

# Massachusetts Nurses PAC

## Candidate Questionnaire

The Mass Nurses PAC is the Political Action Committee of the Massachusetts Nurses Association. The Massachusetts Nurses Association represents more than 23,000 nurses and health care professionals throughout the state. The questionnaire is one phase of Mass Nurses PAC evaluation in the endorsement process. If you wish to add further information in responding to the YES/NO questions space is provided for you.

Please mail the completed questionnaire to:

Martha Campbell, Department Assistant  
MNA Division of Legislation and Government Affairs  
340 Turnpike Street  
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June 9, 2006

Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Owen R. Broadhurst

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Political Party: \_\_\_\_\_  
Green-Rainbow Party

Office sought/district: \_\_\_\_\_  
State Representative, Third Hampden District

1. The MNA is supporting "Safe RN Staffing legislation", which would set a safe limit on the number of patients a nurse is assigned at one time. Would you support this legislation and, if so, what would you do to ensure its passage?

**Yes!**

To help ensure passage, a full campaign must be launched. While I would employ whatever parliamentary procedures and devices I possibly could to help ensure passage, even to that extent of inserting its text in amenable bills even but tangentially related – or not at all related – and even frustrating the passage of other legislation until it indeed is passed, my skills as an amateur parliamentarian pale in comparison to the sheer weight of public pressure brought to bear.

The Massachusetts Nursing Association, of course, well understands that and has been very successful

in securing the passage of such legislation in the Massachusetts House of Representatives after one very long and exhausting struggle. Given the disposition of the House at this time, I do not envision a need for the more drastic measures and parliamentary maneuvers that I might otherwise employ – but I have certainly joined in the campaign to secure passage in the Massachusetts Senate, I would join in the campaign to compel gubernatorial approval, and I would work overtime towards overturning any gubernatorial veto that shamefully might arise. I have called attention to the drastic need for such legislation in press releases and on my website, and as a legislator would in no way hesitate to compose Op/Ed pieces for publications and newsjournals, lobby my very own constituents in direct mail campaigns, and even risk arrest through civil disobedience if a need for that should arise.

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2. Burned out by high patient loads nurses are walking away from the hospital bedside. What would you, as an elected official, do to address this problem?

I wholly support the safe staffing legislation that MNA has championed, but furthermore support and would work to secure passage of a single payer health care plan, the Affordable Health Care constitutional amendment, and establishing realistic Medicaid and Medicare reimbursement rates. Other key means of addressing this problem would involve my full and unqualified support for unionization campaigns among nurses and other direct care staff via my backing of mandatory card check recognition, majority authorization, and mandated employer neutrality during union drives. I solidly support binding arbitration where collective bargaining is at an impasse.

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It is furthermore necessary to continue calling public attention to the problem. Nurses and direct care staff are not only being “burned out”, they’re being injured. I would support and urge a campaign for staff to shed reluctance in reporting OSHA violations, care quality violations, and continued risks to both staff and patients directly resulting from and attributable to the poor working conditions that such high patient loads inevitably cause. To that end, I firmly back passage of An Act Relative to A Patient’s Report Card on Nursing as proposed by Representative Cory Atkins, and An Act Ensuring Safe Patient Handling as proposed by Representative Jennifer Callahan – as, in fact, I support the whole of MNA’s present legislative agenda.

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3. Would you support legislation that prohibits unlicensed personnel from administering medications?

**Yes!**

I firmly back passage of An Act to Ensure Safe Medication Administration as proposed by Senator Marc Pacheco.

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4. Would you actively and publicly support nurse’s efforts to unionize?

**Yes!**

I believe the National Workrights Institute aptly described this as an inalienable human right, noting that “[t]he right to organize is among the most fundamental of workplace human rights. It is the workplace expression of the right to freedom of association.” It is also the workplace expression of the right to

survive. I will join unions in advocating for federal EFCA passage, and I will support the stiffest possible penalties in captive audience statutes. I'm firmly supportive of the Collective Bargaining Convention adopted by the General Conference of the International Labour Organisation, as I am of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. I support the passage of Majority Authorization legislation, and I support mandatory card check recognition and employer neutrality. This most essential and basic of human rights must be respected.

5. Would you support nurse recruitment programs such as scholarship incentives and loan forgiveness?

**Yes!**

I furthermore back passage of An Act Relative to Improvements in Private Duty Nursing Care for Developmentally Disabled Children as proposed by Senator Steve Tolman. I support also full funding of H.2930 and S.1154 permitting, with \$12 million in new line item 1599-1603, better staff retention and development within community services purchased by DMR. I back passage of H.2885, an Act Relative to Rates for Human and Social Service Programs, in order to reform the human services price setting system; S.784, loan forgiveness for direct care human service workers; and S.2380 to promote higher education among employees of human services providers.

