



# emergeUSA

Emerge USA is a 501(c)(3) non profit dedicated to the civic engagement of American Muslims. Through its Emerging Voters, Emerging Data and Emerging Leaders programs, it sustains efforts across the nation to push people out to vote, conduct quantitative studies and collect voter data as well as train youth in professional development and civic leadership. Emerge USA also separately functions as a political engagement organization that endorses candidates and funds particular campaigns.



MPAC is an American institution which informs and shapes public opinion and policy by serving as a trusted resource to decision makers in government, media and policy institutions. MPAC is also committed to developing leaders with the purpose of enhancing the political and civic participation of American Muslims.

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# Introduction

American Muslims are poised as some of our nation's most highly educated, entrepreneurial and talented citizens to influence 2016 Election cycles across the United States. While dispersed throughout the country, significant populations reside in large cities, with the potential to swing votes and impact important local and federal legislation.

Engaging policymakers, being informed and staying involved is the cornerstone of our work at Emerge USA and the Muslim Public Affairs Council (MPAC). This year, we have joined forces in the face of adverse narratives in American politics to employ our best efforts in asking you, the American Muslim voter, to engage in multiple ways. Your participation in this election year is a crucial opportunity to establish strength in diversity and power through participation.

Faith based values make it incumbent upon American Muslim communities across the United States to contribute to the wellbeing of fellow citizens and be active members of society by partaking in civic duties and exercising the right to vote. This toolkit prepares you with ways to get involved in making American communities stronger.

## Using This Guide As A Tool

Along with showing you practical ways to get involved, this guide will summarize the stances of the Presidential race's frontrunners on issues important to the American Muslim voter. We hope you will use it to spark conversations and mobilize your families and friends as you define what is important to you come Tuesday November 8th, 2016.

As a US Citizen, voting gives you and your community a voice. With this in mind, we have chosen 5 areas of policy relevant to the US Muslim population in assisting your decision-making process. Both Emerge USA and MPAC, through consistent engagement with communities over many election cycles, have narrowed the criteria to include (not in order of importance): National Security, Economy, Foreign Policy, Education and Religious Freedom.

This year, our Primary frontrunners include Hillary Clinton, Bernie Sanders, Donald Trump, Ted Cruz and Marco Rubio. Each have engaged in debates and forums that have highlighted their priorities and stances on matters Americans care about. While we provide information, we do not endorse any of the views held by these candidates.

