on issues important to me, please visit www.friedmanfornhouse.com

Thank you.

Respectfully,



Avram Friedman