6. Would you oppose legislation that substituted unlicensed aides and assisted personnel for licensed registered nurses?

**Yes!**

7. Please discuss your views on the health care delivery system in Massachusetts and any changes you would propose and/or support to improve it.

**My firm belief is that a single payer health care plan is the sole and only solution that works**

**Op/Ed – by Dr. Jill Stein, MD, Nathanael Fortune and Owen R. Broadhurst, retired CNA:**

**Thu 04/06/06**

**The Broadhurst Committee**

Op/ Ed Dr. Jill Stein, Owen R. Broadhurst, and Nat Fortune

Why can't our legislature deliver true universal health insurance?

Our legislative leaders have announced yet another breakthrough on their increasingly pared down bill to reduce the number of uninsured in Massachusetts. The real news is that the plan shall in no way curtail skyrocketing health care costs, and that most insurance provided shall have more holes than Swiss cheese.

It would be easy to blame our governor for this travesty. After all, he threatened to veto any bill that costs money, thinks the solution to high cost coverage is to cut benefits, and thinks the best way to reduce the

number who can't afford insurance is to require everyone to buy it. This is like declaring an end to homelessness by requiring everyone to rent an apartment.

The real blame, however, lies with our legislature. With an 85% veto-proof majority in both the House and Senate, our Democratic legislators can pass any bill they like. So why has the sun been so slow to rise for universal coverage? And why is that, when you scrape away the hype and promises, the beneficiary of the meager bill emerging from committee seems increasingly to be health insurance companies and the health care industry more than the people needing health care?

The first reason is that the only proven solution isn't even on the table. Countries from Germany to Japan already have a publicly-financed, privately-provided health care system that cuts the cost of paperwork and negotiates lower prices for medicines and services. You get to choose your doctor, your doctor runs her own practice, and the two of you decide on the best course of care and how to provide it in an affordable, responsible manner. Shouldn't more of \$1 billion currently spent by the medical industry in Massachusetts each week actually go to health care for all instead of paperwork, lobbyists, and donations to campaigns?

Unfortunately, most legislators oppose such a "single-payer, choice-of-provider" health plan. Even those incumbents who claimed to support it quickly declared it had no support once the election was over. And when the only proven solution to a difficult problem is excluded, agreement is hard to reach!

The second reason is the reason that single payer isn't up for discussion: too many Beacon Hill careers depend on campaign donations from the health care industry. Legislators fearful of competitive elections repealed the Clean Elections bill overwhelmingly passed by voters. As a consequence, in part, only one incumbent was defeated in the last general election. Never mind that the entire public financing system would have cost less than \$5 per voter. Now our legislative leaders must answer to big campaign contributors first and voters second, and on this issue, their contributors disagree on who should pay and what to pay for.

Drug companies want public dollars for medications but don't want to negotiate prices. Insurance companies want public dollars to pay for private policies but don't want to meet minimum coverage standards. Hospitals and HMO's want public dollars to cover costs but don't want regulation. Big businesses want public dollars for workers compensation and insurance but don't want to be required to contribute. Two things they do agree on is that publicly financed elections and single payer health insurance aren't for us. The result is a bill that reduces what insurance covers, and doesn't control the rising cost of care. It gives businesses an incentive not to provide insurance, but requires us to buy inadequate policies when our employer doesn't deliver.

In a way, the public is still paying for elections. The difference is this: Instead of paying the tiny cost of clean elections, we pay exorbitantly for the lack of them.

Dr. Jill Stein was the Green-Rainbow Party's 2002 gubernatorial candidate and present Green-Rainbow Party candidate for Secretary of the Commonwealth. Mr. Owen R. Broadhurst is the Green-Rainbow Party candidate for state representative in the Third Hampden District. Mr. Nat Fortune was the Green-Rainbow Party's 2004 candidate for state representative in the First Franklin District.

### **Green-Rainbow Party Statement on the Promise of Universal Single Payer Health Care**

#### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

April 19th, 2006

### **Green-Rainbow Party Statement on the Promise of Universal Single-Payer Healthcare**

Hundreds of thousands of people in Massachusetts are without healthcare coverage. We, the Green-Rainbow Party, find this unconscionable, considering that every other industrialized nation in the world is now providing publicly financed health coverage for all of its residents provided at a per-

person cost that is about half as much as the price of care in Massachusetts. This deplorable situation has been created by a system driven by profit margins of insurance companies. The greed of corporate powers and their friends on Beacon Hill has inflated the cost of care due to excessive bureaucracy, paper work, advertising, CEO salaries, and other needless overhead.

If redirected towards healthcare, these wasteful, bureaucratic expenses would be sufficient to fund healthcare coverage for everyone - without requiring an increase in total healthcare costs!

