



Go to polls prepared

POINT OF VIEW: 2008 ELECTION

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If you are like many Americans, you weren't raised in a home that was politically active. In fact, most of us fulfill our responsibility as American citizens by voting once every four years during presidential elections.

Voting is important. Our country's history is rich with patriotic men and women who risked their lives for our right to vote. And if the current economic crisis hasn't affected your pocketbook, it has to be on your mind. The results of the Nov. 4 election will surely impact your family's future.

Yet many choose to stay home. Why the voter apathy?

Fear is what I believe keeps us from the polls. How do I know whom to vote for? What news report or campaign ads do I believe? How will I find time to sort it all out?

When we do vote, we often head to the polls without adequate and honest information, hoping to find "the answer" from campaign signs along our path. We are then handed a ballot full of candidates we know nothing about and a list of "special" state questions we weren't expecting. We exit with an "I Voted!" sticker — but did we do the right thing? The Nov. 4 ballot is an important test that will impact our nation's future for years. By now, most of us know the answer to the first question on the test and can mark our ballot with the candidate we prefer for president.

But what about the rest of the test? Many of the critical decisions that lie ahead for our country, our state and our personal bottom lines will be made by people who are farther down the ballot — those we elect to Congress and our state Legislature.

Last year I discovered an excellent resource for passing "the test" — the [Oklahoma Prosperity Project](#). It is a nonpartisan, election education service that does not endorse candidates, nor tell you how to vote. It's sponsored by The State Chamber, more than

1,300 leading Oklahoma companies and 100 local chambers of commerce and business associations who care about prosperity for our state and our people.

This beneficial Web site, www.okprosperity.com, tells you which candidates are running in your district for Congress and the Legislature. It lets the candidates themselves tell you how they will vote on issues that affect our economy, Oklahoma's ability to compete in the global economy — and our pocketbooks. It provides the pros and cons for all four state questions — plus voter registration and absentee ballot applications. You can even verify your polling place so you can go to the polls — prepared.

When you share this Web site and information with your family and friends, there is no more guesswork and feelings of failure or fear. You just made a difference!

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