

**Mr. Owen R. Broadhurst
Candidate for State Representative
Third Hampden District**

**The Broadhurst Committee
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Question 2:

Massachusetts has adopted regulations requiring power plants to reduce emissions of nitrogen oxides and sulfur dioxide by 50% to 75% over the next few years. In 2004 the Department of Environmental Protection finalized a rule requiring an 85% reduction in mercury emissions from power plants by 2008 and a 95% reduction of mercury emissions from power plants by 2012. Both of these rules have yet to be implemented and enforced.

If elected, how would you work to see that these final power plant clean-up regulations, including mercury reductions are implemented?

Answer:

I would strongly resist any mercury pollution trading provisions and off-site reduction options, as I believe this allows for delays in meeting standards. I furthermore believe the legislature must now step in to compel implementation of the regulations, and that opportunities for polluters to tie regulations up in lawsuits must now by law be restricted along with bases of appeal.

Question 5.

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, and repairing Massachusetts' municipal water infrastructure?

Answer:

I support H. 1333, the Public Water Preservation Bill to ban the privatization of sewer services and water services in our communities. I have long opposed the construction of new power plants that draw from our rivers for purposes of cooling, and would work towards amending the utility deregulation act to bar the Department of Telecommunications and Energy from exercising unconstitutional quasi-judicial powers

of being able to review and overturn municipal zoning laws, while also barring power plants from drawing Massachusetts river waters. I deplore the construction of bio-mass plants near watersheds, and would work towards preventing construction of the proposed new power plant in Russell. I would support a “carrot and stick” approach towards promoting the most efficient of water use patterns. I support the use of new techniques to keep stormwater local and prevent it from becoming contaminated, and deplore proposed development projects over vital aquifers as has recently been proposed in Westfield.

We must no longer delay the proper repairs and improvement of aged and leaky pipes, and must if necessary float bonds for the full cost of such improvement as soon as possible. I support the use of enterprise accounts for such endeavors, and would pursue legislation for such accounts. Commercial and industrial facilities must be provided incentives and penalties to compel reuse of treated waste-waters. The Clean and Drinking Water State Revolving Funds must have loan application programs refined to facilitate sustainable development – and Fix It Early projects must be prioritized.

Question 11:

How should the legislature encourage smart growth development in the state?

Answer:

I would prefer sustainable development over smart growth development, and firmly believe that a vast difference between the two does indeed exist. To promote sustainable development, the legislature can and should take the following steps:

The legislature must amend the utility deregulation act to bar the Department of Telecommunications and Energy from acting as a quasi-judicial agency. The legislature must immediately repeal Chapter 40Q. The legislature should amend the Community Preservation Act to better facilitate its positive reception in communities by reducing its dependence on the property tax; and it should pass Act Relative to Reforming Chapter 40B filed in November last year by state senator Richard T. Moore. I will work to prevent 40B units from reverting to market rate, and help restore community direction over such developments; and I would oppose any future proposed “fast track auction” laws.

Tax credits should be made available community rooted enterprise, and I support a far speedier processing of agricultural preservation requests. We can enhance local agriculture via tax incentives and the creation of dedicated state and municipal markets. I support a Constitutional amendment in Massachusetts to challenge this fiction of corporate personhood, and urge national legislation to reverse First National Bank Of Boston v. Bellotti. Major corporations ought not have standing to rewrite municipal zoning codes, and I therefore view the notion of corporate personhood as a problem.

Question 16.

For the 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 states 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 increased funding to environmental programs in Massachusetts? YES!!!

If so, which programs should receive increased funding?

Answer:

Not one single environmental program throughout the Commonwealth is adequately funded, and I maintain that each and every single one of such programs absolutely must receive increased funding. I trust that I shall not be judged either flippant or facetious when I say the answer to this is: ALL of them!

However, the funding of our state parks and forest system is of especial concern at this moment for me – since our Commonwealth's failure to fund especially this system adequately has led the Department of Conservation and Recreation to propose a timber harvesting plan at Robinson State Park in Agawam that I believe constitutes a very real danger to the Westfield River, the surrounding watershed, and endangered species.

Our parks, especially, urban parks, are continually underfunded, leaving a legacy of neglect. What steps should our legislature take to get our parks back on track?

Answer:

We can begin with due diligence in identifying endangered plant and animal species in our parks and forests. The situation at Robinson State Park has led me to believe that the Department of Conservation and Recreation can no longer be trusted in its stewardship of several of our treasured urban parks. I call for Robinson State Park to be named a nature preserve or wildlife sanctuary, preferably within the Habitat Protection Program. Timber harvests must no longer be viewed as a solution to neglects in funding.