The Green-Rainbow Party maintains that the ONLY just solution to the healthcare crisis is universal healthcare provided under a single-payer system of insurance - a publicly financed healthcare system that is comprehensive in both coverage and in care. The details of such a plan should be worked out in a democratic and open process including healthcare consumers, providers, and elected officials. The legislation signed by Gov. Romney on April 12th, 2006, which was hailed as the "great compromise," "revolutionary," and a "model" for the rest of the country, in contrast, was devised behind closed doors by politicians, health insurers, and large hospitals, which spent 7.5 million dollars on lobbying to influence the process and outcome in their own favor. It is no surprise this new law is a big win for these special interests, but a major setback for the people of Massachusetts.

Before advancing any more so-called healthcare reform, our Commonwealth must adopt a fundamental concept: that access to healthcare is not a requirement- it is a human right.

If this new law is implemented, health coverage in Massachusetts will become a requirement for every resident. The law will allow residents below the poverty line to receive subsidized stripped-down private insurance coverage, but for those who make too much money to qualify for free coverage, but make too little to buy coverage for themselves, tough times are ahead. Anyone who cannot or does not purchase health insurance will be issued a fine to be deducted from the resident's prospective state tax refund. Even if the low-to-moderate income or working class families and residents are able to purchase a plan, the plan is likely to be too stripped-down to offer adequate coverage, and will only reinforce disparities in healthcare between the haves and have-nots. The plan also provides a huge windfall for insurance companies by creating a new group of buyers that are legally required to purchase insurance.

A universal healthcare plan must guarantee equal coverage to all, regardless of any status, economic or otherwise. This newly passed system of "play or pay" is extortion, and the only parties that are held unaccountable in the process are insurance companies- guaranteed to profit whatever happens.

This law also disingenuously attempts to force businesses to provide health insurance for their employees. Any business that does not provide health insurance will be faced with a \$295 fine per employee per year. This penalty is laughable, as it is a drop in the pond for big business when compared to the cost of providing the most basic health insurance plan to their workers. Big businesses will now have an incentive to drop health coverage in favor of paying a miniscule fine. We are now forced to ask, how many workers will lose quality health insurance benefits upon the implementation of this new law?

While this law will provide free coverage to many among us who need it, it is grossly inadequate, unjust, limitlessly expensive, and a diversion from what will meet the needs of all of us, all the residents of Massachusetts. We call for an end to healthcare coverage based on profit margins, probabilities, and cynical formulae of insurance companies and the government decision-makers they fund, and instead favor the prompt implementation of a single-payer, universal system. As a first step, we therefore urge for the passage and ratification of the healthcare Amendment to our Constitution as

it will ensure the right for every Massachusetts resident to have comprehensive, affordable, and equitably financed health insurance coverage. For when we achieve these ends, Massachusetts will be one step closer to living up to its namesake, a compassionate and healthy Commonwealth.

(END)

**CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS STATEMENT:**

- Grace Ross, Green-Rainbow Candidate for Governor, 2006
  - Wendy Van Horne, B.S.N., Green-Rainbow Candidate for Lt. Governor, 2006
  - Jill Stein, M.D., Green-Rainbow Candidate for Secretary of the Commonwealth, 2006
  - James O'Keefe, Green-Rainbow Candidate for Treasurer, 2006
  - Owen Broadhurst, Green-Rainbow Candidate for State Representative, 2006
  - Nat Fortune, Green-Rainbow Candidate for State Representative, 2004
  - Colby E. Peterson, Communications Director of the Green-Rainbow Party
  - David Rolde, Secretary of the Green-Rainbow Party
  - Ronald Francis, Co-Chair of the Green-Rainbow Party
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8. How have/would you work with MNA members, units or nurses in your area?

For very nearly nine and half years, I was employed full time as a Certified Nursing Assistant in a local East Longmeadow nursing home. I might still today find myself employed in that capacity had working conditions at the facility not proven instrumental in my sustaining injuries from which I quite frankly have not yet ever recovered. I remain in chronic pain as a direct result of this experience.

I have therefore worked side by side with nurses in a professional capacity, while also supporting nurses in solidarity with their struggles with management. My continued appreciation for nurses was only but enhanced when my late mother fell ill, and I was called upon to not only once again put my own direct care skills into practice but also to serve as her health care proxy with full powers of attorney. Through my interaction with hospice care staff and private duty nursing services, I found the nurses with whom I did interact to be very necessary blessings, a Godsend, a life line, a treasure.

