



**2013 SOUTH CAROLINA  
1ST CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT SCORECARD**

# THE CANDIDATES



## **Elizabeth Colbert Busch (Democrat)**

Colbert Busch serves as the director of sales and marketing at Clemson University. She founded the Executive Board of Directors of Charleston Women in International Trade as well as serving as Chair of the Maritime Association Port of Charleston.



## **Eugene Platt (Green)**

Platt is retired from Federal Civil Service. He is an elected member of the James Island Public Service District Commission, having served since 1993.



## **Mark Sanford (Republican)**

Sanford is an American politician from South Carolina, who was the 115th Governor of South Carolina from 2003 to 2011. Sanford previously held the first Congressional District seat from 1995–2001.

# 2013 SOUTH CAROLINA 1ST CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT SCORECARD

	Colbert Busch	Platt	Sanford
What role would religion play in the candidate's decision making in his or her role as a U.S. Representative?	A	F	C
Does the candidate support a science based curriculum in public schools and reject the use of public funding of religious schools or religiously-based curriculums?	B	A	F
Does the candidate support social policies that do not discriminate based on religion, such as marriage equality?	A	N/A	F
<b>FINAL GRADE</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>F</b>

**Key:**

Candidate's remarks and/or actions toward the Secular Coalition's stances have been:

- A:** Generally or consistently positive.
- B:** Neutral or occasionally positive.
- C:** Mixed, with positive and negative responses.
- F:** Generally or consistently hostile or negative.
- N/A:** At the time of publication, the Secular Coalition for America was unable to verify the candidate's position or did not have enough information to rate the candidate.

*The above chart is based on the topics and individual public candidate responses in the following sections.*

# INDIVIDUAL CANDIDATE RESPONSES

What role would religion play in the candidate's decision making in his or her role as a U.S. Representative?

- **Colbert Busch:** Makes no mention of religion within the issues pages of her campaign website on topics related to the Secular Coalition's issues.
- **Platt:** "His political positions are informed by love for country and community and by his understanding of the Gospels."<sup>1</sup> Platt's website describes his views on the climate coming from an explicitly Christian prayer, "His feelings are reflected in this prayer 'For the Conservation of Natural Resources': Almighty God, in giving us dominion over things on earth, you made us fellow workers in your creation: Give us wisdom and reverence so to use the resources of nature, that no one may suffer from our abuse of them, and that generations yet to come may continue to praise you for your bounty; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."<sup>2</sup>
- **Sanford:** At his run-off victory speech Sanford dedicated a good portion to his belief in God<sup>3</sup> and has supported policies that promote religion in public schools. In an apparent effort to respect separation of church and state, Sanford would not endorse the South Carolina license plates with crosses on them.<sup>4</sup>

Does the candidate support a science-based curriculum in public schools and reject the use of public funding of religious schools or religiously-based curriculums?

- **Colbert Busch:** "I want to expand school choice both by making sure every neighborhood school is a great school and giving states the option to use federal dollars to expand school choice through single gender schools, online learning, magnet, charter, Montessori, creative arts, and math and science schools."<sup>5</sup>
- **Platt:** "...he respects the rights of parents to choose private education at their own expense."<sup>6</sup>
- **Sanford:** Voted YES to create a non-profit corporation to administer federally-funded vouchers for low-income children in the District of Columbia.<sup>7</sup> Voted YES on vouchers for private and parochial schools,<sup>8</sup> Endorses teacher-led prayer and displaying the 10 Commandments in public schools.<sup>9</sup> Sanford says he believes intelligent design should be taught in his state's public school classrooms. In a Sunday appearance on a WIS-TV program, Sanford said there is nothing wrong

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<sup>1</sup> Eugene Platt campaign website, <http://voteplatt.com/about/>

<sup>2</sup> Eugene Platt campaign website, <http://voteplatt.com/issues/>

<sup>3</sup> Smith, Bruce, "SC's ex-Gov. Sanford clears hurdle in comeback bid," Associated Press, April 3, 2013, <http://www.usnews.com/news/politics/articles/2013/04/03/voters-decide-on-mark-sanfords-comeback-attempt;> retrieved on April 10, 2013

<sup>4</sup> Etheridge, Eric, "Mark Sanford: The GOP's Goldwater Solution?" New York Times, March 18, 2009, [http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/03/18/mark-sanford-the-gops-goldwater-solution/;](http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/03/18/mark-sanford-the-gops-goldwater-solution/) retrieved on April 10, 2013

<sup>5</sup> Elizabeth Colbert Busch campaign website, <http://colbertbuschforcongress.com/issues/education-policy/>

<sup>6</sup> Eugene Platt campaign website, <http://voteplatt.com/issues/>

<sup>7</sup> Amendment introduced by Arme, R-TX; Bill HR 4380; vote number 1998-411 on Aug 6, 1998

<sup>8</sup> Bill sponsored by Riggs, R-CA; Bill HR 2746 ; vote number 1997-569 on Nov 4, 1997

<sup>9</sup> 2002 S.C. Gubernatorial National Political Awareness Test , Nov 1, 2002

with presenting students with alternatives to the theory of evolution. "I think that it's just ... that there are real chinks in the armor of evolution being the only way we came about," Sanford said. "The idea of there being a, you know, a little mud hole and two mosquitoes get together and the next thing you know you have a human being is completely at odds with, you know, one of the laws of thermodynamics."<sup>10</sup>

Does the candidate support social policies that do not discriminate based on religion, such as marriage equality?

