



Restoring Public Trust & Confidence in State Government

As Governor, I will restore public trust and confidence in state government by increasing openness and ensuring honesty in state government:

- **Requiring senior advisors and cabinet appointees sign performance contracts.** Taking best practices from the private sector and those implemented in other states, I will implement performance contracts for senior advisors and cabinet appointees in my administration. I will personally meet with each senior official of my administration to establish performance measures for their agencies that set goals for being more effective and efficient and hold staff accountable for meeting them, with results made public. Performance driven government is an effective way to ensure public accountability in government. Performance driven programs in Virginia¹, Oregon², and Maryland³ have allowed those states to identify savings by allowing managers to effectively identify and target waste and inefficiencies.
- **Making the executive budget process more transparent.** I want to change the way the executive budget is prepared to allow for more public input and to ensure greater efficiency in the way taxpayer funds are spent.
 - Before each agency submits their budget recommendations to me, I will require cabinet secretaries hold public meetings to collect input on how government services are delivered and ways delivery can be improved.
 - Agencies must adhere to a “pay-as-you-go policy:” If an agency is requesting to add or expand a program, it will need to also recommend options to find efficiency savings within their existing budget to accommodate the request without increasing the agency’s existing budget. Once each agency’s budget recommendations are collected, I will put them on the state’s website for public review along with their recommendations for efficiency cuts.
 - Conduct a comprehensive review of all tax credits and incentives that’s submitted along with the executive budget to the Legislature, as a matter of policy that fosters greater transparency of state spending and will promote economic growth.⁴
 - Finally, I will hold a public hearing with the Legislature to present the executive budget and rationale.

¹ Pew Center on the States, “Grading the States 2005: Virginia,” [February 2005](#)

² Oregon.gov, [2010](#)

³ Center for American Progress, [April 23, 2007](#)

⁴ The Pew Charitable Trusts, Pew: States Rely Heavily on Tax Incentives, but Few Evaluate Whether They Work, by Nicole Dueffert, [April 12, 2012](#)

- **Posting state aircraft use on the state’s website, so it’s available to the public.** The public has a right to know how state assets are being used. Greater public oversight will ensure that any time a state aircraft is used, it’s being used appropriately, not misused for personal convenience.⁵
- **Disclosing contributions of board and commission appointees.** Anyone who’s appointed to a board or commission will be required to disclose their campaign donations, with a record of the information to be included in appointment announcements at any level.⁶
- **Retaining text and instant messages from mobile phones used for state business.** In the past, the state has been slow to respond to advances in communications technology and their implications for state records law. The law states that records “regardless of physical form or characteristics” created “in connection with the transaction of public business by any agency of North Carolina government” belong to the public.⁷ While the current policy⁸ allows public officials and staff with state-paid mobile phones to determine how to archive their text and instant messages, the process isn’t always reliable. As Governor, I will require all state phones to have their text and instant messages backed up on a remote network server as other states do.⁹
- **Improving statements of economic interest.** I will ensure that statements of economic interest, which document an elected or public official’s finances, are available to the public online, free of cost. They deserve to know how their public servants make a living and what potential conflicts they have.
- **Enhancing disclosure requirements of independent expenditures.** There’s bipartisan support in the Legislature for limiting the influence of money in our elections by requiring greater disclosure of campaign spending by outside groups.¹⁰ Since the Supreme Court decided that corporate entities could spend unlimited amounts of money for independent political advertising in the Citizens United case, outside spending on elections has run rampant and has most often been negative.¹¹ Having voted for North Carolina’s “Stand By Your Ad” law¹² which requires candidates to appear in any of their negative ads, and other campaign finance reforms¹³, I believe it’s important that when voters see or hear political ads, they know who’s paying for them.
- **Increase criminal penalties for public officials that breach the public trust.** One of the most effective deterrents for public corruption is punishment by law, especially jail time. I voted for the successful law that meant those convicted of corruption forfeit their state pensions,¹⁴ but that’s not enough. As it stands now, two categories of unscrupulous actions, such as filing false official reports and using state resources to get private vehicles fixed, are punishable as misdemeanors; three other categories that include, embezzlement, bribery and buying or selling offices are felonies. As Governor I will seek legislative action to increase the punishment for crimes that breach the public trust to