With nurses active both within and without the Green-Rainbow Party, nurses that include the Green-Rainbow Party's present candidate for Lieutenant Governor, Ms. Wendy Van Horne, I have lobbied legislators, attended rallies, and organized around the concerns of nurses as part and parcel of the party's continued involvement in Jobs with Justice. I have served as an officer within that party, through capacities as not only party Secretary and party Communications Director, but as also the party's male delegate to the National Committee of the Green Party of the United States.

For the Massachusetts Nursing Association, my doors as a legislator would remain open 24/7. I look forward to working well with MNA to continue promoting progressive health care solutions, workplace safety laws, union organizing rights, and growing collective bargaining power.

9. Please describe your legislative agenda, priorities and the reason you are seeking election/re-election.

My desire to seek and secure public office is firmly rooted in my thirst for social and economic justice. I hope through my campaign to promote and advance progressive policy solutions, and I hope as a legislator to work overtime in implementing progressive policy solutions. I do not believe other candidates for this office are promoting and advocating solutions I believe key means towards establishing a genuine and true Commonwealth and healthy, secure communities. I am. I shall. The key policy platform points that I have enunciated are noted on my website, but I reproduce the very text of the website explication of the key priorities of my campaign now for you below:

- I. Fair Tax Reform:
- II. Healthcare Reform
- III. Sustainable Development
- IV. Housing Needs
- V. Disability Rights and Access

## I. Fair Tax Reform

### You're being squeezed

**You pay more than an income tax.** In fact, the biggest drain on your wallet in terms of taxes may well be the total accumulated cost of your home's property tax, your vehicle's excise tax, the sales tax on nearly all of the goods you purchase, and the many fees you need to pay simply to live in this state. Such fees as those associated with driver's license renewal, vehicle registration, homestead protection, sewer service, kindergarten enrollment in many communities, participation in school sports or band, et cetera, certainly well add up. Taken together with your sales tax, excise tax, tangible property tax, and income tax, you're paying - as a portion of your annual income - far more than the wealthiest among us for far less of a return in terms of services.

**You pay too much in taxes already.** However, your tangible property values are still on the rise, which means your municipal taxes are still on the rise no matter how much your communities might reduce your tax rate. Fees continue to rise, even as the cost of living continues to rise. You're being squeezed, squashed, and steamrolled - many now have trouble making ends meet - while those who can afford to pay the most actually pay the least, if they're paying much of anything at all. Massachusetts reputedly has a flat income tax, but your total tax burden has a regressive impact. You're being overburdened. You've paid your share many times over. The time is now to shift the total tax burden, give you some relief, and solve our state's fiscal crisis.

**Your communities are suffocating.** Many cities and towns cannot afford a music and arts program. Many charge high fees for kindergarten participation. Your sewage and water fees are rising, cutbacks to school budgets are becoming more commonplace, potholes are not being repaired, more citizens are being assessed direct trash removal fees, and few schools will even entertain the notion of elementary school foreign language programs. State aid to cities and towns is dwindling while all costs are rising, and the residents are now being forced to pick up the ball that your state legislature keeps dropping. Teachers are

fleeing to far better wages in Connecticut. City workers are watching actual wages fall as compared to the cost of living. Our communities are hurting.

## **You're subsidizing the fat cats**

**Raytheon and Fidelity barely pay taxes at all.** The likelihood is that you have paid a far more significant income tax than they have. Your Democratic Party legislature gave huge tax breaks to Raytheon and Fidelity, created monstrous tax loopholes enabling the largest of corporations to dance around paying their fair share of the burden, and afforded monstrous tax breaks - to no one's surprise - to their largest campaign contributors. Your total tax burden is quite likely greater than 8% of your paycheck, while for the wealthiest that figure's only slightly more than 4%. Politicians and their fat cat contributors are having a rip-roaring party for themselves - and you're the folks that are buying their meals and picking up their beer tab.

It is time to decline the tab.

**Repealing the Raytheon and Fidelity tax breaks** would generate more than an additional \$220 million in revenue for the state. Closing corporate "combine reporting" loopholes would generate over \$97 million for the state. Applying a transfer tax to sales of higher end real estate would generate over \$500 million for the state. Repealing the sales tax exemption on services such as lobbying, legal and accounting services, engineering services, business consulting, public relations and financial management would generate over \$530 million for the state. Implement a 30 cent per pound tax on the top ten carcinogens, and over \$115 million in revenue would be raised. An intangible property tax on financial instruments of \$2 per \$1000 with a \$50,000 deductible would generate nearly \$500 million for the state. This yields nearly **\$2 billion in revenue raised** without raising **your** taxes.

