

On the issues: Where the major candidates for president stand














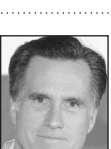
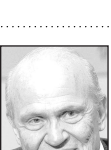
Over the past several months members of the Eagle-Tribune staff have been listening to a cross-section

of Southern New Hampshire voters to learn their top concerns, after which the candidates were

asked for a short response on each issue. In advance of the Granite State's the first-in-the-nation primary

on Jan. 8 and the Massachusetts primary on Feb. 5, here are some of those responses.

(Candidates are listed in alphabetical order; name is followed by party designation.)

	HEALTH CARE	IRAQ	SOCIAL SECURITY	IMMIGRATION	GLOBAL WARMING	TAXES
 Joe Biden (D)	Would make sure every child has health care and that everyone is covered for catastrophic health care. Proposes a new and improved focus on preventive care and chronic illness. Adamant about making sure Medicare can negotiate with drug companies.	"We need to refocus our mission on preserving America's fundamental interests in Iraq. ... We must ensure Iraq does not become ... a haven for terrorists."	"A bipartisan effort is needed to keep Social Security solvent. Raising the income cap on what people pay Social Security on is the best option."	Wants to be sure that we enforce our existing laws already on the books and secure our borders.	"I would cap greenhouse emissions, increase use of renewable energy, increase vehicle fuel economy and efficiency, make government more energy efficient and create incentives for efficient energy use."	Repeal tax cuts for wealthiest 1 percent; extend tax breaks for college tuition; fix alternative minimum tax.
 Hillary Clinton (D)	Proposes American Health Choices Plan that covers all Americans and improves health care by lowering costs and improving quality. Working families would get tax credits to help pay their premiums.	"It is clear there is no military solution in Iraq. If George Bush won't end this war, I will."	"As president, I will honor Social Security's sacred promise to our seniors by first restoring fiscal discipline and then addressing its long-term challenges in a bipartisan fashion."	Wants to strengthen U.S. borders, enforce our laws and allow a path to earned legal status.	Energy plan would reduce global warming pollution by 80 percent; cut oil imports by two-thirds and create 5 million jobs.	"Will offer tax credits for middle-class families and small business to help them afford health care; work for a fairer tax code and balance the budget."
 Chris Dodd (D)	Would ensure all Americans will have quality, affordable health coverage regardless of their employment status, health status or income level.	"If the president refuses to change direction in Iraq, Congress must exercise its constitutional responsibility and act to end President George W. Bush's failed policy."	"I will ensure that Social Security is strong for generations to come - not through privatization, but by getting our fiscal house in order."	"My plan offers comprehensive reform that secures our borders, reduces incentives for illegal immigration, while strengthening our economy ..."	"I am the only candidate calling for a corporate carbon tax, which would punish polluters and spur the innovation of environmentally friendly technology."	"As president, I would work to grow our economy while making taxes fair and providing relief to middle-class families."
 John Edwards (D)	Proposes a truly universal health care plan for everyone that would bring down health care costs across the board, including prescription drugs, and challenge companies that often inflate them for American families.	"We don't need debate; we don't need nonbinding resolutions; we need to end this war."	"I will protect Social Security, not privatize it, and extend its life so every American can retire with dignity."	Supports strong enforcement. People already here should earn citizenship by paying a fine and learning English.	"Our generation must be the one that says, 'We must halt global warming.' We need to end our dependence on oil, to halt global warming and to create a new energy economy that will create more than 1 million jobs."	"I'll reverse regressive tax cuts that shifted the burden onto middle-class workers by cutting taxes for middle-class families and repealing Bush's tax cuts for families over \$200,000."
 Rudy Giuliani (R)	Proposes a free-market solution to the health care challenge and reducing costs by increasing competition. Wants to do this through tax cuts, not tax hikes, and to empower patients and their doctors, not government bureaucrats.	"Iraq is only one front in the larger war on terror. Building an accountable Iraq will assist in reducing the threat of terrorism."	"I recognize the importance of a bipartisan solution to modernizing Social Security that preserves benefits and provides long-term solvency, without raising taxes."	Has made a commitment to end illegal immigration, secure America's borders, and identify every noncitizen in the country.	Plan for global warming focuses on energy independence - expanding use of biofuels, clean coal, and other sources such as wind, solar, nuclear and hydroelectric.	"Will lower taxes and increase government revenues."
 Mike Gravel (D)	Advocates a universal health-care system that provides equal medical services to all citizens, paid for by a retail sales tax. Citizens would pay nothing for health benefits.	"I would now commence an immediate and orderly withdrawal of all U.S. troops that would bring them home in 120 days."	I want to put real money, rather than borrowed money, in the Social Security Trust Fund, investing it properly and identifying the interests of individual beneficiaries so they can leave their surplus funds to their heirs.	"The senator favors protecting our borders and monitoring the flow of immigrants into our country."	"Global climate change is an ominous crisis facing the entire world. We would ... reduce America's carbon footprint, initiate carbon tax legislation, cap carbon emissions, lead the fight against global deforestation and (try) to end energy dependence on oil."	"Will abolish IRS; federal income tax and the tax code; institute fair green (sales) tax with rebates on necessities; make U.S. foreign investment haven, creating jobs."
 Mike Huckabee (R)	Believes we don't have a health care crisis in this country as much as a health crisis. Wants to put more focus on preventive health care and proposes customer-based, not employer-based health care.	"I am focused on winning. Withdrawal would have serious strategic consequences for us and horrific humanitarian consequences for the Iraqis."	"I support the option of personal accounts and also buying annuities with the money in Social Security accounts."	"My number one priority is to secure America's border. I opposed the amnesty bill that was defeated by the Senate."	"The first thing I will do as president is send Congress my comprehensive plan for energy independence. We will achieve energy independence by the end of my second term."	Will eliminate all federal income and payroll taxes personal, corporate, gift, estate, capital gains, alternative minimum, Social Security, Medicare, self-employment.
