

Joe Andrade – Independent candidate for Utah’s 2nd Congressional District

Here are my responses. There's a lot more at <http://www.2andrade.org>

With the national debt at over \$16 trillion, and no budget passed for the last three years, how do you propose bringing spending under control?

"America cannot be great if we go broke" - Preface to the December, 2010 'Simpson-Bowles' Report, formally titled *The Moment of Truth*. The bipartisan commission (<http://www.fiscalcommission.gov>) presents a comprehensive plan:

- cap and decrease discretionary spending;
- comprehensive tax reform and simplified tax structures;
- health care, including Medicare and Medicaid, savings and reform;
- mandatory program decreases and some elimination;
- Social Security reform.

I endorse and support the implementation of the Simpson-Bowles plan.

The 'normal' Federal budget should be sufficient to fund and maintain effective military training, equipment, and materials - but all deployment and expansion in support of an active operation should be directly funded via a specific military tax imposed by Congress for a finite term. We need to pay for military actions directly and up front to minimize debt and its impact on future generations.

I also advocate dealing with unpredictable major natural catastrophes in the same manner – imposing a special one-time national 'patriotism fee' to deal with specific catastrophes.

The Simpson-Bowles report also does a great job on plans to reform the tax code:

"The current tax code is riddled with \$1.1 trillion of tax expenditures: backdoor spending hidden in the tax code. Tax reform must reduce the size and number of these tax expenditures and lower marginal tax rates for individuals and corporations – thereby simplifying the code, improving fairness, reducing the tax gap, and spurring economic growth. Simplifying the code will dramatically reduce the cost and burden of tax preparation and compliance for individuals and corporations."

By 'spending' the report means 'loopholes' – deductions to favor special interests.

I support a simpler, more progressive individual tax code. Taxes, it's been said, are the fee we pay for civilization - for community and for the services we cannot individually provide. They are like a religious tithe. Patriotism is the term we use to describe support of country, national identity, and our joint aspirations and objectives. Paying taxes is not sacrifice – it is patriotism.

We must eliminate waste, ineffective programs, excessive salaries, loopholes, and many other problems. As those unnecessary expenditures are eliminated, the savings should go towards reducing our accumulated deficit, enhancing our strength and security.

How do you propose to stimulate job growth in Utah and the nation?

Good jobs are essential to individual well-being and sense of worth, to families and communities, and to the health and security of the nation.

Our economy is in the midst of a major and chaotic transition. Our *stuff* – based (meaning material goods) and cheap energy – based economy is transitioning to a very different 21st century economy. The conditions and assumptions appropriate to the 18th and 19th centuries are no longer valid in the 21st.

The planet is finite, not infinite – including its atmosphere, oceans, and land. Cheap oil is largely gone. Certain resources (metals, etc.) are getting harder to find and extract. The atmosphere and oceans are now polluted and getting worse.

We are transitioning to a more sustainable economy, but doing it without leadership or understanding by the public. When big things happen without clarity, vision, education, and understanding – we have chaos. That chaos will increase unless we plan for and implement a sustainable economy – quickly.

A sustainable economy, coupled with a more progressive and fairer tax system, will result in jobs for all – and a better quality of life. Details are in my platform at www.2andrade.org .

Public lands – Do you support HB 148 and its language telling the federal government to transfer control of public lands to the state? Yes or No, and why?

Utah's greatest asset is 'its' Federal Lands. Federal Lands 'belong' to the entire Nation. The National Park Service does a great job of managing National Parks, Monuments, and other properties. The extensive national park and monument presence in Utah fosters: tourism;

Federal payments to the state and regions;
clean air, water, and vistas; and
sustainable economic opportunities.
Utah's Congressional District 2 includes:
Zion National Park
Bryce Canyon National Park
Capitol Reef National Park, and the East half of
Canyonlands National Park.
It also includes several National Monuments:
Cedar Breaks
Grand Staircase-Escalante.

District 2 is also a beneficiary of visitors to Great Basin National Park in Nevada (via Delta), which includes Lehman Caves; Pipe Springs National Monument in Arizona (via Kanab and Hurricane); and the North Rim of Grand Canyon National Park (via Kanab).

