

**CLEAN WATER ACTION and MA CLEAN WATER ACTION VOTE ENVIRONMENT
Questionnaire for 2006 MA Legislative Endorsements**



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Please return completed questionnaire to: Jeff Knudsen at jknudsen@cleanwater.org (e-mail is the preferred method, so please let us know if you would also like this questionnaire sent to you via e-mail) or 262 Washington St. #301, Boston, MA 02108 or 617-338-6449 (fax).

Responses must be received no later than Friday June 9th at 10:00AM to be considered for endorsement.

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1. ACT FOR A HEALTHY MASSACHUSETTS. More than one third of the US population is suffering from a range of chronic diseases, including cancers, asthma, infertility, learning and developmental disabilities, birth defects, and neurodegenerative diseases such as Parkinson's disease. Scientific studies are increasingly indicating that toxic chemicals contribute to this epidemic of diseases and disorders. Toxic chemicals have become widespread in our air, water, food, schools, workplaces, everyday products, and ultimately, our bodies. Most people have over one hundred chemicals in their bodies. The chemicals in this "toxic soup" interact with each other in the environment and our bodies, creating unpredictable damage.

Preventable illnesses and disabilities impose staggering costs on our economy; one recent study estimates that Massachusetts costs for medical care and special education for environmentally attributable childhood illnesses alone are between \$56 million and \$337 million for a single year. If we include the cost of school days missed and future earnings lost, the total cost to the Massachusetts economy for the preventable portion of childhood illnesses is estimated to be \$1.1 to 1.6 *billion a year*.

We can replace toxic chemicals with safer alternatives. Our government can help Massachusetts businesses change to a healthy economy based on safer production, safer products and safer jobs. Massachusetts, a former leader on environmental health policy and a major trade partner with Europe, can maintain its competitiveness through innovation and leadership in the development of products and practices that protect public health and environmental quality.

An Act for a Healthy Massachusetts: Safer Alternatives for Toxic Chemicals (H-1286, Rep. Jay Kaufman; S-553, Senator Steve Tolman) will establish a pragmatic, gradual approach to reducing health impacts from many toxic chemicals we are exposed to in everyday life. It initially targets ten of the worst toxic chemicals in Massachusetts: chemicals that are currently replaceable with feasible safer alternatives for many uses. The bill expands the existing Toxic Use Reduction Act program to mandate a careful process to examine all available evidence to choose the safest alternatives to harmful chemicals, and to create a gradual program to replace them with a safer alternative.

QUESTION: Would you co-sponsor AND will you make passage of this bill one of your top legislative priorities?

 X Yes
 No

Explain/Comment: We can no longer permit the casual poisoning of our population. I would indeed co-sponsor this legislation, try my level best to help shepherd its passage, and oppose all efforts to weaken or water down the bill. I furthermore support incentives to communities for bio-diesel or grease car conversion of their municipal fleets, including school buses.

QUESTION: And as the bill changes through the legislative process, will you seek to ensure that the bill that passes complies with these principles:

- The Toxics Use Reduction Institute conducts an alternatives assessment for the major uses of the priority toxic chemicals to determine whether there are feasible safer alternatives.
- The legislation provides technical and financial assistance to businesses to support implementation of safer alternatives.
- Funds are raised through fees on toxic chemicals for an expanded Toxics Use Reduction Act Dedicated Fund to create the Business Assistance Transition Program, research and development programs, TURI alternatives assessments, and to cover regulatory costs.
- When it is determined that feasible and safer alternatives are available for certain uses of a priority toxic chemical, the Department of Environmental Protection establishes timelines and deadlines to *require* toxic chemical users to substitute safer alternatives. The deadlines take into account the costs of the transition and the availability of assistance for substitution.

Yes
 No

Explain/Comment: I believe that all of these conditions are needed if the proposed legislation is to be the least bit effective. I would fight tooth and nail against stripping the bill of any such provisions.

2. E-WASTE TAKE BACK BILL. The collection and recycling or disposal of electronic products, computer products, and cathode ray tubes (CRT's) in TV's and computer monitors are a significant portion of cities and towns annual solid waste management budgets. The costs for collection and recycling electronic waste are an increasing financial burden for cities and towns, estimated at between \$6-21 million annually.

The states of Washington and Maine have passed Producer Take Back laws, while several other states, including Rhode Island, are considering Producer Take Back legislation. Over 28 countries have Producer Take Back requirements, where the manufacturers are required to be financially responsible for these costs, thus giving the manufacturer a financial incentive to make the products less toxic and more recyclable and saving the city or town that financial burden.

