

PICO LIFT

Louisiana Interfaiths Together

2003 Governor's Election Platform

As people of faith, we join with families across Louisiana in denouncing the conditions in our state. We will not accept things as they are. Our children are being lost to drugs, violence, poverty and lack of opportunity. We have the highest rate of high school dropouts in the country. Our public education system fails even those who complete high school by not adequately preparing them for college or careers. Our families are suffering from the decay of older, established neighborhoods. They are fearful of the violence in their communities fueled by poverty and drugs.

Our state is rich in resources. We have 63 miles of industry along the Mississippi River, yet many of our people are unemployed and businesses continue to abandon our state. 87% of the jobs with the most growth pay less than a livable wage (\$28,714 for a family of 4), 41% of jobs pay less than \$12,626 per year, and nearly 30% of our children live in poverty.

In Louisiana, we treat sickness more than we prevent it, and we treat it late more than we catch it early. We get care later because many of us - almost 1 in 4 - are poor and uninsured, lacking access to comprehensive health care, most notably primary care and prescription drugs. In 1999, 22.5% of Louisianians were without health insurance, compared with 15.5% of the country and 17.6% of Southerners. Only New Mexico and Texas fared worse than Louisiana.

We will not accept government as usual; we offer goals and objectives to be met. We will not accept leadership out of touch with the people; we offer a real partnership with the new governor of Louisiana.

We ask you to take a prophetic stand; when people of faith work together for the common good, all things are possible.

Therefore, we ask you, as a candidate for governor, to pledge your support for this platform, and to work together with PICO LIFT to create a strategy for making these goals a reality during your term as governor.

EDUCATION

Raise teacher pay to at least the Southern average to attract and retain the best teachers.

Increase percentage of educational funding for classrooms vs. administration.

Assist in building communities of learning, focusing on using school facilities in afternoons and evenings for enhanced learning opportunities for children and adults.

DRUGS

Make at least 150 beds available for free and/or affordable drug treatment dispersed throughout the state. (Currently there are fewer than 30).

Make treatment rather than incarceration mandatory for first time drug possession offenders (not dealers).

HEALTHCARE

Invest in preventive and primary care, and home and community based long-term care services. Ensure that healthcare and medications are affordable and accessible to all. Reduce the uninsured rate to the national rate or lower.

HOUSING

Identify funding sources for the Louisiana Housing Trust Fund, to assist with low income housing, home repairs, and housing for the homeless.

Establish a renters' bill of rights to assure safe, well-maintained rental housing and fair treatment by landlords.

Help cities demolish or renovate blighted housing to create green space or provide new affordable homeownership opportunities, creating neighborhoods that people are proud to live in.

ECONOMY

Create, with community input, a new tax structure for Louisiana that fairly allocates taxes and incentives between businesses and individuals, while realistically raising the revenue needed to make our state a great place to live.

Grow the economy such that at least 50% of jobs pay \$35,000 or more per year, and no more than 10% pay less than \$20,000.

ENVIRONMENT

Acknowledge the number of Brownsfields in the state and work to clean up those identified by local communities as most urgent.

JUVENILE JUSTICE

Commit to the Juvenile Justice Project of Louisiana's platform.

A concerned Louisiana citizen

City

Date