

I want you to be among the first to know, I am running to become Mayor of Nashville.

The Bone family has called Middle Tennessee home since 1785. Generations of my family have made our lives here and built businesses here, while embracing civic responsibility. Sacha and I have also chosen to call Nashville home and we are raising our four children (ages 4-12) in this amazing city. I have always worked to stay true to my family's legacy of community involvement. Over the last several months, I have participated in hundreds of meetings and listened to people from all over this city, and it is clear to me that I share your views as to where Nashville is headed and what issues concern all of us.

These interactions compel me to pursue a more active role in leading Nashville's next chapter, and have confirmed for me the following beliefs and observations:

I believe Nashville is poised to build upon the progress, growth, economic development and **momentum** that has been more than 30 years in the making and that has accelerated over the last 10 years. We need to continue being proactive by investing throughout our entire city with the goal of attracting new businesses and facilitating the growth of existing businesses. The continued expansion of our property tax base in a fiscally responsible way and in a way that benefits each and every unique community that comprises Nashville is vital.

I believe our greatest strength as a city is our **diversity**. As a community, we have made the conscious decision that embracing diversity is not only the "right thing to do," but also provides profound cultural and economic benefits. As author and new Nashville resident, Jon Meacham, suggested in describing his new home, "culture is commerce." Frankly, Nashville's organic brand and culture, which are rooted in diversity, are what sets us apart as a city and create tremendous economic and quality of life opportunities.

I believe our **children and education** must remain Nashville's most important priority. This means that we must continue funding both the operational and capital needs of our school system while engaging in an improved dialogue on how best to accomplish education reform. Given the prosperity of this city, we have an opportunity and a duty to develop and pursue innovative programs that guarantee equal opportunity for all of our children to succeed in school, such as implementing a Pre-K program and, with more than 150 languages being spoken in our schools, becoming a national leader in transitioning first generation Americans into the classroom. In addition, as a community we must recommit ourselves to focus on improving the lives of all our children and their families when not in school. Only by creating an environment that supports and encourages our young people can we ensure they are prepared not only for school, but also for adulthood.

I believe, on a long term basis, Nashville will be judged, not by whether we continue to be recognized as the "It City," but by how we respond to and deal with the issues of **poverty and homelessness**. Given the resources that already exist in Nashville, it is inexcusable that we cannot more effectively and meaningfully address these issues.

I believe **public safety** and continuing to reduce crime and eliminate the fear it creates must remain priorities for our city. Our crime rate is low and declining. To continue this trend, we realize that we must pursue initiatives that address safety, emergency preparedness, crime prevention and that empower our neighborhoods to work in partnership with the police.

I believe we must maintain and strengthen Nashville's position as the "**Healthcare Capital of the World.**" According to the Nashville Health Care Council, the health care industry contributes an overall economic benefit of nearly \$30 billion and more than 200,000 jobs to the local economy annually. Nashville is home to more than 250 health care companies, 13 of which are publicly traded. As a city, we must continue to be aggressive in attracting more health care businesses to locate and expand their operations in Nashville while exporting the services we have to offer around the world.

I believe the **music, arts and entertainment** industry not only makes us unique, but that their \$13 billion annual economic impact is critical to our economy. According to a recent report from the Music City Music Council, "the Nashville area has more music industry jobs than any other U.S. city in relation to population and total employment, even more than New York or Los Angeles. According to the findings, the music industry helps create and sustain more than 56,000 jobs in the Nashville area, supporting more than \$3.2 billion of labor income annually." As the Music City Music Council is focused, we must continue "developing strategies toward heightening the awareness and development of Nashville as the global Music City." We must also continue developing strategies that fuel innovation and support our creative sector.

I believe the **tourism and hospitality** industry is vital to our economy and that we must do everything within our power to continue expanding our worldwide appeal. With direct visitor spending exceeding \$4.6 billion annually and the total number of annual visitors exceeding 11.8 million (as calculated by the Nashville Convention & Visitors Corp.), we must make the necessary investments that emphasize Nashville as a premier destination city.

I believe we must continue to promote **entrepreneurship** and support **small businesses**. This is the foundation of Nashville's diverse economy. Considering that small businesses employing nine or less employees account for approximately 70% of the businesses in the Nashville area and that 26% of our workforce are employed by an entrepreneur, we must support and equip small businesses and entrepreneurs with tools similar to those that we provide to larger businesses, including tax incentives and new programs.

I believe a **regional mass transit strategy** led by Nashville must be pursued, one that addresses impending growth and that continues to make our city competitive and accessible for those who live, work, play, study and visit here. As a part of this, our substantial infrastructure needs must be addressed locally through early and open discussions with our partners.

My conversations with hundreds of people have helped me gain an appreciation of our opportunities and our challenges as a city. They have led me to two conclusions:

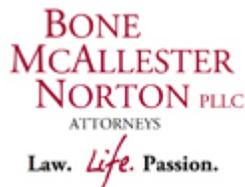
- Without question, Nashville is headed in the right direction, but we have important challenges that must be addressed in a collaborative and responsible way that involve the whole community; and
- Our next Mayor must be bold if we are to sustain the city's momentum and meet these challenges.

I will make a formal announcement and appoint a campaign treasurer in the coming weeks, but I wanted to share with you my thoughts now, with the hope that you will join my family and me in this journey and support our campaign. I ask that you please save the date of June 25, 2014 at 5 p.m. for a campaign kickoff and fundraiser. I will provide you with additional details shortly. I hope you will attend this event, participate in our campaign, and continue believing in Nashville.

Thank you for your friendship.

Sincerely,

Charles Robert



Charles Robert Bone | Attorney
Bone McAllester Norton PLLC
511 Union Street / Suite 1600 / Nashville, TN 37219
tel (615) 238-6394 / fax (615) 687-5597
crb@bonelaw.com / www.bonelaw.com

Follow Me:   