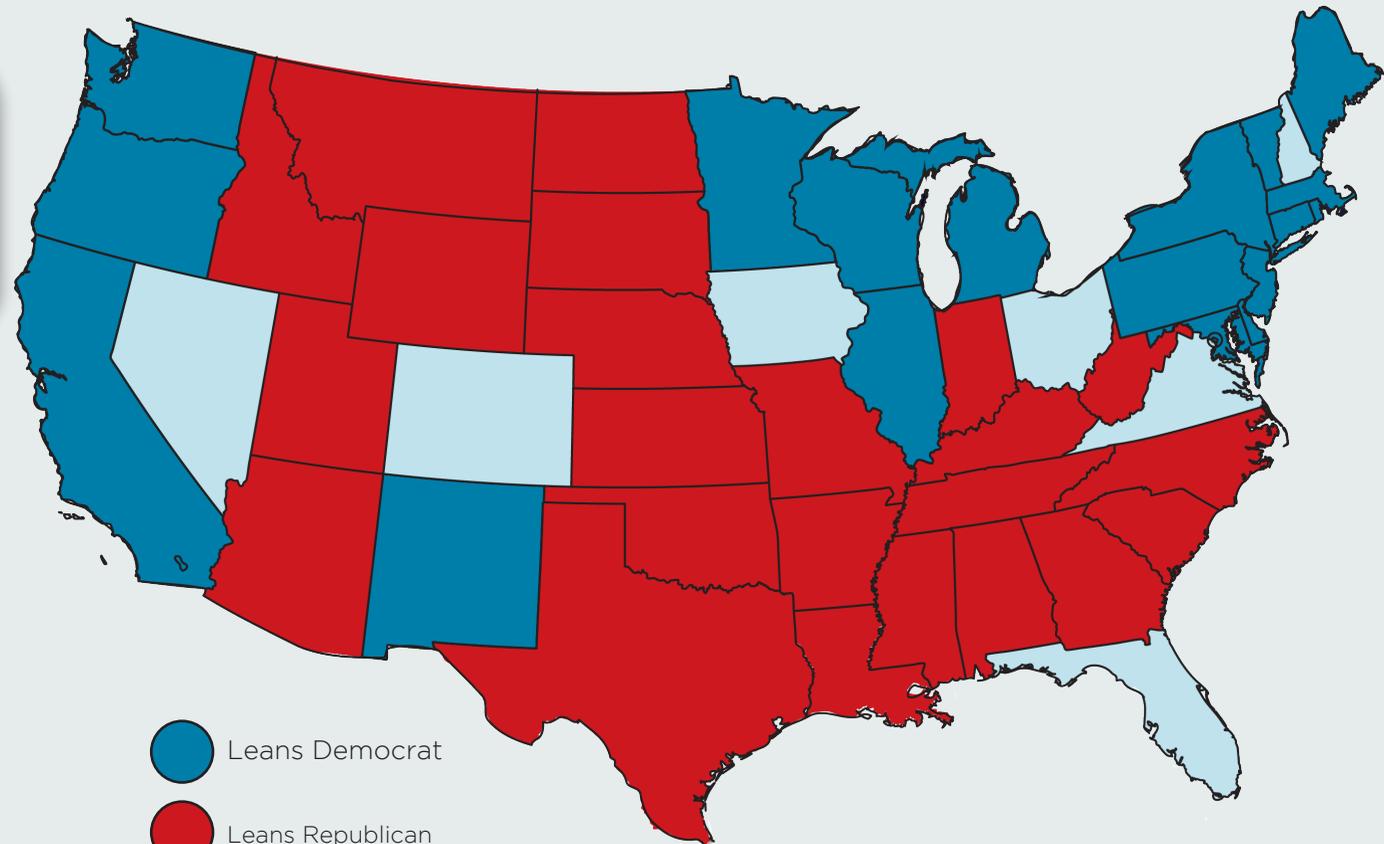
# YOU & The Electoral College

In 1787, when the Constitution was being drafted, the Founding Fathers didn't want the President and Vice President to be chosen directly by the people or by Congress. To establish a role for the states in national elections — consistent with their idea of a federalist system of government — and to protect the country from what they saw as an ill-informed populace, they devised a system that came to be known as the Electoral College.

The system was intended to ensure that a candidate who may have overwhelming support in only one part of the country — which might enable him/her to win a slim majority of the popular vote nationally — would not be elected president against the will of the rest of the nation. In some states, the legislatures chose the electors; in others, electors were chosen by popular vote. The system has changed little in more than 200 years, except that now each state's political parties nominate slates of electors who pledge to support their party's candidates.

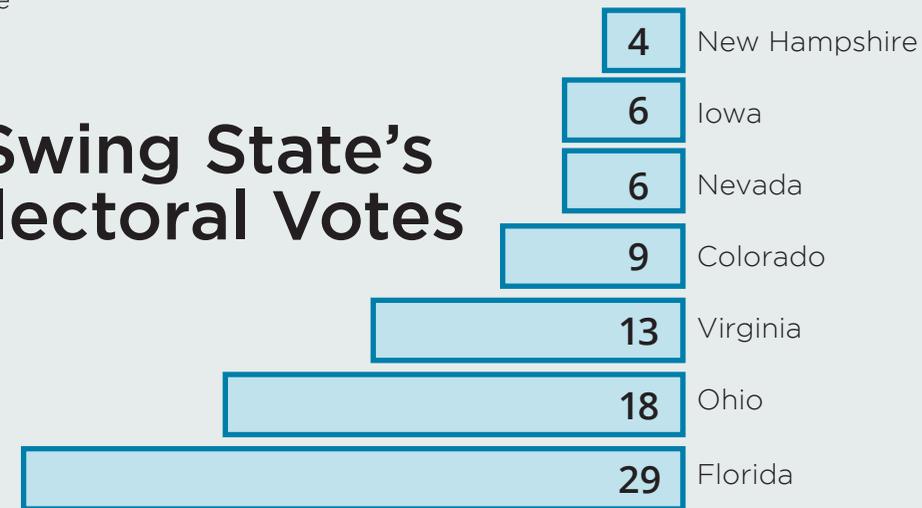
These electors are part of the Electoral College. Each state has a number of electors equal to the number of its senators (always 2) plus the number of its representatives (determined by the state's population), for a total college of 538 electors. The first candidate to win more than half the electoral votes (at least 270) becomes president. The candidate with the most popular votes in a state gets all of that state's electoral votes.

