

# 18<sup>th</sup> Assembly District

Thomas Knox (Republican)

## BIOGRAPHY

I am Thomas Knox and I am running for Connecticut's General Assembly from West Hartford. I am a cardiologist with a private practice in Hartford. My wife, Jennifer, and I have three children in our public schools and an eleven month old at home. I am running to try to bring reform and meaningful savings in government that will help all of Connecticut's residents.

## Essay questions

1. With shrinking resources and increasing demands on state funds, what legislative initiatives would you propose to meet the needs of economically struggling citizens?

The best way to help those in need would be to reduce the burden on State resources. Finding more cost effective measures for State services and cutting unneeded and overfunded programs will make funds available that can be used to help those most in need. This will also reduce the tax burden so people can keep more of what they make. The State should also look to what factors are causing those shrinking resources and increasing demands. Over taxation and union pressure have driven key businesses out of the State. This creates a lack of quality high paying jobs and increases demand for State services. We need to bring back businesses as well as encourage entrepreneurial small business development.

2. Recent reports suggest that the Charter Oak Health Plan is inadequate with very few providers willing to participate. What measures would you propose to fill in the gaps for those unable to afford health insurance?

This issue affects my everyday life. As a doctor I do accept the Charter Oak Health Plan. Many of my colleagues do not as it pays providers very little. Universal healthcare is not the answer as it leaves the government with one more thing to mismanage. The traditional way of getting insurance through an employer is still the best way. Obviously, the more people in our work force, the better. Taxes need to be reduced and incentives need to be given to employers to offer health coverage to more employees. For those that are

unemployed or still fall through the cracks, temporary safeguards need to be in place. This could include an expansion of the Husky plan and perhaps increasing the pay to the doctors accepting these State funded plans. Doctors want to help those in need. When we are faced with increasing taxes, larger number of patients, increasing malpractice costs, and decreasing re-imburement; something has to give. More often than not it will be those with insurances that do not pay as well.

3. Affordable rental housing needs have increased due to sub-prime foreclosures, job losses, escalating fuel, food and electricity costs. What specific measurable initiatives would you propose to increase the supply of affordable housing and to prevent/ reduce homelessness?

Tax incentives to developers who build low to middle income housing, as well as easing zoning restrictions on converting formerly business only zones to residential zones. I would also support a measure to require construction of low to middle income housing in large developments in identified depressed areas as a condition for approval of a building permit.

4. What will you do to help localities to get the necessary money to provide quality education for all?

Initially there should be a restructuring of the ECS funding formula. This formula is not used properly and West Hartford has been short changed \$50 million in the last twelve years. School districts should also have greater flexibility to find measures to fill the funding gap. State funding to schools should not be tied to programs that restrict parents or student's right to choose.

5. If elected, what single legislative initiative would be your first priority?

My first priority would be to work on a "Three Strikes" initiative to mandate life imprisonment without parole for those violent criminals that continue to break the law.



Thomas Knox

## LWV Yes/No Grid Questions, Election 2008

Would you support legislation reducing the drinking age to 18?

No

Would you support legislation eliminating billboards on state highways in CT?

No

Would you support legislation requiring universal full day kindergarten?

No. This is too burdensome on the schools.

Would you support re-organization of the probate court system?

No

Should the state adopt LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) environmental standards in the construction and major renovation of all state owned buildings?

Yes

Would you support legislation that could require CT compliance with the federal Real ID Act requiring changes to state drivers' licenses?

Yes. This is important for security reasons.

Should Connecticut adopt and fund a work program to address long neglected infrastructure deterioration?

Yes

**For more information on the League of Women Voters of Greater Hartford go to [www.lwvgh.org](http://www.lwvgh.org).**

Check out the League of Women Voters-Connecticut website at [www.lwvct.org](http://www.lwvct.org) for additional information on all of election 2008.

# 18<sup>th</sup> Assembly District

Andrew M. Fleischmann (Democrat & Working Families)

## BIOGRAPHY

Andy Fleischmann has served West Hartford in the legislature since 1995.

He chairs both the Education Committee and the Appropriations Subcommittee for Education.

In 2007, Andy helped West Hartford schools win an historic increase of over \$4 million in education funding. This spring, he co-sponsored a new law that provides mortgage assistance to struggling homeowners and penalizes predatory lenders.

Education: Hall High School

Princeton University – BA cum laude, Phi Beta Kappa.

Stanford University – Masters in US History

Occupation: Chief Operating Officer, SpeedReading People, a communications training firm.

Andy, his wife Caroline and daughter Emily reside near Bishop's Corner.

## Essay questions

1. With shrinking resources and increasing demands on state funds, what legislative initiatives would you propose to meet the needs of economically struggling citizens?

State government's best economic tool is the power to create a climate that promotes entrepreneurship and job growth. More jobs paying good wages mean fewer struggles for Connecticut residents. That's why I introduced and will keep advocating for legislation to establish tax credits for investments in Connecticut start-up companies. It's also why I support research & development tax credits for small and medium-sized companies. These measures will increase the number of new small and mid-sized companies in Connecticut and help create high-paying, quality jobs.

2. Recent reports suggest that the Charter Oak Health Plan is inadequate with very few providers willing to participate. What measures would you propose to fill in the gaps for those unable to afford health insurance?

I support expanding the state health insurance pool to allow non-profits, small businesses, and individuals to

join. Unlike the Governor's Charter Oak proposal, this approach will provide affordable, high quality coverage to people who need it.

3. Affordable rental housing needs have increased due to sub-prime foreclosures, job losses, escalating fuel, food and electricity costs. What specific measurable initiatives would you propose to increase the supply of affordable housing and to prevent/ reduce homelessness?

This past term, I strongly supported expansion of the HOME initiative, which is making more affordable housing available across Connecticut – while compensating communities that establish such housing. I support further expansion of this initiative in the next two years. I also believe we need to increase the availability of supportive housing – which helps the homeless to get services they need in addition to housing – leading to a long-term decline in the incidence of homelessness.

4. What will you do to help localities to get the necessary money to provide quality education for all?

I support re-balancing Connecticut's tax structure and greatly increasing state support for local schools. Specifically, I believe we need to repair the income tax so that it better reflects peoples' ability to pay. This would mean a tax cut for 95% of Connecticut residents, and a marginal tax increase for households at the top of the income spectrum. This tiered approach to the state income tax would bring a net increase in revenue – funds we need to make available to Connecticut's under-funded school systems.

In addition, I believe that quality education requires more than increased funding. It will require a commitment to making pre-school available to all families, reconstitution of certain failing schools, increased use of great new school models (such as CommPact, Charter and Magnet schools), and an embrace of new approaches to recruiting school leaders and teachers in critical shortage areas.

5. If elected, what single legislative initiative would be your first priority?

Increasing state support for West Hartford's schools – and all local school



Andrew Fleischmann

systems – will be my top priority if I am fortunate enough to win re-election this November.

## LWV Yes/No Grid Questions, Election 2008

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Yes

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Yes

Would you support re-organization of the probate court system?

Yes

Should the state adopt LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) environmental standards in the construction and major renovation of all state owned buildings?

Yes. I led the fight to put these standards in place for school construction, and believe we should do the same for state-owned buildings.

Would you support legislation that could require CT compliance with the federal Real ID Act requiring changes to state drivers' licenses?

No – unless the federal government funds the changes it's seeking.

Should Connecticut adopt and fund a work program to address long neglected infrastructure deterioration?

Yes