**Raise income tax to 6% and lower sales tax to 4%**, and - through that alone - a very large portion of the voters in this district would know tax relief while overall revenue would be raised. Earmark but 20% of revenue raised by the sales tax to cities and towns, and your communities would have incentive to give tax relief as well. Raytheon paid only \$456 in state taxes in the year 2000. How much did you pay? How much less could you pay with an efficient and fair tax plan? Payoffs for layoffs are killing public education, health care, police and fire departments. You're being priced out of your homes to pick up the burden. There's just no rational excuse for that.

## **I have a plan**

**Not one opposing candidate has embraced such a plan**, and if any do then it shall be because they have seen it here first. I should note, for the record, that I have not devised this plan alone but have rather been inspired by the groundbreaking vision and research of 2004 First Franklin District candidate Nat Fortune, the Massachusetts Coalition for Healthy Communities and the Massachusetts Budget and Policy Center. The fiscal crisis this state is in was **manufactured** by politicians and my plan is similar to many fair tax plans advanced by policy experts ignored by the legislature now for nearly twenty years. It is time to stop ignoring common sense and start implementing it. It is with this plan or similar plans that we must begin.

**It is only through tax fairness that we can have tax efficiency.** This plan, if implemented, would result in lower taxes for more than 80% of the state's population while generating over 15% more revenue for cities and towns. Lower sales tax to 4%, raise income tax to 6%, earmark 20% of sales tax for cities and towns, close corporate tax loopholes, stop corporate tax giveaways, double individual and dependent tax exemptions, double the limited income tax deduction, apply transfer tax to properties valued at more than \$400,000, repeal the sales tax exemption for lobbyists and fat cat services, implement an intangible property tax with a \$50,000 deductible, institute a carcinogen production tax - and build healthier communities for all.

**Tax relief can only result from ending corporate welfare.** The latter shall ultimately fuel the former. This candidate urges implementing combined reporting and "throwback" rules for companies shifting profits out of state; repealing special sales tax breaks for lobbyists, mutual fund companies and defense contractors; and providing incentives for cities and towns to reduce tax rates on tangible properties. No trickle-down so-called "fiscal stimulus" package is worth what mayhem this legislature so relishes committing against health and human services, schools and city services, municipal employees, people in poverty, nearly all taxpayers in general, and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts itself.



## II. Healthcare Reform

More than 50,000 lost coverage when MassHealth Basic was eviscerated. Those most in need, and least able to pay for services, were quite viciously denied (in a fashion that, by this Democratic Party legislature, could only be described as morally depraved) eyeglasses, prosthetics, orthotics, dentures and chiropractic therapy. Many private employers are slashing health care coverage and gouging employees with health care costs. Aid for state rape crisis centers and sexual assault services is being wiped out. Medicaid will not allow for cleanings, bridge work, fillings or root canals - thereby virtually mandating- and making inevitable - tooth extraction for the people so covered. Public health agencies, meanwhile, are scheduled to be hamstrung by requirements for cost/ benefit analyses.

Cutbacks in inpatient care for the Department of Mental Health leave some of our most vulnerable with no place to turn, inviting self-harm and suicide. Hospitals, nursing homes and health centers are going bankrupt. Over 640,000 people are without health insurance, despite our state having the highest health care spending in the nation. 40% of what we spend on health care gets spent on overhead rather than care. Hospitals and nursing homes have a staffing crisis facilitating increased risk of infection by C. difficile and MRSA, greater risk for falls, medication errors and increased instances of malnourishment. Loss of dignity from inability to pay for dentures has prompted many nursing home residents on MassHealth to willfully starve to death. For people insured, premiums are skyrocketing while coverage now has more holes than swiss cheese. Medicare now provides so little coverage, we can honestly say the Great Society has died. Many people are now being forced to choose between medications, and their meals and homes.

A caring Commonwealth simply cannot allow this sad and sorry state of affairs to continue.

### I Support a Single-payer Plan

By making health insurance independent of employment, the state can lower health care costs (and lower the costs of doing business for most local enterprise) while providing for universal coverage. I support a Massachusetts Health Care Trust such as that which favorable passage of S. 755, reintroduced December 1, 2004, would provide. This bill would ensure that monies now wastefully spent on administrative costs such as paperwork, marketing and profits would be spent on providing care. Businesses and individuals would no longer need exhaust so much on liability coverage duplicative of the coverage that many filing claims already have.

The single-payer plan benefits not only consumers, but also most employers. Manufacturers especially face a mighty competitive disadvantage in the global marketplace, as their health care costs are one third higher than those in the service sector. Proposals to mandate employee coverage from employers are both unrealistic and unsustainable. A single-payer plan would provide an economic plus for the Commonwealth, permitting employer capital investment, and permitting employees a healthier cash reserve. It would reign in costs for hospitals and nursing homes, and put an end to class-based disparities in wellness and health care.