***The system was supposed to ensure that a candidate who may have overwhelming support in one part of the country would not be elected president against the will of the rest of the nation.***



- Leans Democrat
- Leans Republican
- Swing State

## Swing State's Electoral Votes



Adapted from 2015 U.Va Center For Politics

# GET INVOLVED



**Register To Vote** for your local, statewide and federal officials at [U.S. Election Assistance Commission](#). Know your state voter deadline.



**Use Social Media** to spark discussion and mobilize others.



**Host a Debate Gathering** to view and discuss issues and candidates.



**Register as a Polling Place**  
Let your community center or mosque facilitate elections by becoming a registered polling center.



**Become an Election Officer** to assist with Election Day.



**Write Op Eds** that shed light on your perspective on values, legislation, candidates and campaigns.



**Engage in Interactive Town Halls** by hosting candidates and attending other town Halls.



**Organize an Election Forum** that invites local, state and national campaigns to share their plans and positions on issues important to your community.



**Conduct Phone Banks** that mobilize getting out the vote.



**Cast Your Vote on Election Day!** Find your polling places and timings, know your candidate choices, take your ID and exercise your duty as a citizen.

# Election Day Roles: The Basics

## PUSH VOTER REGISTRATION

Voter registration distributors offer people the opportunity to register to vote, distribute voter registration applications, assist people with completing voter registration applications and return completed applications to local county election office.

## ESTABLISH A VOTING/ POLLING CENTER

What better way to project our voice and be involved than opening up the doors of our mosques, community centers and Islamic schools to serve as a polling location? Visit your county's website and contact your local registrar today to find out how to open your doors to voters on election day.

## VOLUNTEER AS A CHALLENGER/WATCHER

Being a challenger or watcher will give you the opportunity to be present at the voting center during the voting process to assist and guide voters to ensure the election process runs smoothly.

## BECOME AN ELECTION JUDGE/OFFICER

Without them, there would be no elections! Election judges are the individuals who check in voters, provide instructions and answer questions, and they generally monitor the activities in the polling place.

# Overview of Presidential Candidates for 2016



| **Hillary Clinton**

Hillary Rodham Clinton was First Lady of the United States as wife of 42nd President Bill Clinton. She later became the U.S. Senator from New York. In the 2008 Presidential election, Hillary Clinton led in the Democratic nomination for President. She served as the U.S. Secretary of State from 2009 to 2013.



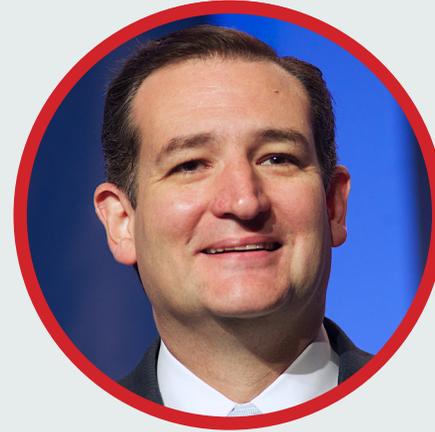
| **Bernie Sanders**

As the longest serving Independent in congressional history, Bernie Sanders is currently a second term US Senator from Vermont. Before his Senate service, Sanders was Vermont's only Congressman in the House of Representatives for 16 years. His re-election in 2012 resulted from earning 71 percent of the vote.



| **Donald Trump**

Real Estate developer, Donald John Trump earned his wealth through projects in New York beginning in the 1980s. He rose to national fame in 2004 with his reality show The Apprentice and its offshoot, The Celebrity Apprentice. Trump became the Republican party's front-runner right after the first Republican debate.



| **Ted Cruz**

Texan and Harvard Law School attorney Ted Cruz worked as a lawyer and then served as an advisor to the George W. Bush campaign in 2000. Cruz was elected to the U.S. Senate in 2012 with Tea Party support and subsequently became a force behind the governmental shutdown over Obamacare.



| **Marco Rubio**

Marco Rubio was born in Florida to Cuban immigrants. He earned his law degree from University of Miami and thereafter embarked on a political career with a seat on the West Miami City Commission. After being elected to the Florida House of Representatives in 1999, Rubio won election to the U.S. Senate in 2009.

