

## Policy vs. Principle

Lea Wojciechowski

As the election draws nearer, so many Americans are basing their votes on policy issues instead of on principle. Once a principle is identified (i.e., economic depression is bad), the question is one of policy – which policy will better lead us out of economic depression? The candidates, as informed voters know, differ on many ideas regarding what kind of policies to apply to our country to make life better for its people. Though the candidates may disagree on which policies to put forth, they often agree on the root principles.

Trouble arises when people put policy ahead of principle. Policy disagreements are important, but principle differences rise to another whole level. For example, if candidates A and B agree that some measure must be taken to reduce crime, but disagree on what that measure should be, they have a policy disagreement. However, if candidate A wants to legalize all forms of crime and candidate B believes crime should be reduced, they have a principle disagreement. This case is much more important and requires voters to be more attentive to the issue.

By nature, humans are moral beings. Our morals – our principles – shape us and affect our views and what we stand for. When we make important decisions such as voting, we must let our morals guide us to look at the deeper issues and stand up for good principles, not just what we believe are good policies. Strictly considering policy questions and sacrificing deep, important principle issues will lead to deeper and far graver consequences. We cannot let policy override the foundational principles of our moral selves and of our country.

What principles do the candidates stand for this election?