



Georgia State Lodge
Fraternal Order of Police

2010 Candidate Questionnaire

Office of Attorney General

Please return by August 10, 2010

GAFOP Legislative Committee

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Candidate Name Ken Hodges

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Party Affiliation Democratic Party of Georgia

Education Bachelor's degrees: Political Science and Sociology from Emory University in 1988. Law degree from the University of Georgia School of Law in 1991

Political Experience I ran as District Attorney in 1996 beating an incumbent with 60% of the vote. I then served as District Attorney for 12 years and was re-elected in 2000 and 2004 by wide margins. Recently, I won the statewide Democratic primary election with 65% of the vote despite tough competition.

Military Experience None

Other: I am proud to have recently received the endorsement of the International Brotherhood of Police Officers Local 623. I have served as the chair of the Prosecuting Attorneys' Council, president of the District Attorney's Association and I was honored to receive the District Attorney of the Year award in 2002. While DA, I sat on the policy and review board for the Consolidated Drug Unit and SWAT Team, and I was also elected chairman of the Southwest Georgia Chief's and Sheriff's Association. Because of my career in law enforcement as a prosecutor, I feel very strongly about law enforcement issues and will always consider myself a member of your ranks.

The Fraternal Order of Police is the world's largest organization of sworn law enforcement officers, with more than 325,000 members in more than 2,100 lodges. We are the voice of those who dedicate their lives to protecting and serving our communities.

We are committed to improving the working conditions of law enforcement officers and the safety of those we serve through education, legislation, information, community involvement, and employee representation. No one knows the dangers and the difficulties faced by today's police officers better than another officer, and no one knows police officers better than the FOP.

The Fraternal Order of Police is a non-profit organization.

Please answer the following 10 questions. Create as much additional space as you need for your responses.

1-What do you consider the most important function of government?

Providing for the safety of citizens. That's why I served for 12 years as the District Attorney of Dougherty County, and that's why I'm running for Attorney General. I have stood before hundreds of juries, supervised thousands of cases, and I have argued before the Georgia Court of Appeals and the Georgia Supreme Court. As DA of Dougherty County, under my leadership, the conviction rate for crimes against children increased from below 50% to near 100%. I will help bring that success rate to the entire state.

2-Across Georgia and the nation, insurance premiums continue to rise. Healthcare fraud contributes to this greatly, yet most agencies have limited resources and training to police it. Will your office establish any type of unit to help investigate this fraud?

My philosophy on healthcare fraud is pretty simple: no one is too big to be beyond the law's reach, and no one is too small to be beyond the law's help. When elected, I will assess the needs of a special unit to help investigate fraud and I will certainly direct my office to aggressively take on corruption and fight to keep down the ballooning cost of healthcare that is due to fraud. It simply isn't fair when the corrupt among us are allowed to get away with abuse of our healthcare system.

3-What is the role of the Georgia Attorney General?

The Attorney General is the chief prosecutor and law enforcement officer in Georgia. I can deliver for Georgians because I am a prosecutor committed to ensuring the prosecution of violent criminals in order to keep our homes and communities safe, fighting to preserve civil liberties, and rooting out corruption wherever it exists. My office will also make it a priority throughout Georgia to protect women and children from sexual predators and violent crime, get gang members off the streets, and battle Medicaid fraud to help protect taxpayer dollars. I am the only prosecutor in the race, and that experience matters.

4-What changes will you make if elected?

I know that our next Attorney General must work more closely with law enforcement, and I'll do that. On day one, I'll assess the office to see where changes should be made to best serve the citizens of Georgia. Any changes I make will be to keep all Georgians safe and fight public corruption.

5-Do you support the death penalty?

It is appropriate in some cases. As a prosecutor, I'm the only candidate in the race for Attorney General who has handled death penalty cases. I have pursued the death penalty a number of times in my career, but I have also withdrawn the death penalty notice for one case that I felt didn't call for capital punishment. I will sign off on a death penalty case only when all due process rights have been exhausted and no questions remain.

I have a three-part test for this ultimate punishment: conviction of a heinous capital crime; certainty of guilt using all investigative methods available; and finding that the defendant is well past any hope of rehabilitation.

6-Do you believe the Georgia Attorney General should be involved in healthcare reform litigation?

There has been a lot of politics surrounding the healthcare reform litigation. I'm a prosecutor, not a politician, so my core interests are and always will be whether the law holds up to Constitutional scrutiny and whether it's fair to the people of Georgia. I think it's dangerous and ultimately wasteful to file a lawsuit before the facts of the law are entirely clear, so I do not believe that

Georgia should be involved in the lawsuit at this time. If it becomes clear that implementation of the law is at odds with Georgians' Constitutional rights, then I promise you that as Attorney General, I'll stand up for our rights as Georgians.

We are currently diverting resources from crucial areas of the budget, including law enforcement. When we don't have the resources to keep our public safety professionals on the job, keep our crime labs open, and fund our jails, pursuing a politically motivated lawsuit is irresponsible and is not the best use of taxpayer money.

7-How will your office interact with Georgia law enforcement?

I carried a badge for 15 years as a prosecutor. I know what it is like to be at the scene of a crime at 2am and I have attended autopsies. I know that law enforcement needs advocates in all levels of government; I will be that advocate.

The Attorney General must play a strong role as a partner with the men and women in law enforcement. I will ensure they have access to training and education about our existing laws, but also for new laws passed by our legislature that require changes in everyday operating procedures. I will be a proactive advocate for law enforcement every day I serve as Attorney General.

I am the only candidate that has consistently demonstrated a personal understanding of the issues facing those that have sworn to serve and protect the citizens of Georgia. I will stand behind the men and women who stand behind the badge.

8-What do you see as the biggest challenge for Georgia law enforcement, and how can your office help?

Georgia is currently facing budget shortfalls that have resulted in across the board cuts, including law enforcement, teachers, and many critical public safety services. It isn't appropriate to take officers off the streets and teachers out of classrooms because of furloughs, to shut down the GBI crime labs, or for prisons to be so crowded that we can't keep criminals behind bars. As Attorney General, I will fight tooth and nail against cuts that hurt our ability to keep our streets safe. In tough economic times, cuts must be

made, but they cannot be made indiscriminately and at the expense of public safety. As DA of Dougherty County, I ran my office at or under budget every year, and when I didn't need more money, I didn't request it. Every branch of Georgia government needs to take that same approach so we are able to spend money where it matters most: keeping our streets safe and educating our children.

9-Do you support any type of racial profiling legislation?

I do not support the recent racial profiling legislation that I have seen. Through the many conversations that I have had with law enforcement officials and my own experience as a prosecutor, the recent racial profiling legislation would not help law enforcement. Legislators need to work with the law enforcement officers who are actually on the streets protecting our neighborhoods when crafting legislation with the goal of helping law enforcement. I will not support something that isn't Constitutional and I will not support legislation that doesn't have the support of law enforcement.

10-When HB 218 was passed in Washington giving active and retired police officers the right to carry concealed weapons throughout the United States, many states, including Georgia, had problems complying with this law. These problems were resolved by the previous Attorney General because of his open-door policy with the FOP. Will you continue to have this open-door policy and assist law enforcement with issues pertaining to Georgia law?

Absolutely. My door will always be open to the FOP to discuss the concerns of law enforcement, just as my door was open when I was DA in Albany. The Attorney General should be held accountable, especially to the men and women serving the citizens as public safety professionals. I have always had an open door to the men and women who put their lives at risk every day to keep Georgia safe. I will continue to embrace your criticism, ideas, and support when I'm your next Attorney General because of our shared commitment to the welfare and safety of all Georgians.