- **Colbert Busch:** In response to a question tweeted to her in early April 2013, Colbert-Busch responded as being "both pro-choice and in favor of marriage equality."<sup>11</sup>
- **Platt: N/A**
- **Sanford:** Sanford said "You have to differentiate between gay rights and gay marriage" and defended "the traditional definition of marriage."<sup>12</sup> Sanford voted for the Defense of Marriage act in 1996.<sup>13</sup> Sanford supports redirecting welfare funding to faith-based and community-based private organizations.<sup>14</sup>

## Methodology

Candidates were graded only on questions for which the Secular Coalition was able to identify the candidates' position—either through statements or previous actions. For each response, the candidates were given a grade of A, B, C or F. An "A" grade earned the candidate 3 points, "B" earned 2 points, "C" earned 1 point and an F earned 0 points. An average of the candidates' grades for each question were averaged for each section. Grades of "N/A" indicate that the Secular Coalition was unable to identify the candidate's position on the given topic. The section averages were then averaged for the total score. N/A grades were not factored into the candidate's score.

**Averages were compiled on the following scale:**

A = 2.25 – 3.0  
B = 1.50 – 2.24  
C = 0.75 – 1.49  
F = 0.0 – 0.74

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<sup>10</sup> "S.C. governor OK with intelligent design", UPI, January 31, 2013, [http://www.upi.com/Science\\_News/2006/01/31/SC-governor-OK-with-intelligent-design/UPI-11101138732975/](http://www.upi.com/Science_News/2006/01/31/SC-governor-OK-with-intelligent-design/UPI-11101138732975/); retrieved April 10, 2013

<sup>11</sup> @ColbertBuschSC, Twitter, <http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:BOx0aF6G-asJ:https://twitter.com/ColbertBuschSC/statuses/313743621490872320+&cd=1&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=us>

<sup>12</sup> Behre, Robert, "1st Congressional District candidates speak up on gay marriage, other issues," The Post and Courier, March 12, 2013, <http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20130312/PC16/130319795/1006/1st-congressional-district-candidates-speak-up-on-gay-marriage-other-issues>; retrieved April 10, 2013

<sup>13</sup> Linkins, Jason, "Mark Sanford On Marriage Equality: 'Who Are You To Deny Love?' Asks Jake Tapper", Huffington Post, April 4, 2013, [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/04/04/mark-sanford-marriage-equality\\_n\\_3011558.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/04/04/mark-sanford-marriage-equality_n_3011558.html); retrieved April 10, 2013

<sup>14</sup> 2002 S.C. Gubernatorial National Political Awareness Test , Nov 1, 2002



The Secular Coalition for America is a 501(c)(4) advocacy organization whose purpose is to amplify the diverse and growing voice of the nontheistic community in the United States. We are located in Washington, D.C. for ready access to government, activist partners and the media. [Our staff](#) lobbies U.S. Congress on [issues](#) of special concern to our [constituency](#).

Our [member organizations](#) are established 501(c)(3) nonprofits who serve atheists, agnostics, humanists, freethinkers and other nontheistic Americans. Their purpose in founding the coalition was to formalize a cooperative structure for visible, unified activism to improve the civic situation of citizens with a naturalistic worldview. A number of [additional organizations](#) have endorsed our mission statement.

### **Member Organizations**

- American Atheists – [www.atheists.org](http://www.atheists.org)
- American Ethical Union – [www.aeu.org](http://www.aeu.org)
- American Humanist Association – [www.americanhumanist.org](http://www.americanhumanist.org)
- Atheist Alliance of America – [www.atheistallianceamerica.org](http://www.atheistallianceamerica.org)
- Camp Quest – [www.campquest.org](http://www.campquest.org)
- Council for Secular Humanism – [www.secularhumanism.org](http://www.secularhumanism.org)
- Institute for Humanist Studies – [www.humaniststudies.org](http://www.humaniststudies.org)
- Military Association of Atheists and Freethinkers – [www.militaryatheists.org](http://www.militaryatheists.org)
- Secular Student Alliance— [www.secularstudents.org](http://www.secularstudents.org)
- Society for Humanistic Judaism – [www.shj.org](http://www.shj.org)



The Secular Coalition for South Carolina is an established state chapter of the Secular Coalition for America, which lobbies state lawmakers on behalf of secular Americans in South Carolina.

For more information on the Secular Coalition for South Carolina, visit [http://secular.org/states/chapters/south\\_carolina](http://secular.org/states/chapters/south_carolina)