
Congressional primary candidate survey

Candidate name, age, party affiliation: Paul Spause, 44, Republican

Candidate residence: Hanover, Howard County, MD

Educational background: BS Aerospace Engineering, Penn State Univ 1985

Relevant employment background, including prior political offices held:

U.S. Air Force, Officer, 1985 – 1997. Duties included satellite and launch vehicle operations, and foreign military technical intelligence
Aerospace and Control Systems Engineer, 1998-Present. Experience includes work on space missions with Goddard Space Flight Center, work on modern control systems for nuclear power plants, work on modern control systems for regional power distribution network.

1. What in your own background best prepares you to be a member of Congress?

I have experience in solving problems. The major domestic problem facing our nation today, energy infrastructure and independence, requires men and women at all levels of government who can understand the technologies and work together to provide a solution that will support continued economic growth of our nation without environmental damage. I have academic experience in nuclear power, having supplemented formal classes with independent study of nuclear technology for space applications. I also have practical experience working with the nuclear industry on modern control systems for existing plants and for future, advanced designs.

I have also worked in the intelligence community both in uniform and as a civilian contractor. I have a great appreciation for how the intelligence community works, when it breaks down, and how dedicated women and men do the best they can to serve the people and principles of our nation.

My background makes me a problem solver with the broad knowledge and experience needed in the modern world. The U.S. House needs more problem solvers, not lawyers and politicians.

2. What local laws/regulations for border controls do you support? And what laws or regulations that restrict immigration do you consider bad ideas?

Respectfully, this is a poorly phrased question. I am running for the U.S. House of Representatives, which has no authority over local laws and regulations. Local laws and regulations do not apply to border controls; federal law applies. Additionally, I can list a myriad of bad ideas that restrict immigration; I only propose and support good ideas. I will attempt to answer what I believe is the intent of this question.

There are enough federal laws in place to provide adequate control of illegal border crossing, if they are enforced and the Border Patrol properly staffed to support the mission. I do not support long-term use of the National Guard or active duty military on the border. Border fences, physical and virtual, should be put in place to limit unauthorized border crossing. Enforcement of employment eligibility laws must continue.

I support immigration. I believe U.S. immigration policy should give priority to those escaping repressive regimes; there should be no limit on those granted asylum in the U.S. I think economic immigration must be balanced against domestic work force needs, not the needs of domestic employers. Every foreign scientist and engineer granted an H1B visa takes a job that should have gone to a properly educated U.S. citizen. Industry must support scholarship programs to encourage the development of domestic engineers and scientists. I know this from experience; because the U.S. Air Force had a shortage of engineers, I was able to compete for and win a college scholarship. U.S. industries must support similar initiatives; U.S. public education must produce students able to work in fields requiring knowledge and logic.

I support amnesty for people brought to the U.S. as children and raised here as Americans. A special, restrictive residency status can be given to them (restricting them from sponsoring others) until they can meet all the normal conditions required to be naturalized citizens. Expedited citizenship may be granted to these new Americans who join the military and serve honorably. The law should allow states to determine if people with restricted residency status qualify for resident tuition rates at state-related schools. As an example, California has very restrictive rules for resident-rates; even after 4 years in California as a USAF officer on active duty, I did not qualify for in-state tuition rates.

3. Are you in favor of pulling our troops out of Iraq immediately, or continuing with the troop surge? Why?

My father served in the U.S. Army in Korea in 1952; today North Korea still poses a threat to South Korea, Japan, and the United States. I have learned a lesson from this.

I support continued military operations in Iraq until a stable, republican form of government is firmly established. I cannot accept allowing Iraq to sink into chaos or falling under the political control of Iran; both of these situations will present a continuing threat to U.S. national interests. The surge has successfully begun to stabilize the situation in the streets of Iraq; we must give the political institutions time to respond. In U.S. history we declared independence in 1776 and didn't constitute this current government until ratification of the U.S. Constitution in 1789. News might run on a 24-hour cycle, but political change does not.

4. What negative ramifications, if any, do you see in the government's intervention regarding the increasing number of foreclosures? What negative ramifications, if any, do you see if the government does not get involved?

Industries must learn that poor business practices lead to bad ramifications, not federal bailouts. Even now there is evidence that fixed rate loans are dropping and that many subprime borrowers should try to refinance to conventional, fixed rate loans. With the federal government in place to help, industry is not recognizing its responsibility in this mess and taking the appropriate actions to help customers change their loans.

The government's main involvement should be to verify the business practices that led up to this situation were legal and ethical. If the government does not get involved in its oversight role, continued bad, possibly illegal, business practices will undermine another segment of the economy. I believe government should ensure a fair, level playing field in our free market economy.

5. Has the No Child Left Behind Act helped produce better educated students? What improvements, if any, would you like to see to the legislation?

I don't know, because before "No Child Left Behind" there weren't any decent measures of student performance. If nothing else, the intent of NCLB has put in place systems to measure whether students are better educated. Most teachers are professionals, dedicated professionals, who know they are not supposed to push pupils through an education system without the student meeting minimum proficiency standards. Most teachers are such caring people they would never want to do such a thing. The intent of NCLB was to put the administrators of public school systems on notice that they need to provide all the resources necessary to support teachers and principals in educating every child. Administrators successfully pushed the onus of student performance off onto teachers without taking the leadership responsibility (that they always should have had) to ensure teachers are properly organized, trained and equipped to educate all the students.

I think NCLB is an example of federal over reaching. The federal government should define the minimum standard education to which every public school student is entitled and ensure the states are on notice to provide this and prove it is being delivered. The federal government should step in, on behalf of the affect citizens, when a state fails to meet the standards. This worked for desegregation; it can work now.

6. What is your position on single-payer health insurance for all Americans?

I am clearly an advocate of the free market. Consumer choice should drive consumer-oriented markets. Health care and health care insurance are consumer-oriented markets. A single payer system is wrong and will undermine our health care system. There should be more patient choice, not less. Companies should get out of health care plan management, give the benefit to employees as a quarterly lump sum payment, and consumers should be free to join privately marketed health plans. More freedom, not less, is better for health care.

7. What do you see as the most serious problem specific to your district.

The economy continues to be the most serious problem in this district and state. Rising taxes and energy costs are beginning to affect consumer confidence. AND NOTHING IS BEING DONE! Conservation is not enough to save consumers from the escalating energy costs; and conservation is clearly not enough to promote a growing economy. We must look to domestic fossil fuels to supplement foreign oil, and clean coal and nuclear power for electricity production. We must immediately streamline the approval process of coal power plants with modern pollution control systems and plan for modern nuclear power production. We must begin to realize something from our investment in nuclear fusion power generation; it is the lynch-pin of our future energy economy.

We must also reform the federal tax system to promote businesses, service and manufacturing, to stay in the U.S., not move abroad. We need an industrial renaissance in the U.S. manufacturing sector where our per-employee productivity eclipses that of any other market due to the use of advanced manufacturing technologies. The 21st century U.S. manufacturing economy must rely on machine operators, not laborers. Employee pays will rise, the concept of minimum wage becomes obsolete, and consumer choice revitalizes the health care and housing markets.