



questionnaire answers

1 message

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Yes, going for public financing

No primary opponent

Yes, have GOP opponent for November 4th

Parks-Funding should be kept in a lockbox to prevent raiding to general fund.

Transportation- We have made good in exercising initial discipline to catch up on long deferred maintenance of infrastructure. It will take more fiscal discipline in the future to invest in this as we should.

Propert tax reform-I am a former four term First Selectman of a small town, Essex, where local education is nearly three quarters of our budget. Property tax reform has long been needed. Several towns I represent are short funded with the Educational Cost Sharing (ECS) model. This makes it very challenging to properly fund local capitol improvements, among other things. This is where the STEAP grants and other state opportunities have helped bridge the shortfall, so towns don't have to make large tax increases.

Pesticides- More and more legitimate academic studies are linking pesticides with cancer, birth defects, neurotoxicity, hyperactivity, developmental delays, behavioral disorders, and lymphoma. When I was Essex First Selectman, we instituted pesticide free care in our schools before it became law with the preK through eighth grade. We did the same with parks, though since I have left, the parks have gone back to using pesticides.

This subject is a heavy lift that is necessary, because although many modern landscape professionals get their training in pesticide industry sponsored programs which orient them to the chemical regimen. Many therefore lack "old school" ways to enricvhing soil to grow best turf, instead of potentially harmful chemicals. Many of these professionals resent our efforts to have a say in this, proving that the professionals do not necessarily know better. The industry has spent money to discredit our previous efforts, and they have had some unlikely stooges on their side, like the municipal mouthpieces at CCM. I'm not sure that giving towns more authority by law would be helpful. It could change with different regimes coming to power. I think legislation is the key, even though the resentment

against this will be palpable. In my opinion, upholding public health trumps all that, and I'm willing to try and make this case. In fact, I'm willing to sponsor legislation which would provide an up front grant to help towns convert to organic and sustainable lawn and turf care, since several municipalities, including Hartford, have expressed a reservation to go sustainable because of the up front costs.

Microbeads- I support outlawing them, especially since there are biodegradable substitutes readily available, such as certain crushed nutshell husks.

Conservation lands- I led the efforts to repeal the Haddam land swap of 2011, a terrible public policy gaffe, where our legislature sought to convey conservation land as though it were surplus land. I subsequently worked to successfully repeal the bill, even after the deal had fallen through. I also worked diligently to pass SB 70, an excellent start to protect these state conservation lands.

Energy- Here as well, funds should be in a lock box so as to be protected from being periodically swept into the General Fund. I would work to expand energy efficiency programs. I believe that we should promote net metering and sub metering for solar, fuel cell, and other clean, renewable energy.

Chemicals of concern-I lead this last year, to find that it was opposed by lobbyists who took money from the can manufacturers, toy industry (!), cleaning products manufacturers, and the pesticide industries, among others. They would rather that the state be in the dark, even though this bill, which had no fiscal impact, was endorsed by our Department of Public Health (DPH) as well as the venerable 92 year old Association of Connecticut Public Health Departments, who administer public health in all 169 municipalities in Connecticut.

An environmental issue which lacks attention is the long continuing unnecessary fluoridation of public water. This is another which will be a heavy lift because it is an unquestioned and long running policy, and therefore will take a lot of teaching to give discerning environmentalists a compelling reason to question this and take it on as a relevant cause.

The environmental priorities in my district include protecting conservation areas, promoting cleanup of polluted sites (we're currently cleaning up gorgeous Higganum Cove with two million dollar funded EPA, as we speak), developing more clean energy, securing a permanent solution for the perpetual storage of planet-killing nuclear waste at the former Connecticut Yankee plant in Haddam Neck, (my district on the east side of the river).

My top priorities, if reelected are pesticide protection legislation, continuing to create more clean energy, and tackling property tax reform.

Thank you for the opportunity to address these issues which affect us here in Connecticut and beyond.

Philip Miller, July 23, 2014