

2008 NC Commissioner of Insurance Candidate Questionnaire



Democratic
Candidate:

Wayne Goodwin

Party Affiliation:
Democrat

Profession:
Assistant Commissioner of Insurance,
North Carolina Department of Insurance;
Assistant General Counsel to the Insurance
Commissioner; Attorney; 4-term State
Representative in North Carolina General
Assembly

Hometown:
Hamlet, North Carolina

Educational background/degree(s):
Morehead Scholar and U.S. Senate/William
Randolph Hearst Scholar at UNC-Chapel Hill;
B.A. with Honors in Political Science,
UNC-Chapel Hill; Juris Doctor, UNC-Chapel
Hill; Honorary Alumnus, Pfeiffer College;
certifications from Center for Creative
Leadership, Governor's School, Institute of
Political Leadership, the National Association
of Insurance Commissioners (NAIC), et al

Family:
Spouse - The Honorable Melanie Wade
Goodwin, State Representative, District 66
(Richmond & Montgomery Counties)
Children – Madison, Jackson

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Committee**
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1. Describe why you have the appropriate experience and qualifications to be the next Commissioner of Insurance.

Our Insurance Commissioner must have directly relevant experience to the job. Why? E.g., \$35 BILLION in annual NC premiums, a State agency with 405 employees, and 77,000 agents to regulate. I've served as Assistant Insurance Commissioner for 3.5 years. I already perform some Insurance Commissioner duties. I manage the Western Regional Office (Asheville) and the Eastern Regional Office (New Bern), not to mention supervise the Office of State Fire Marshal, with one-fourth of DOI employees reporting to me. I've worked with the insurance industry to draft legislation and amend laws regarding our insurance market, as well as worked with independent insurance agents and other regulated persons. I serve as Department of Insurance hearing judge. My experiences as a private businessman, legislator, and attorney provide further skills and experiences necessary for the job.

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Republican
Candidate:

John H. Odom

Party Affiliation:
Republican

Profession:
Executive Director and CEO of Greater
Raleigh Merchants Association
Owner/Operator Meineke Car Care Centers

Hometown:
Raleigh, NC

Education background/degree(s):
Wagram High School, Scotland County
Oak Ridge Jr College, Guilford County
Richmond Technical Institute, Richmond
County

Family:
Spouse: Linda
Children: Son Robert Odom & wife Tara; 3
Grandchildren: Rachel, Eli, Wyatt; Daughter
Lee Ann & husband David Neibauer

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Election Committee:**
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1. Describe why you have the appropriate experience and qualifications to be the next Commissioner of Insurance.

My experience as a small business owner for 37 years; 10 years serving on the Raleigh City Council, 4 as Mayor Pro tem; 22 years with Meineke - 12 years working with a world-wide franchise as Chairman of the Advertising Committee. My ability to manage all of these ventures surely gives me the experience to run this department.

2. List your top priorities if elected, including any changes to the operational/administrative structure of the Department of Insurance.

To have a department that is open and responsive to the people of North Carolina.

Begin process on wind/beach plan to maintain solvency of insurance companies in the event of a disaster.

Reduce the car insurance risk pool so that good drivers are not paying for bad drivers.

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Libertarian
Candidate:

**Mark Wayne
McMains**

Party Affiliation:
Libertarian

Profession:
Small Businessman

Hometown:
Fuquay Varina, North Carolina

Educational background/degree(s):
Apex Senior High School

Family:
Spouse - Denise
Children – Elizabeth, Steven, Brian

**Contact information for Mark McMains
Committee:**
Campaign Office: 5013 Martha Nell Drive,
Fuquay Varina, NC 27526
Website: www.markmcmains.com

1. Describe why you have the appropriate experience and qualifications to be the next Commissioner of Insurance.

The people of North Carolina expect an individual who is devoted to understanding their needs and seeing they are satisfied. As Insurance Commissioner, I offer my daily experience of working with insurance companies to see a turn around in high premiums. With my experience on the Fuquay-Varina Volunteer Fire Department, Board of Directors, I understand the high standards as Fire Marshall.

My decision to run for Insurance Commissioner is because I feel that the people should be presented by a citizen who feels the effects of insurance rates each day. I intend to focus on automotive and health insurance as they are greatly impacting the young and elderly. I want to see high standards on safety issues and benefits for all firefighters and law enforcement. I promise to all citizens of North Carolina that you will see integrity at it's highest if elected as Insurance Commissioner.

2. List your top priorities if elected, including any changes to the operational/administrative structure of the Department of Insurance.

A real Assistant Fire Marshal that's a firefighter. The high risk pool needs fixing. Fix under insured. Zero deductible prescriptions for the elderly. Fix the hurricane insurance at the cost.

3. Give your opinion of the current state of the property and casualty insurance regulatory system in North Carolina, specifying any changes you propose.

Have all 100 counties on the same page.

4. The NC General Assembly has formed two different study committees, one to examine rate making and the residual market for auto insurance and another to examine impact of a major storm on coastal property insurance. What recommendations would you offer to legislators with regard to these two issues?

On auto insurance, make it free market and fix the coastal property insurance for all eighteen counties of the coast.

5. What is your opinion of the current workers compensation insurance system in North Carolina, and what changes, if any, would you propose?

Getting it in line. I think there's a lot of work to do there.



Democratic Candidate:
Wayne Goodwin

2. List your top priorities if elected, including any changes to the operational/administrative structure of the Department of Insurance.