# 1. National Security

Protecting the US and its citizens during times of crises through political, diplomatic, economic, military, and other means.

# 2. Economy

Fiscal and monetary means to generate wealth and sustain a robust financial structure.

# 3. Foreign Policy

Achieving national interests through policies that deal with other nations.

# 4. Education

Improving school systems and accessibility to resources for creating competitive workforces within our nation.

# 5. Religious Freedom

The First Amendment right to have choice and practice as members of faith communities without government interference.

# TOP 5 ISSUES

AMERICAN MUSLIMS  
CARE ABOUT IN 2016

# 1. National Security



## | Hillary Clinton

Clinton plans to ensure our military is well trained and equipped to make it the strongest yet. As Secretary of State she was dedicated to tackling terror recruitment and worked on global anti terror cooperation. She hopes to expand National Security to include domestic and global engagement around climate change. Clinton aims to include cyber security and address current mistrust between the public and private sector to increase cooperation and overall corporate competitiveness. She believes both climate change and cyber security issues have economic consequences. Clinton also plans to protect the US by preventing and containing contagious disease as part of her National Security goals.

SOURCE: HILLARYCLINTON.COM



## | Bernie Sanders

Sanders advocates a more proactive and preventative role for US handling of international conflicts. He believes in a strong military with clear goals before any interventions, based on his voting experience on wars in Kosovo, Kuwait, Iraq and Afghanistan. Sanders rejects increased defense spending, especially if such expenses reduce domestic social spending. He opts for the selective use of drones versus eradicating their use altogether. Senator Sanders is in favor of closing Guantanamo Bay prison.

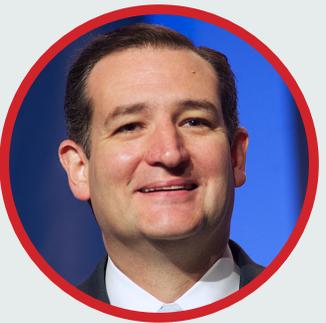
SOURCE: BERNIESANDERS.COM \ FEELTHEBERN.ORG



## | Donald Trump

Trump advocates a crackdown on illegal immigrants as it costs \$1.1b in incarcerations. He claims the 14th Amendment did not intend for unquestioned migration and advocates controlling the southern border and focusing on Americans already in the US. Trump intends to build fences and a wall that will employ construction workers and to increase border patrol by 25,000 agents equipped with drone support technologies. He believes foreign students studying in America should stay and help build its corporations. Trump called for “a total and complete shutdown of Muslims entering the United States until our country’s representatives can figure out what is going on”. This extends to the surveillance of American mosques, a database of all Muslims in the US and no entry for Syrian refugees.

SOURCE: CNN.COM \ ONTHEISSUES.ORG



## | Ted Cruz

Ted Cruz believes the US should be a world leader and defend the interests of its allies everywhere by rebuilding its armed forces. According to Cruz, National Security decisions should encompass what is best for America, which in turn is best for the world. Cruz favors the term “Radical Islamic Terrorists” to describe ISIS and does not advocate the removal of US forces in the Middle East as it would endanger US allies. He is against the Iran Nuclear deal because it makes the US vulnerable to Iran. His goal is to secure America’s borders to sustain national security.

SOURCE: TEDCRUZ.ORG



## | Marco Rubio

Rubio proposes securing our southern border by completing a wall, increasing border patrol, deporting illegal criminal aliens and enforcing workforce immigration laws through visa tracking mechanisms. Claiming not to be anti-immigration, Rubio believes the wall is necessary to prevent ISIS infiltration and that the vetting process for Syrian refugees should be rigorous. Rubio wants smarter defense spending cuts rather than entire budget cuts. He intends to increase the size of the navy and modernize the air force. He advocates for a stronger ground presence by restoring the Marine Corps and Army to pre 9/11 capacity. Rubio promises to improve the military with technical innovation and US cyber defense and offense capabilities.