### I Support Higher Staffing Ratios

Throughout my nine years employed as a certified nursing assistant, I learned first hand the true costs of paltry staffing. I watched as infection control procedures were routinely violated in efforts to preserve an appearance of efficiency. Staffing constraints often compelled observance of a mere thirty minute window for the feeding of people with profound disabilities. Nursing home residents reported out for hospitalization more often than not returned with anti-biotic resistant infections. Serious injuries to staff could easily be predicted on days when the few co-workers staffed were compelled to call in sick on days scheduled.

Resident falls would rise.

Staffing ratios for nurses, orderlies and nursing assistants are not now nearly high enough for staff and patients both to have even a snowball's chance in Hades of avoiding sickness and injury. For this reason, I support the passage of H. 2663, backed also by the Massachusetts Nurses Association - but also note that this bill is **not nearly good enough** but quite inadequate to the needs of both patients and other staff. I would work hard for the passage of not only this bill, but also companion legislation mandating higher CNA to patient ratios in nursing homes along a similar basis to that which would be mandated by the passage of H. 2663.

## **I Won't Hamstring Public Health Agencies**

Too many Democratic Party state legislators enjoy pretending that hampering health regulators somehow provides "economic stimulus". In fact, it helps pave the way for continued and far more terrible economic consequences to come. Members of the state House of Representatives have made a habit out of attempting to mandate ever more cost/ benefit analyses of public health agencies that would advance new rules and/ or regulations. This would effectively divert their dwindling resources from actual public health protection into more red tape and paperwork. I would oppose impact study requirements for such agencies.

## **I Support an Affordable Health Care Constitutional Amendment**

Quality health care for all is an inalienable human right, and it is high time it became a Constitutional right in the Commonwealth. The newly proposed Health Care Constitutional Amendment would enshrine these rights into law - permitting every Massachusetts resident comprehensive, affordable and equitably financed quality health care.

### **III. Sustainable Development**

Throughout my time in Agawam, I have seen the community divided in entirely too many ways over the nearly endless onslaught of ill-advised monstrous development projects. Over the years, the Town of Agawam was saddled with an incinerator, rebuffed a river-boat casino, became saddled with an inefficient power plant, and finally rebuffed a major big box shopping complex. The towns of Russell and Barre both are being rattled by the prospects of a bio-mass power plant; the residents of Holyoke are struggling to fend off the virtual sale of their sewer system to the monstrous conglomerate, Aquarion; and communities throughout all of Massachusetts are struggling to fend off an onslaught of big box shops, often without the cooperation of their very own elected officials.

Huge corporations have been attempting to re-write community zoning codes and various ordinances under the pretense that properties (as corporations in fact are) somehow constitute actual persons with every right to supplant the role of the people in petitioning government. Often, their lobbying campaigns of Mayors and other public officials is such that the fix is in long before municipalities actually schedule any public hearings on their machinations. It is long past time for community governance to be restored to community residents, rather than put in the service of invaders whose interests often do not at all coincide with the best interests of the communities concerned. Genuine sustainable development is always a community directed, and community fostered, enterprise.

## **I 100% Oppose the Biomass Plant**

Russell Biomass LLC not only has no business attempting to re-write the laws of the Town of Russell, it has no business even being in Russell. I support the campaigns of the Concerned Citizens of Russell, and recognize the project as a major threat to not only Russell residents, but also to both of our beloved rivers and air quality for the whole entire Pioneer Valley. The project would spew more than 1600 tons of major pollutants into the very air we breathe, it would on a daily basis remove 800,000 gallons of water from a river that already has been experiencing an unprecedented series of episodes of drought, and it could not by law be prevented from burning construction and demolition waste if it is constructed. We live in a valley that already has a huge ozone pollution problem.

## **I Support 40B Reform, and 40Q Repeal**

I solidly support an Act Relative to Reforming Chapter 40B filed in November last year by state senator Richard T. Moore to require more state and federal agency oversight, increase the percentage of required affordable housing units in 40B projects, limit 40B developments profits to 20% as had originally been intended, and limit the variances a 40B developer can seek with regards to lot size and density requirements. I will work to prevent 40B units from reverting to market rate, and help restore community direction over such developments. Chapter 40B must no longer be used as a weapon by developers

extorting support from communities for denser market rate development, when they themselves are short-changing affordable units and shielding high profits from public oversight.

I deplore Chapter 40Q, which permits use of eminent domain in order to facilitate the legalized theft of your homes and your land for the profit of the real estate developer lobby. The law permits for municipal authorities an opportunity to reward well-connected developers with deep pockets among their campaign contributors with the very things that you, their constituents, have worked hard all of your lives to gain. If ever there was a law to facilitate the sale and purchase of public officials, it is this one - a law so terrible that it is quite beyond reform, and absolutely must be revoked for the sake of us all immediately.