Stronger, proactive relationships with regulated persons/industries.

Solving the coastal insurance crisis in ways that provide for a solvent, competitive market and adequate reserves. E.g., I am considering a Constitutional amendment creating a State catastrophe fund that cannot be tapped by a future Governor during budget crises; examining the deductible levels, other States.

Additional high-level P&C experts in Department of Insurance.

Fighting insurance fraud, which requires more investigators.

Incremental rate making process changes in order to promote a stable market during these changes - including procedures that cut the rate hearing time substantially. I'm inclined to support modest upward deviations.

De-populating the Re-Insurance Facility.

Promoting health insurance affordability/accessibility.

Seeking incentives to remedy the recruitment and retaining woes of our volunteer fire & rescue departments.

As with any new administration, I anticipate some changes to the operations chart to reflect my priorities, and to promote efficiency and a transparent, open door, extra-accessible administration.

3. Give your opinion of the current state of the property and casualty insurance regulatory system in North Carolina, specifying any changes you propose.

The current regulatory system - though in place for many decades - needs targeted review to locate potential inefficiencies and additional ways to meet the dual goals of an Insurance Commissioner in any State: a competitive insurance market comprised of solvent, profitable companies AND a system that provides consumers low, fair, actuarially sound rates and a choice of more products/services.

I believe incremental rate making process changes are in order. This ensures a stable market, preventing unintended consequences. Without removing the Insurance Commissioner's role, I've proposed procedures that cut rate hearing times substantially. I'm inclined to support modest upward deviations.

Regarding automobile insurance, I favor de-populating the Re-Insurance Facility of "clean risks". Safe drivers should pay the best rates, bad drivers should pay the highest rates. I'm open to suggestions that don't violate the dual goals above.

To foster further improvements, I have proposed additional high-level P&C experts in DOI.

4. The NC General Assembly has formed two different study committees, one to examine rate making and the residual market for auto insurance and another to examine impact of a major storm on coastal property insurance. What recommendations would you offer to legislators with regard to these two issues?

I'd share my answers to the previous question and reinforce my philosophy of what the role of NC's Insurance Commissioner is. As a former lawmaker, I understand their perspective and know that they, too, want what's best for consumers (individuals, families, and businesses) - all of whom want low, fair rates - and a stable, competitive insurance market. I'd commit to lawmakers my best efforts in working with industry to find common solutions.

Elaborating on coastal insurance issues, I'd join industry in educating legislators about the crisis we face if we don't learn from the mistakes in Mississippi, Louisiana, and Florida. I will provide for the 2009 legislative session the first in a series of incremental reform proposals that ensure appropriate Beach Plan reserves while not causing harm to homeowners. Part of that proposal would consist of improved, low-cost Building Code changes that ensure lessened damage to coastal residential and commercial structures.

5. What is your opinion of the current workers compensation insurance system in North Carolina, and what changes, if any, would you propose?

First of all, the NC workers' compensation system - as governed by the Industrial Commission -- is part of the Department of Commerce, NOT the Department of Insurance. (Chapter 97 vs. Chapter 58 of NCGS) The only role the Insurance Commissioner has on the subject pertains to workers' comp rates and workers' comp fraud.

Notwithstanding, as an attorney/former lawmaker/small businessman, I favor greater efficiencies in the rendering of Industrial Commission decisions and swift action against fraudulent or baseless claims. Because members of the Industrial Commission are gubernatorial appointments, I'd encourage the next Governor to choose the best-qualified, independent-minded appointees.

As Insurance Commissioner, I'd support medical cost containment and other measures that tackle the primary impetus behind rising workers' comp rates in some States; and, the bolstering of efforts to root out fraud - whether by an insurance agent, a worker, or a company; this will keep rates down and reward those who play by the rules.



Republican Candidate:
John H. Odom

3. Give your opinion of the current state of the property and casualty insurance regulatory system in North Carolina, specifying any changes you propose.

My opinion of the current state of the insurance department overall is that the systems are antiquated and need to be reviewed. There are many states around us that have options that we could review and adapt to North Carolina's needs. I will form a study group made of individuals and agents to identify the problems and find the right solutions.

4. The NC General Assembly has formed two different study committees, one to examine rate making and the residual market for auto insurance and another to examine impact of a major storm on coastal property insurance. What recommendations would you offer to legislators with regard to these two issues?

As in Question 3, there are many states with lower rates than we do but do not have our large risk pool. I would look for examples that have worked in other places. As to a major storm on coastal properties, I have begun the process of what was called 'regionalism' at the Appalachian State University Symposium. I have spent a morning with Georgia Commissioner, John Oxendine and the Director in South Carolina spoke at the symposium. The willingness of these two states to at least come to the table for discussion is refreshing. This problem should have been studied years ago. We are clearly at risk.

5. What is your opinion of the current workers compensation insurance system in North Carolina, and what changes, if any, would you propose?

As a small business owner, I definitely have an opinion on this issue. However, at this time, I have not finished the due diligence that I need to answer this question at this time.

This NC Commissioner of Insurance candidate questionnaire was produced by the Insurance Federation of North Carolina (IFNC), a trade association representing the property and casualty insurance industry in North Carolina.

The candidates' responses to this questionnaire are presented here as they were received by IFNC, and are provided to the public in an effort to educate voters on the positions of these candidates; IFNC does not support or endorse candidates for public office.

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