SOURCE: MARCORUBIO.COM

# 2. Economy



## | Hillary Clinton

Clinton proposes “Strong Growth” to reduce taxes for families, issue tax credits per student, and give working women equal pay, paid leave and affordable childcare. She plans to cut business taxes so employees share profits while streamlining start-up business procedures, allowing easier access to credit/capital, cutting small business taxes and reforming corporate tax loopholes. To increase jobs, she proposes infrastructure building and scientific research. “Fair Growth” will give a 15% tax credit to companies sharing profit with workers and end the “carried interest” loophole to make college more affordable for students. “Long Term Growth” intends to increase corporate wages and training. Clinton will promote Wall Street reforms and hold corporations accountable for individual and business fraud.

SOURCE: HILLARYCLINTON.COM



## | Bernie Sanders

Sanders asserts tax loopholes and breaks benefit the rich and need to be eliminated. He believes there is a huge income and wealth disparity in the US and advocates expanding social safety nets and programs to address poverty and promote productivity. He plans to make housing and childcare more affordable, create more well paying jobs, increase minimum wage and address the gender wage gap. He believes that the criminal and immigration system need reform as current laws increase US inequality, crime and poverty. His goal for the Federal Budget is to have progressive income and estate taxes, fair tax hikes on the wealthy and corporations, a reduction in the military budget and more investment in US infrastructure.

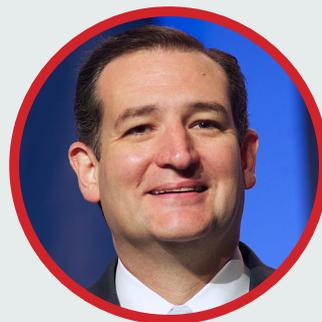
SOURCE: BERNIESANDERS.COM \ FEELTHEBERN.ORG



## | Donald Trump

Trump wants to bring back jobs lost to Mexico and China. He will focus on tax reform by providing relief for the middle class, simplifying the tax code and growing the economy at 6% annually with increased global competition that discourages corporate inversions and adds jobs. He believes in eliminating the \$19T US debt through his business leadership and enforcing strong debt limits. Trump will focus spending on Veteran Administration Reforms that ensure more accessibility and resources for members of the armed forces. He supports keeping the minimum wage at the current rate, believes that oil is integral to the US economy and that some, but not all, climate change is caused by humans.

SOURCE: DONALDTRUMP.COM \ ONTHEISSUES.ORG



## | Ted Cruz

Ted Cruz advocates the Cruz Simple Flat Tax for a “double digit increase in after-tax income” across the board. Personal income tax will be 10%, with families of four having the first \$36,000 tax free. The expectation is an increase in GDP by 13.9%, wages by 12.2% and job creation by 5m more. Through the Regulations from the Executive in Need of Scrutiny Act (REINS), Executive regulation of \$100m or more will require a Congressional vote. Cruz will abolish the IRS, repeal Obamacare in favor of state markets and expand Health Savings Accounts that eliminate employer provisions of health insurance.

SOURCE: TEDCRUZ.ORG



## | Marco Rubio

Rubio sees debt as harmful to the US economy and future generations - he plans to cut spending and fight for a Balanced Budget Amendment without raising taxes. He wishes to repeal Obamacare and reform Social Security and Medicare without impacting retirees. In order to increase global US business competitiveness, Rubio plans to cut taxes to 25% allowing investment back into the economy. He intends to modernize higher education for workers and use energy sources to their fullest. Rubio supports internet freedom and wants to eliminate online sales taxes that burden consumers and affect small businesses.

SOURCE: MARCORUBIO.COM

# 3. Foreign Policy



## | Hillary Clinton

Hillary supports the Iran nuclear deal and believes strong, sustained enforcement will prevent Iran from obtaining future nuclear capabilities. She plans to empower US partners in the Middle East to combat terror regionally and ensure that America does not get embroiled in misguided wars while protecting its interests in the region. To this end, she will build Iraq's military and governing capacity, develop democracy and security in Afghanistan and restore stability to Libya and Yemen. She believes we should accept 65,000 Syrian refugees after vetting and screening. Clinton also promotes resisting Russia's interference in Syria and elsewhere.

