

National Association of Social Workers - MA PACE

617-227-9635, ext. 15

Statewide Candidate Questionnaire

DO NOT HIT REPLY!!!

PLEASE EMAIL THIS QUESTIONNAIRE TO **sallyebleiberg@verizon.net**

Please return your completed questionnaire by May 19, 2006

Part 1. General Information

Candidate: Owen R. Broadhurst Party: Green-Rainbow Party

Office Sought: State Representative, Third Hampden District

Campaign Mailing Address: 96 Elbert Road, Agawam, MA 01001-3202

Website: <http://www.owenbroadhurst.org> Email: owen.broadhurst@gmail.com

Campaign Manager: James Ian Broadhurst CPF ID#: 14478

Phone # (h): 413.786.1508 (c): 413.786.1508 (hq): 413.786.1508

Contribution Payable to: The Broadhurst Committee

Name(s) of Other Candidate(s) and Party Affiliation(s):

Republican candidates: Robert Magovern, Samuel Adams and John Cesan

Democratic candidates: Rosemary Sandlin, Joseph Mineo, and Denise Moffat

Part 2. Candidate Background

Education: B.A. Westfield State College

Employment: Unemployed. Former certified nursing assistant, Chestnut Hill Nursing Home

Elected Office(s) and Year(s) in Office: N/A

Leadership Position(s) Held and Year(s): Representative to Green Party National Committee, 2005 – now
Green-Rainbow Party Secretary, 2005-2006; Green-Rainbow Party Communications Director, 2004- 2005
Green-Rainbow Party State Committee, 2002-2006

Town of Agawam Community Preservation Committee, 2003- now

Community/Civic/Religious/Professional Memberships:

Board of Directors, Town of Agawam St. Patrick's Committee, Inc.
Citizens Against Reckless Development; Rowan Tree Church

Part 3. Policy Positions - please answer each question with no more than one paragraph.

1. Campaign Finance Reform

Do you support public financing for candidates who agree to strict fundraising and spending limits? **Yes.**

2. Civil Rights

- a. Do you support the fundamental right to choose an abortion and oppose attempts to restrict or ban abortion? **Yes.**
- b. Do you oppose weakening the state's affirmative action program and its supporting infrastructure? **Yes.**
- c. Do you oppose the death penalty? **Yes.**
- d. Do you support the restoration of services for immigrants including citizenship assistance, driver's licenses, employment, health insurance, and in-state tuition? **Yes.**
- e. Do you support equal civil rights, including marriage, for same sex couples and oppose a Constitutional amendment to limit these equal rights? **Yes.**
- f. Do you support the elimination of racial and ethnic disparity in health care? **Yes.**

3. Child Welfare

- a. Do you support increased state funding to make quality education available to all working families? **Yes.**

to increase reimbursement rates to raise childcare workers wages? **Yes.**

to provide adequate inpatient and outpatient mental health services for Massachusetts children? **Yes.**

to ensure adequate and stable funding of the Department of Social Services with smaller caseloads for DSS workers? **Yes.**

- b. Do you support a gradual approach to reducing health impacts from many toxic chemicals and mandating the use of the safest alternatives to harmful chemicals used in every day life? **Yes.**

I support a "gradual approach" far less than I support immediate and unqualified action. The time to seek safe alternatives is not in the future, but right now this immediate instant.

4. Disabilities

- a. Do you support removing barriers and facilitating access to community based services and support for individuals with disabilities, allowing for full inclusion? **Yes.**
- b. Do you support providing services to the disabled and their caregivers to maintain their social and economic wellbeing? **Yes.**

5. Elders

Do you support providing services to elders and their caregivers to maintain their social and economic wellbeing? **Yes.**

6. Health Care

Do you support legislation creating a single payer health insurance system in Massachusetts that guarantees access, is publicly administered, and limits the rate of growth in health care spending?

I most certainly do, yes, and I support also the proposed affordable health care constitutional amendment. The single-payer solution is the one solution that works.

7. Mental Health Care

Do you support comprehensive mental health services that will meet the mental health needs of consumers? **Yes.**

8. Housing/Homelessness

- a. Do you support increased funding for modernization of state owned apartments administered by local housing authorities? **Yes.**
- b. Do you support funding to provide safe transitional shelter to all individuals and families? **Yes**
- c. Do you support the creation of affordable housing for all individuals and families in need in Massachusetts? **Yes.**

9. Employment

- a. Do you support privatization of state services when it cuts workers' salaries and denies them union representation? **Absolutely Not, NO!**
- b. Do you support all workers receiving a living wage and competitive benefits? **Yes.**
- c. Do you support ensuring safe working conditions for all workers? **Yes.**

10. Welfare

Do you support preserving sustainable employment and benefits through education/training and provision of necessary support services? **Yes.**

11. Criminal Justice

- a. Do you support repealing mandatory minimum sentencing? **Yes.**
- b. Do you support diverting to treatment low level offenders who are mentally ill and/or drug addicted? **Yes.**
- c. Do you support expanding alternative sentencing, rehabilitative interventions for prisoners and community reintegration services after incarceration? **Yes.**
- d. Do you support establishing citizen oversight and monitoring of health and human services in state and county correctional facilities? **Yes.**

12. Revenue/Taxes

- a. Do you support closing corporate tax loopholes? **Yes.**
- b. Do you support returning the personal income tax to prior levels? **Yes.**

I would support this indeed if impact on working families is reduced.

Part 4. Legislative Goals

1. What are your three priority issues? How do you plan to address them?

I. Tax Reform:

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.

2. Which three actions should the Legislature undertake in order to improve the quality of life for Massachusetts residents? What role should the Commonwealth take in funding these policies or programs?

The Legislature should unquestionably be taking the following actions: Implement a single-payer health insurance plan; implement a Fair Tax plan to reduce reliance on regressive taxation and flatten overall tax burden disparities; and hike the minimum wage to the standard of the Living Wage and index such to the rate of inflation.

To better fund progressive policies and programs, the Commonwealth should be looking to reduce dependence on regressive taxes and fees, closing corporate loopholes, and implementing the Fair Tax plan to better raise more revenue.

Part 5. Your Campaign

- a. What is your campaign strategy or strategies (i.e. specific actions such a voter identification) and how is your campaign implementing the strategy or strategies?

My campaign has presently begun a selective letter campaign, specifically targeting those groups of voters we believe shall initially be most receptive to our message:

Fundraising appeals are currently being forwarded to Green-Rainbow Party members, known married same-sex couples and local LGBT rights activists, activists in Agawam and Russell who have been involved in campaigns against polluting power plants and big box shopping centers, and most especially persons with disabilities. With the wonderful assistance of the campaign Disability Rights and Access coordinator, Ms. Martina Robinson, a press conference specifically relating to the unveiling of my disability rights and access legislative platform shall likely be held later this month or next month.

b. What endorsements have you received?

Green-Rainbow Party; National Lavender Green Caucus; United Auto Workers MA State Community Action Program Council.

c. How much money do you need to raise? How much have you raised to date?

The campaign hopes to match the fundraising levels of prior Republican campaigns for State Representative in this district, in the level of some \$5000. As of this date, the Broadhurst Committee has raised approximately \$150.

Please email to sallybleiberg@verizon.net. Do not hit Reply.

Please submit a letter of recommendation from a licensed social worker in your district who knows you and supports your candidacy.

Please mail this recommendation and campaign literature to:

14 Harris Street, Belmont, MA 02478 or fax to: 617 -484-4459.