The land now called Utah was originally the property of Mexico. In 1848 that land was ceded to the US. Further, in 1896 when Utah was admitted to the Union, it relinquished all claim to Federal Lands, although Congress did transfer 1/9 of Federal land to the State as State School Trust lands (see www.utahtrustlands.com), as well as other lands for specific purposes. The Homestead Act of 1862 provided a means to transfer small portions of Federal land to homesteaders. In 1976 the US Congress reaffirmed, via the FLPMA (Federal Land Policy Management Act), the need for and importance of Federal lands as a national resource, for the benefit of all present and future Americans. In 2000 the National Land Conservation System (NCLS) was established, emphasizing the conserving of public lands.

Utah receives considerable Federal payments related to the Federal lands within state boundaries: Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) – about \$36 M/year to Utah – and Rural Schools Fund

Some of the PILT funds are derived from grazing and logging fees, mineral and fuel lease fees, and royalties..

The Federal lands are used by tour guides, outfitters, schools, outdoor therapy groups, artists, hikers, riders, and many others for recreation, research, and study. This is generally considered part of the overall ‘tourism’ economy. In addition the Federal Land management offices of all the agencies involved provide a significant payroll in the local regions. Park rangers and most other employees are local residents, participating in local economies. One example – Bryce Canyon – with 1.3 Million visitors/year – provides of the order of \$100 Million/year in economic input to the local regions.

The Utah State Government is currently on a crusade to force the assignment of most Federal Lands to the ownership and jurisdiction of the State. The argument is that we in Utah are best informed and equipped to manage ‘our’ lands. This argument, of course, ignores the fact that these are not Utah’s lands, but rather the lands of all US citizens and residents.

There is great concern that the State, if it indeed was given full jurisdiction, would ‘manage’ the lands for relatively immediate income to the state via leases and mineral resource licensing, which generally degrades the lands and makes them less suitable for future generations. Federal lands are not a burden – they are a clean, sustainable, dynamic resource.

Critics often argue that tourism-based jobs are low-paying and seasonal, but that’s because we do little to change the situation. If there is very high demand for tourism-based services, then those business can indeed obtain greater revenues and pay higher salaries. We don’t need to only pay the ‘minimum’ wage. And there are different types of tourism – there is scientific tourism (where visitors pay to participate in research projects, ‘digs’, special tours, etc.), eco-tourism (think Costa Rica!), and special education tours and activities. Some such activities occur and are fostered by the State Office of Tourism, but they could easily be greatly expanded.

I endorse keeping most Federal Lands Federal. I will work to minimize bureaucracy – at the Federal, State, and regional levels – to facilitate more effective, sustainable, and appropriate

'use' of all lands. I am discussing the possibility of long term essentially free long term leasing of small amounts of appropriate lands to the State, the Counties, or municipalities for specific community purposes. I endorse Federal-State land partnerships and means of sharing revenues to facilitate such partnerships. I especially encourage Federal, State, and local officials to think creatively regarding such possibilities.

I will also endorse the development of transportation plans and systems to facilitate the visits to National Parks, Monuments, and other 'popular' lands and sites.

My recent discussions with Federal Land managers suggests a new openness and spirit of cooperation that perhaps was not in place some years ago. I do not sense such openness and cooperation on the State level. I'll work to improve the situation.

On matters of foreign policy, facets of the public have both supported and decried military action in other nations, particularly the Middle East. Did you support military actions in Iraq and Afghanistan, and do you believe Iran to be a threat to the national security of the United States?

Military action should be a very last resort and only when the direct security of the United States is threatened. Any direct military action must be authorized by Congress and paid for on a direct basis, via a special fee or tax levied on all households, over and above the normal (balanced!) budget.

We should be encouraging the populations of those troubled nations in their own quests for freedom. The Iranian Revolution will rise again, particularly if world leaders, and especially the President of the US, provides moral leadership and advocates such actions. We can provide information infrastructure and education resources.

We must advocate and facilitate the education of women, as I believe it is the women in nations with excessive religious fanaticism that will facilitate their transitions to more open and less violent societies.

And we must continue to encourage non-violent resistance and the mobilization of masses which can overthrow their own governments, much as what was done in Serbia, Tunisia, Egypt. The film, *How to Start a Revolution*, should be made available around the world for all to see.

Foreign Aid should be limited to education and information infrastructure and humanitarian aid - not weapons or related military aid.

See the column by Tom Friedman:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2012/10/10/opinion/friedman-what-romney-didnt-say.html>

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