## **I Shall Resist the Privatization of Natural Resources**

I support H. 1333, the Public Water Preservation Bill to ban the privatization of sewer services and water services in our communities; I'm steadfast in opposition to the Jones-Stanley bill to privatize public lands; and I support S. 359 allowing for no net loss of Article 97 lands. I would oppose legislation allowing "expedited permitting", work towards ending the practice of 99 year leases, and work towards ensuring that reuse of public lands is in accordance with local planning. I will stand against any future "fast track auction" laws for public lands, and work towards a stronger Community Preservation Act independent of any property tax surcharge.

## **Foster Community Rooted Enterprise and Agriculture**

We must expand and improve mass transit within the district, and encourage community rooted enterprise with tax credits to small and mid-size local, independent businesses that provide new jobs at living wages and reinvest their profits locally. We should provide a discount on workers compensation insurance for firms with good safety records. We can enhance local agriculture via tax incentives and the creation of dedicated state and municipal markets. I support expansion of funding for conservation and agricultural preservation land acquisition, and urge the speedy processing of agricultural preservation restrictions.

## **Corporate Personhood is a Problem**

Property should never be invested with the same rights afforded human beings in petitioning government and participating in a true democracy. Neither Russell Biomass LLC, nor the National Realty and Development Corporation, should have the same standing as community residents in re-writing community Codes or zoning ordinances. Our very own rights to petition and have grievances redressed by the government ought not be trumped by deeper wallets. 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*. Model ordinances for communities resisting corporate personhood shall be made available at this website, and I very much urge their passage.

## **IV. Housing Needs**

The persistent and growing concern of homelessness is by no means limited to such cities as Springfield, Boston or Worcester, but is an ever growing issue throughout our state as middle income and low income families find housing and rental costs continually skyrocketing along with healthcare costs in an age of wage stagnation and draconian budget cuts.

The Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless has observed that Massachusetts is the third least affordable state in the country. Despite our having rental and housing costs now beyond the means of growing numbers of families, only 1,300 affordable rental units are created each year through DHCD subsidy programs. 118,000 households are paying over 50% of income towards rent and utilities. Families already homeless and living in shelters are being told they must wait three years or more to find housing. A head of household earning \$15,000 per year working full time cannot afford rent in this area.

## **Remedies Remain Available**

Clearly, we need to raise the minimum wage and index this to the rate of inflation. Clearly, we need a single-payer health plan so that heads of families need no longer be forced to choose between housing

and health care. We furthermore must absolutely restore funding to vital agencies, and implement a fair tax plan to better fund such services. Massachusetts has the means, and must find the will.

## **I Have a Plan**

I support and endorse the Massachusetts Association of Community Development Corporations recommendation for the Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program (MRVP) budget to be raised an additional \$10 million; I am urging an additional \$5 million for the Affordable Housing Trust Fund; and I seek to double the low income housing tax credit.

We must raise Rental Assistance for Families in Transition (RAFT) an additional \$2 million and cover moving costs and rent arrears; I would oppose the cuts proposed in Governor Mitt Romney's budget, and oppose his proposed RAFT payment restrictions; and I propose that RAFT income eligibility standards in economically depressed areas to be set at 50% of state-wide median income rather than area median income. I furthermore support a state enabling act allowing cities and towns to adopt rent control and/or just cause eviction protection.

I support raising Individual Self-Sufficiency Initiative Program funding an additional \$5million; urge state-wide implementation of a pilot program of the First Stop Early Warning Prevention Initiative as recommended by the Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless; support full funding for the Emergency Aid to the Elderly, Disabled and Children Program to meet current eligibility standards and provide a 10% cost of living adjustment; urge expansion of the Toolbox program, earmarking up to \$5 million to be used for homelessness prevention and helping families move from shelters to safe and affordable permanent housing; seek passage of An Act Removing Barriers to Emergency Shelter for Families with Children; support additional 10% funding of shelter providers' operating contracts; urge an increase of \$1 million for shelter cash assistance and stabilization services; and support a \$6.5 million increase in Emergency Assistance for homelessness prevention.

## **We Must Create More Units**

To facilitate further creation of affordable units, I support Chapter 40B reform and urge passage of Act Relative to Reforming Chapter 40B as filed in November last year by state senator Richard T. Moore. We need a stronger Community Preservation Act independent of any property tax surcharge, and I support a package of incentives to facilitate adoption of the Community Preservation Act in more communities. I firmly oppose allowing Chapter 40B units to revert back to market rates.

## **Housing is a Basic and Essential Human Right**

Housing is a basic human right recognized by international law. Article 24 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights makes clear: "Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control." We're clearly not doing nearly enough to house people in need in this state. This candidate would do more.