QUESTIONS: Would you co-sponsor, actively promote and vote for H-4764, An Act to Require Producer Responsibility for Collection and Recycling of Discarded Electronic Products (sponsored by Rep. Mark Carron), which would require producer financial responsibility for Computers and CRT's, and would you also co-sponsor and vote for legislation to require Producer Take Back for Household Hazardous Products?

Yes
 No

Explain/Comment: Communities must no longer shoulder the burden of corporate irresponsibility.

And as the bill changes through the legislative process, will you seek to ensure that any electronic waste bill that passes complies with these principles:

- Requiring manufacturers to have full financial responsibility for the collection and recycling of their products (which creates incentives for producers to improve the design of their products to minimize their life-cycle impacts on the environment);
- A free, easy, and convenient system of collection that does not create economic disincentives for consumers to participate and that taxpayers, local governments, or others do not shoulder all the financial burdens of recycling and disposing of electronic products;
- Environmentally sound recycling standards that will keep waste out of landfills and incinerators, and restrict the export of non-working electronic equipment to developing countries;
- Labor standards for all workers recycling and dismantling electronic equipment that would protect their health and safety and maintain fair living wages and safe working conditions?

Yes
 No

Explain/Comment: I could endorse or support no bill stripped of these provisions. Absent all of these provisions, the bill would essentially be stripped of its efficacy.

3. SAFER CLEANING PRODUCTS BILL. Emissions of toxic chemicals from cleaning products used in schools, hospitals and other health care facilities, day care centers, public buildings, and public housing common spaces can cause or exacerbate asthma and other health threats. An Act To Reduce Asthma by Using Safer Cleaning Products (H-4704, Representative Frank Smizik & Senator Dianne Wilkerson) would require that no cleaning product may be used in schools, day care centers, public buildings, and public housing unless the product is included on the “Safer Cleaning Products” list established biannually by the Commissioner of the Department of Public Health. It would also establish a *Hospital Safer Cleaning Products Commission* which will investigate the implementation of safer cleaning products for routine cleaning in hospitals and health care facilities. Safer Cleaning Products are defined as products that do not contain chemicals that cause or trigger asthma, as determined by DPH; are Environmentally Preferable Products (EPP) as determined by the Mass. Operational Services Division; and are fragrance free. DPH shall establish a program to train cleaning personnel in the use of such products, test healthy cleaning products with teams of cleaning personnel in the field, and provide grants to train cleaning personnel in use of healthy cleaning products.

QUESTION: Would you co-sponsor and make it a priority to pass this bill?

Yes
 No

Explain/Comment: Throughout my prior campaigns for City Council of the Town of Agawam, I have issued press releases calling attention to this problem in public facilities. Given how the use of diesel in municipal fleets, including school buses, exacerbates this problem as well, I furthermore support bio-diesel or grease car conversion of such fleets.

4. CLIMATE CHANGE POLLUTION. The vast majority of scientists believe that deep reductions of carbon dioxide and other global warming pollutants are needed to begin stabilizing our climate. If no action is taken, the Intergovernmental Panel for Climate Change predicts that average rates of warming by year 2100 will be greater than any seen in the last 10,000 years. Climate instability in Massachusetts will mean further erosion and flooding of coastal communities, loss of native species like sugar maples, property destruction, prolonged droughts and extreme weather events, and damaging shifts in insect, disease and agricultural patterns.

In August 2001, the New England Governors and Eastern Canadian Premiers adopted a regional Climate Action Plan that sets the following goals: 1. Reduce global warming pollution to 1990 levels by 2010, 2. Reduce global warming pollution an additional 10% by 2020, and most importantly 3. Reduce global warming pollution to the level required to avoid harmful impact to the climate (assessed to be 75-85% below current levels). The Romney Administration released its Climate Protection Plan in May 2004, but has stalled implementation and backtracked on signature commitments in recent months.

QUESTIONS: As an elected official, would you take a leadership role in meeting these goals by sponsoring and voting for the following kinds of legislation:

- A) Increasing funding and support for energy efficiency and the development of renewable energy?
- Expanding state efficiency programs to include natural gas and heating oil efficiency;
 - Strengthening the Renewable Portfolio Standard, while defending it against efforts to include non-renewable or old sources of energy in the mix?

Yes
 No

Explain/Comment: I must also here note my party's support for the Cape Wind Farm project.