SOURCE: HILLARYCLINTON.COM



## | Bernie Sanders

Sanders is a proponent of diplomatic solutions over military action. However, he believes in some form of military intervention in tandem with coalition building on the issue of ISIS in the Middle East. He does not support a US led effort and instead believes that Arab nations like Saudi Arabia, Iran, Kuwait and Qatar should lead the fight against the Islamic State by sending troops. Sanders regards the Iran nuclear agreement as a victory for the US. According to Sanders, North Korea is the biggest threat after ISIS and the US should employ the aid of China in dealing with it. He also supports the United States having a leading role in implementing a two state solution for the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

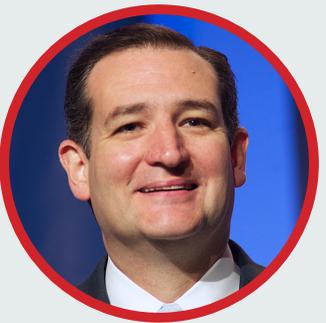
SOURCE: BERNIESANDERS.COM \ THE DAILY BEAST.ORG



## | Donald Trump

Trump believes in improving ties with Russia and restoring US respect abroad. He holds that North Korea's nuclear threat must not be ignored and is against the Iran nuclear deal in favor of sanctions to ensure the safety of Israel. Trump asserts that China manipulates the US economy by devaluing its currency, the Yuan, and that as America's enemy he predicts it will outpace the US economy by 2027. As a "dealmaker" he plans to conditionally support Russia's involvement in Syria while holding China accountable for human rights and consumer development curtailment. He proposes stepping up bombing of oil fields in the Middle East to cut ISIS' core funding.

SOURCE: FACTCHECK.ORG \ ONTHEISSUES.ORG



## | Ted Cruz

Ted Cruz believes that any American citizen joining ISIS has forfeited the right to citizenship and will not be allowed back into the country. He also believes in arming Kurdish fighters with weapons and increasing U.S air support. Cruz is in favor of unleashing bombs on ISIS strongholds with Congressional approval, and sees ISIS as a bigger threat than Al Assad. Cruz is not a proponent of US nation-building in Afghanistan or allowing international courts to affect US sovereign power. He supports the presence of strongmen in power in the Middle East as a better situation for US regional interests.

SOURCE: ONTHEISSUES.ORG



## | Marco Rubio

Senator Rubio believes America should lead the fight against ISIS with Sunni, Kurd and regional allies. He claims radical Islam threatens the West. His plan is to send US and other ground troops to step up strikes against ISIS and remove the Al Asad regime in Syria. Rubio holds that Iran's influence in Iraq should be minimized and religious minorities protected. He advocates broadcasting of US victories over ISIS, targeting its financial roots and preventing foreign recruits from traveling to ISIS held areas. Rubio contends North Korea is a criminal syndicate that wields nuclear power. He does not support the Iran nuclear deal.

SOURCE: MARCORUBIO.COM \ ONTHEISSUES.ORG

# 4. Education



## | Hillary Clinton

Under her “College Compact”, Clinton proposes states be given grants if they ensure students do not take out loans. It aims to make four year institutions more affordable and community colleges free. She plans to cut student loan interest and increase educational benefits with a strengthening of GI bill offerings. “Childhood Education” intends a doubling of investment in Early Head Start and its Child Care programs. Access to preschools will be increased under federal support. For “K-12 Education”, Clinton plans to stress on quality by supporting educators with more training and mentoring. There will be a focus on developing individual student skills and goals.

SOURCE: HILLARYCLINTON.COM



## | Bernie Sanders

Bernie Sanders proposes The College for All Act which promises tuition-free colleges and universities and a reduction in student loan interest rates. The Act also suggests hiring more faculty and increasing the number of tenured professors. Senator Sanders believes that the No Child Left Behind Act needs to be reformed to include the effects of poverty on development and acknowledge skills outside standardized testing. All undocumented children should have access to education and a path to citizenship under the Sanders plan that supports the DREAM Act.

SOURCE: BERNIESANDERS.COM \ FEELTHEBERN.ORG \ TWITTER.COM/BERNIESANDERS



## | Donald Trump

Donald Trump aims to cut Department of Education spending and end Common Core. He favors reduced overall spending while not cutting all services and supporting more local control of education. He believes schools are not safe, do not teach and have serious crime and drop-out rates. Trump is for school choice as a means to improve public schools while opposing Teacher’s Unions, which he says leverage specific funding sources and interest groups which control US public schools. He thinks that comprehensive education is lacking and a focus on particular skill sets dominates the current system.