 Duncan Hunter (R)	Currently not addressed in his platform.	"It is my strong belief that the freely elected Iraqi government will hold and that the Iraqi Army will successfully take the hand-off (from U.S. forces)."	Did not respond.	Has a 27-year record of fighting illegal immigration and promoting border security.	Supports energy independence from the Middle East, would offer tax breaks or credits for alternate fuels, and believes America needs to cut carbon emissions and achieve energy independence.	Will reform tax code to make it simpler and fairer; eliminate marriage tax; change alternative minimum tax so fewer pay.
 Dennis Kucinich (D)	Proposes universal, single-payer, not-for-profit health care plan to cover all Americans.	"The U.S. occupation of Iraq is fueling the violence. My plan, HR 1234, provides the framework for a stable, secure withdrawal from Iraq."	"I would begin by returning the top 1 percent of taxpayers to the tax rates of the 1990s, and keeping the estate tax for those leaving \$3 million or more."	"The United States will not be able to resolve its immigration issues until it resolves its trade policies."	"I've called for a global green deal that would push development of renewable energy in the U.S., creating new jobs in the process."	Double tax refunds and credits for Americans earning \$80,000 and lower by shifting burden to those who can afford to pay.
 John McCain (R)	Would outline a comprehensive plan to make the American health care system responsive to the needs of families, assuring quality care at lower costs by harnessing market competition.	"John McCain is committed to success in Iraq, the central battleground in the war against radical Islamic extremists."	"I believe addressing Social Security's financial problems can be done without raising taxes, and I will work to do so."	Will restore trust in government and as president will secure the nation's borders.	Along with his commitment to clean air and water and to conserving open space, he has been a leader on the issue of global warming with the courage to call the nation to action on an issue we can no longer afford to ignore.	Tax cuts work best when accompanied by lower spending. Will work for intelligently formulated tax cuts, tax reform, lower spending.
 Barack Obama (D)	Would make available a new national health program that will allow individuals and small businesses to buy affordable health care similar to that available to federal employees. Would create a new public program for the uninsured.	Barack Obama opposed the Iraq War from the start and will begin bringing it to a responsible close immediately.	"I will preserve Social Security, forge a bipartisan Social Security coalition, prevent privatization, and be honest about possible solutions."	Supports comprehensive reform that secures the border, fixes the broken immigration bureaucracy and creates a responsible path to citizenship.	"My plan will break our dependence on foreign oil and make America a global leader in fighting climate change."	"Will cut taxes up to \$1,000 for working families, eliminate taxes for seniors making under \$50,000 and simplify tax forms."
 Ron Paul (R)	Believes in limited federal involvement, and in letting Americans choose how they take care of their health. Proposing tax credits to cover insurance expenses.	"The war in Iraq was a tremendous mistake and will only get worse until we bring the troops home."	"To fix Social Security, the \$1 trillion being spent overseas should be used instead to soften the landing of an obviously broken retirement program."	"The talk must stop. We must secure our borders now. A nation without secure borders is no nation at all."	"The only way to address environmental problems is to enforce private property rights. The government has failed at this for decades."	"Working Americans like lower taxes. So do I. Lower taxes benefit all of us, creating jobs and allowing us to make more decisions for ourselves about our lives."
 Bill Richardson (D)	Would give Americans the choice to keep their current coverage or obtain coverage through an existing, well-established program, without raising taxes.	"Our troops have done everything we've asked them to do, but they cannot win someone else's civil war. We need to get them out."	"Cutting benefits and privatization would be off my table. I will keep the promise of Social Security by unleashing the potential of the American economy."	"Gov. Bill Richardson has a record of accomplishment for protecting our nation's borders and striving for immigration reform."	Committed to the battle against global warming ... has a plan for a new energy revolution. He fought to make New Mexico the "clean energy" state and, as president, would make this a clean energy nation.	End Alternative Minimum Tax and death tax for middle class; end Bush tax cuts for wealthiest; slash corporate welfare.
 Mitt Romney (R)	Has put forth a comprehensive solution to expand access to affordable, portable, quality health insurance. As governor of Massachusetts, he was able to get every citizen health care coverage without raising taxes.	"The road ahead will be difficult, but success is still possible in Iraq. I believe it is in America's national security interest to achieve it."	"I prefer personal accounts, and I'm willing to consider indexing Social Security payments for higher income individuals to the consumer price index, rather than the wage index."	Believes we must secure our borders, enforce current immigration laws, implement an effective employment verification system for noncitizens.	"We must be responsible stewards of the environment, which entails implementing common sense policies, and using new and effective technologies to protect our land, air and water, while not inhibiting economic growth."	"I'll make Bush tax cuts permanent; end the death tax; end middle-class tax rate on interest, dividends and capital gains."
 Fred Thompson (R)	Believes every American is entitled to affordable health care, but does not believe in a one-size fits all plan. Encourages greater competition and choice to reduce costs.	"With the momentum of an effective military strategy now on our side, we must press forward, never wavering."	"The indexing of benefits, from wages to prices, is one way to avoid future generational warfare, where we have to fight over higher taxes or benefit cuts."	The government must secure its borders and determine who may enter and who may not to fulfill a fundamental responsibility.	"While we're not certain how or why climate change is occurring, it makes sense to take reasonable steps to reduce carbon dioxide emissions."	Abolish death tax and Alternative Minimum Tax; cut corporate income tax from 33 to 27 percent; start voluntary flat tax.