- B) Decreasing global warming pollution from the transportation sector?
- Increasing vehicle efficiency through measures like rebates for efficient vehicles and requiring the sale of energy-saving tires (that come on all new cars):
 - Increasing transit funding and expanding state and regional rail systems;
 - Committing to "Smart Growth" principles, especially compact, mixed-use development near existing transit?

Yes
 No

Explain/Comment: I have long advocated improvement and expansion of public transit in Western Massachusetts, and embrace principles of sustainable development.

- C) Cutting global warming pollution from power plants by rejoining the regional effort (RGGI) outlined in the Global Warming Bill (S-2516)?

Yes
 No

Explain/Comment: I have grave reservations regarding the trading of emissions caps, but reluctantly support this legislation as a necessary first step.

5. NUCLEAR ENERGY AND WASTE Highly radioactive spent nuclear fuel will remain at reactor sites much longer than anticipated. It is currently stored in densely packed pools outside primary containment, vulnerable to attack. If by accident or acts of malice water is drained from a densely packed pool, an uncontrolled fire will result in releasing radiation contamination 500 miles downwind.

Safer interim storage options include low density pool storage and dry casks. Low density pool storage assures that if the pool water is drained air convection will prevent an immediate fire and allow time for remediation. Dry casks provide passive storage, without need of human intervention or mechanical components; and each cask contains only a few spent fuel assemblies. Safety is increased when casks are hardened and dispersed.

QUESTIONS: Do you support requiring:

A) Safer storage of spent radioactive fuel assemblies -- in low density pool and hardened dry casks -- until all spent fuel is moved off site?

Yes
 No

Explain/Comment: _____

B) Increased land, water and air security of reactor/stored waste and frequent security tests administered by the federal government rather than the company that provides that security?

Yes
 No

Explain/Comment: _____

C) Emergency planning that has been upgraded to meet today's challenges – including expanded emergency planning zones and maintaining emergency planning until all waste has been removed from the site?

Yes
 No

Explain/Comment: _____

D) Will you condition support of re-licensing reactors for an additional 20 years on implementation of these safety features?

Yes
 No

Explain/Comment: I remain opposed to the re-licensing of nuclear reactors, period.

6. COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS. Legislation is periodically filed that would require the Department of Environmental Protection, the Department of Public Health, and almost all state agencies to do either a formal cost-benefit analysis, or a similar review, called a “regulatory impact statement” for new rules or regulations they promulgate. Such requirements would spawn increased litigation, require more resources for state agencies, and would hinder changes in existing regulations that could benefit businesses. In the end, these proposals will dampen the agency’s ability to implement laws or improve upon existing regulations intended to protect public health and the environment.

QUESTION: Would you support or oppose legislation to require cost-benefit analysis or additional “regulatory impact statements” by all state agencies?

Support
 Oppose

Explain/Comment: I firmly oppose imposing “regulatory impact statements” or cost/ benefit analysis requirements on environmental and public health agencies.

7. DRINKING WATER FUNDING. The drinking water supply infrastructure, out of sight and out of mind in Massachusetts, is crumbling. Old and poorly maintained water mains, storage tanks, fire hydrants, and water treatment plants threaten public health and public safety. EPA has estimated that \$8.5 billion is needed over the next 20 years in Massachusetts to adequately restore this vital drinking water infrastructure.

QUESTION: If elected, would you sponsor or co-sponsor an environmental bond bill to build on the existing Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (SRF) Program to provide the funding needed to restore our drinking water infrastructure? "

Yes
 No

Explain/Comment: _____

8. Please state your top 3 legislative priorities if elected.

Fair tax reform, single payer health care reform, and facilitation of sustainable development initiatives would likely be my three top legislative priorities.

9. Please state your top environmental legislative priorities if elected.

I believe we must facilitate bio-diesel or grease car conversion of state and municipal fleets; I believe we need a strengthened Community Preservation Act independent of property taxes; and I back passage of the Public Water Preservation bill (H. 1333).

10. Please list any other endorsements that you have received:

Green-Rainbow Party, Greens for Democracy and Independence, National Lavender Green Caucus, and the United Auto Workers MA State Community Action Program Council.

11. Please feel free to enclose (or forward via e-mail) a resume, letter, campaign materials, or any other materials you would like us to have that highlight your experience, specifically in regard to the environment and health.

If there are any questions, please contact Jeff Knudsen at jknudsen@cleanwater.org or 617-338-8131.

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