SOURCE: WWW.ONTHEISSUE.ORG



## | Ted Cruz

With his Five For Freedom plan, Cruz will give states control over the school costs and curriculum with parents and communities leading the way. He will abolish the Department of Education and repeal Common Core. The funds from these department closings will allow states Title 1 funding and Disabilities Education program funds. The Indian Education program, Federal Impact aid and DC Public School Funding and Opportunity Scholarship Program will all be transferred to other government departments. Pell Grants will remain, but as part of the Treasury Department.

SOURCE: TEDCRUZ.ORG



## | Marco Rubio

Rubio wants to end Common Core and terminate Federal decision making for K-12 in favor of local autonomy. He believes federal standards are outdated and hinder the economy. Rubio prefers Charter Schools and school choice, believing they help poorer communities and special needs students more. He sees higher education as broken and expensive, with lower flexibility for parents and working adults and excessive durations. Rubio plans to streamline the Federal Financial Aid application and make loan repayment solutions income-based. His goal to increase online information and access to higher education for families is intended to modernize education while his Student Investment Plans are meant to encourage innovation.

SOURCE: MARCORUBIO.COM

# 5. Religious Freedom



## | Hillary Clinton

Hillary Clinton has been a big supporter of LGBT rights and lobbying, vowing to grant equal federal rights. In the past, she has denounced legislative efforts that supported religious freedoms that curtail gay rights. She believes religiously motivated attitudes toward abortion need to be revisited. Clinton does not support the 1993 Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA) that protects religious freedom, claiming it infringes on the rights of gay communities and other groups. She has defended Muslims, saying that they have nothing to do with terrorism.

SOURCE: HILLARYCLINTON.COM \ WASHINGTONPOST.COM \ LIFESITENEWS.COM



## | Bernie Sanders

As a self-ascribed secular Jew, Sanders is a proponent of social and economic justice as well as the right of individuals to not have religious beliefs imposed on them. He supports separation of Church and State for the purpose of protecting religious liberty and promoting equal rights. Sanders believes in protecting people of faith and of no faith equally and that as long as lawful means are employed, people should express and practice their faith as they choose. Senator Sanders has long been a supporter of LGBT rights, voting against the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) in 1996 and celebrating its being overturned in 2015.

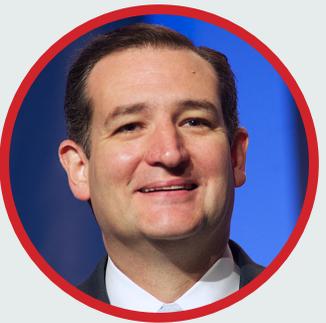
SOURCE: BERNIESANDERS.COM \ FEELTHEBERN.ORG



## | Donald Trump

Trump contends there is a lack of respect for Christians around the globe and vows to fight for greater freedom of religious expression for Christians. Trump has given conditional support for the First Amendment Defense Act (FADA) which prevents legal action towards those discriminating against same-sex unions. He has been cited as saying the Equal Protection clause in the 14th Amendment and the Free Exercise clause of the 1st Amendment are in "a clear conflict". He favors mosques being monitored based on a belief that radicalism possibly stems from them. Trump has supports creating a database and a unique ID system to identify Muslims.

SOURCE: CBN.COM \ WASHINGTONTIMES.COM \ WASHINGTONBLADE.COM



## | Ted Cruz

Ted Cruz believes religious rights are from the Creator. He supports the First Amendment as a defender of religious freedoms for persecuted Christians. His track record shows support for the Texas Ten Commandments monument and keeping "under God" in the Texas Pledge of Allegiance and the Supreme Court. Cruz is against the Contraception Mandate in Obamacare and supported a Kentucky clerk who refused to issue a same-sex marriage license.

SOURCE: TEDCRUZ.ORG



## | Marco Rubio

Rubio supports marriage between a man and a woman and opposes same-sex unions. While he respects that gay marriage is now US law, he supports the tenets of the controversial Indiana Religious Freedom Law, which lets individuals and businesses discriminate against religious and LGBT groups through the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA). Rubio views religious freedom as globally vulnerable, especially in the Middle East where he believes people of certain faiths face genocide.

SOURCE: RUBIO.SENATE.GOV \ ONTHEISSUES.ORG \ THEHILL.COM

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