### **V. Disability Rights and Access**

In a landmark 1999 decision on the Americans with Disabilities Act (*Olmstead v. L.C.*), the Supreme Court decided that people with disabilities have a right to receive care in the most integrated setting appropriate and that unnecessary institutionalization violates the Act. All states are now required to facilitate community based services and reduce institutionalization for those requiring long-term care. However, far too many people with disabilities in this state who, with but a modicum of assistance regarding adaptive equipment and community based care services, could easily become integrated and active within our communities are compelled to live their lives in virtual prisons and leave loved ones, friends and their chosen communities behind. Beyond being an inefficient waste of both our tax dollars and resources, the failure by this Commonwealth to further facilitate independent living for people with disabilities is a de facto human rights violation impacting on the freedoms and liberties of our very own citizens.

Throughout my nine years as a certified nursing assistant, I was appalled, shocked and astonished to see how disabled and elderly persons perfectly capable of managing their very own affairs and contributing to their communities were being segregated, shelved and forgotten all because this Commonwealth would not afford them the means needed to contribute to their communities, to become the valuable assets to their communities that each was perfectly capable of being if only provided community based access and care.

## **The Green-Rainbow Party Supports Full Integration and Access for the Disabled**

Together with disability rights activist and Green-Rainbow Party candidate for Belchertown Selectboard, the wonderful Martina Robinson, I helped compose the following plank to the Green-Rainbow Party platform - a platform plank intended to cement our status as leaders in the disability rights struggle: "To facilitate increased independence and mobility for people under long term care the Green-Rainbow Party supports mandatory minimum staffing legislation for nursing facilities, increased resources for rehabilitative services, and encouraging home and community based long term care services instead of institutionalization. We recognize as a party that most people with disabilities and elders would prefer to live in their own apartments, houses and communities supported by people they and their family members hire and instruct in issues related to their care, ie. scheduling, task performed, etc., rather than in institutions. The Green-Rainbow Party as a general rule strongly discourages institutionalization of elderly and people with disabilities except where such would serve the best interest of the individual on a case by case basis and no better alternative exists."

## **I Support a Legislative Agenda to Make This Dream A Solid Reality**

I fully support and endorse the legislative agenda proposed by the Massachusetts ARC. I support raising the Turning 22 line item 5920-5000 to \$10.5 million, ensuring at least \$21,000 per year per graduate for employment or day transportation and support services; I support an increase of \$5 million to Family Support Line Item 5920-3000 permitting an additional 5000 to be served by Family Support allocations, and thus allowing more cost-effective and humane strategies for children with medical needs and autism; I support an increase of \$4 million to DOE-DMR Collaboration, Line Item 5948-0012, to clear the waiting list for children with severe disabilities to be reintegrated into their families rather than shelved in private facilities; and I support full funding of H.2930 and S.1154 permitting, with \$12 million in new line item 1599-1603, better staff retention and development within community services purchased by DMR. To facilitate more humane treatment of people with disabilities, I firmly support passage of S.376/ H.1120, the Act to Ensure the Human Treatment of People With Disabilities, as filed by Sen. Jarrett Barrios and Rep. Barbara L'Italien, and I firmly back passage of S.1352 to promote training of law enforcement officers in responding to mental health emergencies as filed by Sen. Cynthia Creem. I back passage of H.2885, an Act Relative to Rates for Human and Social Service Programs, in order to reform the human services price setting system; S.784, loan forgiveness for direct care human service workers; and S.2380 to promote higher education among employees of human services providers. I support expanding definitions of mandated reporters of abuse; I support full funding for the Emergency Aid to the Elderly, Disabled and Children Program to meet current eligibility standards and provide a 10% cost of living adjustment; I support full funding of inpatient care for the Department of Mental Health; and I firmly support restored coverage for prosthetics, orthotics, dentures, eyeglasses and chiropractic therapy via single-payer health care plans. I furthermore believe health care dollars expended should follow consumers into their own communities and allow for those consumers to choose themselves what options best meet their needs. I firmly support legislation to create a PCA Quality Workforce Council (H.4758), and support full implementation in Massachusetts of the Ticket to Work/ Work Incentives Act.

## **Home and Community Based Service Options Help Consumers and Save Money for the State**

Martina Robinson has estimated that the Commonwealth would save over \$27,000 per consumer to provide for community based health care services rather than imprisoning consumers in nursing homes. Freedom for the more than 8200 wrongly deprived of freedom and liberty when community based services would quite nicely suffice would result in savings for the Commonwealth in the realm of some \$221,400,000 per year.

10. Will you publicly support nurses who strike over the issues related to patient care?

**Your right to strike is your right to live and breathe. Yes, I would indeed publicly support such nurses – and I would do so without reservations or hesitation!**