

**2008
Legislative
Candidate**



18 Legislative Questionnaire

**Massachusetts
Questionnaire**

DEADLINE: 5:00

pm, Thursday, January 17th.

About this questionnaire: The Massachusetts League of Environmental Voters thanks you for taking time out of your busy campaign schedule to complete this questionnaire. Your responses on the questionnaire will be a factor in endorsement and campaign contribution considerations. We will weigh public records, questionnaires, campaign positions and statements, and candidate interviews in our endorsement process.

Introduction: As a legislator, you will consider numerous environmental issues which will be before the General Court. Many of these issues are represented in the following questionnaire.

We ask that you circle a **YES** or **NO** to each question that calls for it. If you do not, the interpretation of your response will be left to the screening committee. There are no "trick" questions. If you need further clarification of any of the questions, please do not hesitate to call us for additional information. Please feel free to offer a written response using the space below the question or by attaching additional comments. We will post questionnaires on our website.

Please complete this questionnaire and return by **January 17th** to:

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Clean Air and Global Warming

1. Governor Patrick recently signed onto the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative agreement to establish a cap and trade system for carbon dioxide.

What steps do you propose the state take to ensure that we meet our emission reduction goals?

- **First the Legislature needs to pass the Global Warming Solutions Act, which calls for a mandatory cap on global warming emissions. If adopted, 20% of today's emission levels would be reduced by 2020 and 80% by 2050.**
- **I will support the Green Communities Act, which sets a goal that the Commonwealth will meet at least 25% of its electric load with clean, demand side resources; 20% of the electric load with new, renewable generation; reduce fossil fuel use in buildings by 10%; reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 20% from 1990 levels by 2020; and develop a plan to reduce energy consumption by 10%.**
- **Finally, the legislature needs to adopt legislation that will cause people to drive low-emissions vehicles. While efforts to improve public transportation are helpful to the environment, people still drive lots of cars, and we need to require cars to be more environmentally friendly.**

Would you actively support an economy-wide greenhouse gas emissions cap (similar to that pioneered by California in state law AB32 and currently in place in several other states)? **YES**

2. Automobiles are one of the major sources of air pollution, smog, and greenhouse gases in the state.

Would you support legislation that would encourage the sales of hybrid and low emission vehicles through tax incentives? **YES**

Clean Water

3. Our drinking water supply infrastructure faces a variety of challenges in the coming years. Rivers are being drawn dry or are fouled with sewage treatment plant effluents, and clean groundwater is being siphoned into wastewater systems.

How would you work towards maintaining, upgrading, and repairing Massachusetts's municipal water infrastructure?

This is a major issue because most of the 21,000 miles of water mains in the state were installed between the late 19th century and the early 1950s. Many pipes are reaching the end of their useful lives. Local governments pay 90% of the costs of building and maintaining their water systems. Because municipalities cannot make all the repairs alone, I will support efforts by the

Commonwealth to help finance investments by municipalities in water infrastructure. I support the Water Infrastructure Finance Commission Act, which would establish a Commission to develop a Water Infrastructure finance plan.

4. The Commonwealth's ocean waters accommodate a wide variety of uses that often overlap and vary depending on time, seasonality, location, or existing specific use areas. Cumulative impacts on estuarine and marine habitats and life caused by conflicting human activities are not well understood and not often incorporated into public decision-making. The Oceans Management Bill, S. 529, has been introduced to develop a comprehensive and integrated management plan to guide marine development activities.

Do you support S. 529? **YES**

5. The rivers, streams and wetlands of Massachusetts provide clean drinking water for millions of residents, offer countless opportunities for recreation, and support a wide variety of wildlife. The natural flow of streams must be better managed. The Act to Protect Rivers and Streams, H. 833, will require clear, science-based standards and will allow water suppliers to continue to meet the needs of our communities while ensuring adequate water flow and levels for recreation and the survival of fish and other species.

Do you support H. 833? **YES**

Land Conservation

6. Massachusetts's open space – our rolling hills, farmlands, and wetlands – are being converted to shopping malls, housing developments, and roads at the rate of 40 acres a day.

Do you support the Public Lands Preservation Act, S. 539, which will ensure no net loss of conservation land through dispositions under Article 97?

YES

7. The last environmental bond bill was passed in 2002 and many of the accounts have been depleted. There is a vast array of capital needs from park buildings and equipment, sewer and water infrastructure, land protection, pool, dam and seawall repair, beach replenishment, etc.

Would you support a substantial environmental bond bill? **YES**

Do you support the Safer Alternatives Bill, H 1286, which would mandate that toxic substances be replaced with the safest available alternative?

YES

Solid Waste

11. The Massachusetts Bottle Bill, enacted in 1982, stimulates recycling and discourages litter by encouraging consumers to return their empty beer and soda containers through a \$0.05 deposit. Unfortunately, it does not cover bottled water, sports drinks, and juices which are a substantial part of the market today.

Do you support expanding the bottle bill deposit law to include bottled water, juice, and sports drinks? **YES**

12. Discarded electronics (“e-waste”) is one of the fastest growing waste streams in the industrialized world. Electronic equipment is also one of the largest known sources of heavy metals, like lead and mercury, and toxic pollutants in the waste stream.

Do you support the creation of an e-waste recycling program in the state?