Rather than allowing ourselves to fall under the spell of industry propaganda such as "*The Illusion of Preservation*", we must create a dedicated fund for the park system.

Question 17:

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?

Answer:

I support Cape Wind, but most importantly support incentives for municipalities to facilitate the creation of much smaller scale wind energy projects on their land. I furthermore believe that state and municipal fleets should be converted to use of bio-diesel, or better yet undergo “grease car” conversion where practicable so that we may create a dedicated market statewide for the use of these fuels. I furthermore support the retrofitting of public and municipal buildings for heating via vegetable oils, and use of financial incentives for municipalities to situate solar cells on municipal buildings.

Where retail energy consumers now must receive 1% of energy from new renewable energy, my belief is that we must immediately raise this required ratio – but must not permit anymore the calculation of new biomass plants (glorified toxic incinerators) to be used in this calculation. Where Massachusetts utilities must purchase 5% “new” renewables by 2010, I believe we must expand this requirement. We must provide new tax incentives for homeowners to use solar cells to generate their very own electricity, while providing them an even better rate of return for what excess they sell to the grid inspiring them to generate even more. We must expand grants for renewables, as well.

Question 18:

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

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

Answer:

We can begin by requiring the most energy efficient construction possible in Massachusetts building codes. There’s absolutely no reason whatsoever for new construction in Massachusetts not to have the most efficient R factors in windows and walls. Indeed, if every home in New England used the highest R factor windows on the market today, then we would as a nation no longer be dependent on other nations to fuel our nation’s energy needs. New construction should also use passive solar design.

Continued construction of new bike paths, eschewing environmentally sensitive areas, must be given incentive. We must expand and improve mass transit in especially Western Massachusetts where mass transit barely has existence; and we must resist the widening of roads and new road construction which can only but encourage ever more traffic. I do, however, support the creation of “diamond” or car-pool lanes on our freeways.

Time-based metering would provide financial incentives for consumers to shift usage away from peak. I furthermore support efficient appliance purchase rebates, small business conservation loans and grants, and tiered energy pricing for consumers.

Question 17:

There are four liquefied natural gas (LNG) siting proposals already in Massachusetts, and one facility in place in a crowded urban setting.

*Do you support the proposal to build an LNG terminal on Outer Brewster Island in the Boston Harbor Islands National Park? **NO!***

How will you balance the need for new energy supplies with environmental and safety concerns and what is the role for LNG development in Massachusetts?

Answer:

The need for new energy supplies beyond decentralized “grease car” conversion, bio-diesel, solar cell use and wind power production is, I believe, exaggerated. As I have noted above, efficient construction and retrofitting if mandated throughout New England would eliminate the nation’s energy crisis. I do firmly support, however, the decentralized production of clean energy, which we must encourage. I see no role, period, for continued LNG development, or biomass power plant development in Massachusetts.

Question 18:

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 three environmental issues will be a priority for you?

Answer:

- 1. Global Warming: Join RGGI, drastically cap CO2 production, facilitate grease car conversion for both state and municipal fleets, mass transit.**
- 2. Forest and Park preservation: reduce use of timber sales as funding source.**
- 3. Water conservation and preservation: pass Public Water preservation bill.**

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

Answer:

Legislators must cooperatively work with environmental community to mobilize, organize, and educate our communities regarding such issues.

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

Answer:

I am seated on the National Committee for the Green Party of the United States; I am a Green-Rainbow Party State Committee member; and I am both former Secretary and former Communications Director for the Green-Rainbow Party.

I am Secretary for the Town of Agawam's Community Preservation Committee since April of 2004, having been appointed by the Town of Agawam City Council. I created the Taxpayers for Positive Change municipal PAC in the Town of Agawam to combat the siting of the pollution spewing Berkshire Power Plant in Agawam, and was active in the Concerned Citizens and Business of Agawam offering testimony before the City Council of Agawam and the then Department of Public Utilities against that project.

I am involved in the Friends of Robinson State Park opposed to the present timber harvest plan for that park. I was involved in Agawam Citizens Against Reckless Development, opposing the National Realty Development Corporation's proposed multiple "big box" shopping complex in Agawam; and I am involved in the Concerned Citizens of Russell opposing the siting of a pollution spewing bio-mass plant there.

I have long lobbied the City Council of Agawam to pass moratoriums on the construction of any new "drive-thru" windows for banks and restaurants, and lobbied the City Council of Agawam against the widening of Main St. in Agawam, an historic district. I was engaged in Town of Agawam efforts against the siting of a riverboat casino in the Connecticut River; and I have been active in efforts against the privatization of municipal sewer services in the city of Holyoke. With Agawam Citizens Against Reckless Development, I have been involved in projects to clean up city parks and sanctuaries.