⁵ tampabay.com, [May 11, 2009](#)

⁶ North Carolina Coalition for Lobbying and Government Reform

⁷ NC [G.S. 132-1](#)

⁸ NC Department of Cultural Resources, [March 2012](#)

⁹ *Tampa Tribune*, “McCollum Text Messages on AG’s Blackberries will be public record,” [September, 15, 2009](#)

¹⁰ *Charlotte Observer*, January 22, 2010

¹¹ *New Yorker*, [May, 21, 2012](#)

¹² SB 881, 1999

¹³ SB 1002, 2001; HB 579, 1999; HB 921, 1999

¹⁴ SB 659, 2007

ensure that North Carolina has some of the stiffest penalties for corrupt practices in the nation.¹⁵

- **Increase resources and enhance the investigative ability of State Ethics Commission.** I voted to create an independent and bi-partisan State Ethics Commission to help ensure compliance with ethics laws could be enforced in a fair and impartial fashion. But increasing penalties will only serve as a deterrent to public corruption if that commission has the resources and investigative capacity to make monitoring compliance and catching corrupt practices a realistic possibility. A recent report by the Center for Public Integrity showed that although the State Ethics Commission received more than 300 complaints, the Commission was only able to initiate 18 investigations in four years.¹⁶ This is simply unacceptable, money spent to ensure taxpayer money isn't lost to corrupt practice is money spent wisely.
- **Sunset review of boards and commissions.** As Governor, I will set up a process to conduct a systematic performance review and audit of all state boards and commissions on a quadrennial basis. Florida has a similar review system and annually recommends that obsolete boards and commissions be ended or consolidated.¹⁷ Setting up a regular process will enable a predictable and consistent review of boards and commissions to determine their relevance, instead of the ad hoc review that currently exists.
- **Creating an independent redistricting commission.** Twelve states have independent commissions of some form¹⁸ that manage the redistricting process and develop voter maps in order to keep political bias from influencing future elections. Politicians should not be allowed to draw their own maps to better secure their chances for reelection, as they sometimes do now.. As Governor, I will work with the Legislature to create an Independent Redistricting Commission that makes sense for North Carolina to ensure that elections are fair.
- **Instituting term limits for legislative leaders.** Legislative leaders should keep their focus on what's good for North Carolina and not remaining in power. I believe legislative leaders should be limited to a maximum of eight consecutive years serving the same office, just like our governors. As Governor, I will sign any bill that comes to my desk that imposes term limits.
- **Increasing the "cooling off" period for former lawmakers and top officials.** We've made strides in putting limits on the revolving door between lobbying and state government in recent years with a 6-month "cooling off" period for former legislators to become lobbyists, but I want to go further. I support extending the cooling off period to 1 year.
- **Ending the revolving door for lobbyist becoming state employees.** We need to ensure that lobbyists don't move into official capacities in state government where they would be overseeing, licensing, or regulating their former clients and in so doing remove the potential for conflicts of interest to occur.¹⁹ Just as there is a cooling off period for legislators and top officials we need to stop the revolving door as it turns the other way.

¹⁵ National Conference of State Legislatures, [January 2011](#)

¹⁶ Center for Public Integrity, [August 8, 2012](#)

¹⁷ [Florida Sunset Reviews](#)

¹⁸ North Carolina Coalition for Lobbying and Government Reform, "Redistricting Reform: Restoring Voter Choice & Accountability," accessed [December 8, 2009](#)

¹⁹ NC Coalition for Lobbying and Government Reform