YES. I support legislation to (House Bill 864) to require producers to collect and recycle discarded electronic products.

Environmental Spending

13. For Fiscal Year 2005, Massachusetts’s environmental budget was 0.69% of the state budget. When compared with other states in the union, Massachusetts ranks 49th out of 50 in per capita environmental spending. As a result, our parks are deteriorating, our hazardous waste sites remain contaminated, many of our rivers and streams are still unsafe for fishing and swimming, and our environmental laws are not enforced.

As a legislator, would you support increasing funding to environmental programs in Massachusetts? **YES. We rank towards the very bottom at spending per capita on the environment.**

If so, which programs should receive increased funding and by how much?

I don’t have dollar figures, but I would like to see an increase in spending on the following programs:

- 1. Park acquisition and maintenance**
- 2. Stormwater, sewer and water infrastructure improvements**
- 3. Hazardous waste site cleanup.**

What steps should the legislature take to revive and restore our parks?

I would support the Environmental Bond Bill, which would provide \$665 million in borrowing authority for infrastructure and park assets, and \$213 million for state parks, urban reservations, and harbor islands, hiking and biking trails, and camp grounds.

Energy

14. Emissions from power plants harm our air quality and contribute to climate change. Encouraging the use of renewable energy sources will improve air quality, reduce Massachusetts's emissions, and help strengthen our national security. Additionally, Massachusetts has the opportunity to grow our economy by becoming a leader in the development of new renewable technologies.

How would you spur development of renewable energy in Massachusetts?

Renewable energy helps increase our energy supply, can reduce air pollution, and can be a source of economic development. We can spur the development of renewable energy in Massachusetts by going forward with the Cape Wind project, and the state can do its part and set an example by implementing energy saving solutions in all of its facilities. Utilities must be required to increase renewable energy sources in their power mix each year, and they must enter into long term contracts with renewable energy suppliers. There also must be limits on power plant emissions. Individual and corporate consumers should receive tax credits for installing renewable generating capacity.

15. Nuclear energy is hailed by its advocates as a clean, global warming-free energy source, but its opponents note that its generation produces toxic, nuclear waste. Over the next several years, the US will have to make tough decisions about how to meet its energy demands while reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Would you support the licensing of new nuclear energy plants in Massachusetts?

NO

16. According to the Division of Energy Resources, energy prices in Massachusetts have risen by 30% in the past year. In 2005, the legislature passed a bill to create energy efficiency standards for appliances.

How should the legislature encourage energy conservation by citizens and businesses to help reduce energy costs and oil dependency?

The Legislature can begin by adopting the Green Communities Act. Here are some specific ideas that will encourage energy conservation by citizens and businesses:

- **To get people to drive more fuel-efficient cars, the Legislature should implement excise taxes on newly purchased inefficient vehicles, provide tax incentives to people who purchase fuel efficient cars, and increase the gas tax.**
- **To get people to drive less, the Legislature should implement a pay as you drive insurance program, facilitate more commuting by bicycle, and expand the regional rail network.**
- **A critical step towards encouraging energy conservation is decoupling utility rates – by separating the direct link between rates and power consumption. Regulated utilities in Massachusetts maintain the distribution system and recover costs by how much electricity flows through their wires. This is a disincentive to promote energy efficiency. Utilities should be allowed to earn revenue by supplying connections and investing in efficiency.**
- **Smart grid plans need to be adopted to give consumers incentives to avoid unnecessary power usage at peak times.**
- **Home inspectors should be required to score homes on energy efficiency; this would lead to more energy efficient housing in Massachusetts.**
- **Passing the provision of the Green Communities Act that calls for the energy conservation components of the building code to meet or exceed international standards every three years would be an incentive for business and individuals to build more energy efficient buildings.**

Leadership

17. For many years, environmental issues have taken a back seat in the state house. Many of the priority bills for the environmental community have been introduced for more than 10 years without receiving a vote.

If elected, what actions would you take to ensure that key environmental bills are considered?

I would partner with like-minded legislators and interest and advocacy groups to push forward environmental legislation.

If elected, what three environmental issues will be a priority for you?

1. **Passage of the Green Communities Act.**
2. **Passage of the Global Warming Solution Act**
3. **Passage of the Electronics Recycling Act (House Bill 864), which would prohibit the sale of certain hazardous electronic products and require environmentally sound recycling for electronic products.**

What leadership initiatives will you undertake to advance the issues you listed?

I will be an advocate on these issues by writing op-ed pieces in local and regional newspapers, encouraging citizens to lobby my fellow legislators on these issues, and speaking out as often as necessary on these issues.

What examples of environmental leadership can you cite from your past? Include legislative examples or organizational work.

From 2001 to 2005, I spent a considerable amount of time and energy helping to improve Spy Pond and Spy Pond Park, which are located near the center of the Town of Arlington. As a member of the Vision 2020 Spy Pond Task Force, I worked with high school students to place markers by storm drains warning people that “only rain goes down the drain” because it flows to Spy Pond. The effort helped educate the public about the importance of keeping the pond clean. I also served as President of Friends of Spy Pond Park. I worked with neighbors and town leaders to secure funds to renovate the park and fortify the shoreline. Today Spy Pond Park is a beautiful open space enjoyed by many people in the community.