

19th Assembly District

Theresa McGrath (Republican)

BIOGRAPHY

Theresa McGrath is a daughter of Irish Immigrants, a wife of 20 years and mother of three teenagers. She attended parochial school, Manhattan College and received a Culinary Arts Diploma from Johnson & Wales University.

After observing the shortcomings of the educational system and the political culture, Theresa became an advocate for her own children and a professional parent advocate for less fortunate parents of children with special needs. On a professional level, Theresa has been an active grassroots lobbyist, for over 12 years. She developed an organization called Family Alliance for Children in Education to give parents a voice at the Capitol.

Theresa continued her efforts as a researcher and writer for the Yankee Institute as their Education Policy Expert, researching education legislation, while providing cost effective alternatives to maintain quality and equity in education.

Due to her strong support during her bid for town clerk, Theresa was asked by the Republican leadership to consider running for office. Although public office had not been on Theresa's mind, she realizes this would be the most effective way to effect REAL change for the people of her community, and the issues that she and the voters care about.

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 problem is not shrinking resources since in fact, the state budget increases every year. The problem is the allocation of resources. Where is our money going, and is it being spent appropriately? The best way to meet the needs of struggling citizens is to create an economic environment that promotes employment creating sustainable lives.

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?

There is Husky A for Medicaid recipients, Husky B and Husky Plus for children under 19. For people with the lowest incomes, these are free. Charter Oak is a basic, generic health care program that is actually affordable for the poor, but expensive for the middle class, who can obtain private insurance for less.

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?

Keep Property Taxes low, which will help keep rents down. Prevent illegal immigration which will create employment for US citizens out of work. Create a welcome climate to enable businesses to remain in our state and entice new businesses to our state; particularly alternative energy businesses – job creation, revenues and competition to combat ever increasing oil and gas gouging.

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

Strip the politicized ECS formula altogether, as recommended by Attorney Horton of the Sheff case. Replace it with a system that provides a flat rate for all students, with extra amounts for free & reduced lunch, ESOL and Special needs children. The current system is not working as intended.

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

I will seek to cut taxes, cut spending, without cutting services, reform education funding, make Connecticut attractive to new employers, and get violent criminals off the streets for good.

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



Theresa McGrath

Would you support legislation requiring universal full day kindergarten?

No, it's a mandate. I don't support unfunded/underfunded state mandates on towns. Towns know how best to educate their students.

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?

No. This is an expensive program. I support cost effective, pro-business, job creating alternative energy programs.

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

No.

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

No. We should fix the one we already spend millions of state dollars on.

For more information on the League of Women Voters of Greater Hartford go to www.lwvgh.org.

Check out the League of Women Voters-Connecticut website at www.lwvct.org for additional information on all of election 2008.

19th Assembly District

Beth Bye (Democrat)

BIOGRAPHY

Beth Bye is just completing her first term representing the 19th District – that is West Hartford, Avon and Farmington.

Beth has worked in early childhood education for 25 years. She led programs at Trinity College, Saint Joseph College, CREC and the Asylum Hill Congregational Church. Beth was named as one of 30 young people of influence by Connecticut Magazine.

In her first term, Rep. Bye focused her efforts on education funding to ease property taxes; environmental issues, recycling and open space. She also worked on health care, protecting seniors privacy in property tax applications, energy, and criminal justice reform.

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?

Connecticut residents struggle with the high costs of energy, health care, transportation, food, and property taxes. In the short term, the legislature and Governor have passed home heating assistance and legislation to hold off home foreclosures. Tough economic times will be with us for the near future. We need to look carefully at our priorities as a State.

The legislature can help residents by being cautious about passing state mandates to towns and cities that can drive up property taxes. Also, we must take advantage of all available federal funds. This past session, we worked to help Connecticut access millions of federal dollars for senior prescription drugs.

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?

We need to work with Governor Rell to improve the Charter Oak Plan so state health care plans help CT residents. Helping families access health care plans saves tax dollars as it increases well care and reduces emergency room

visits. Our inefficient health care system has numerous problems beyond the uninsured, including the high cost for health care insurance, high deductibles, a lack of essential services for those with insurance that does not cover their medical care needs, and the uninsured using emergency rooms for primary care.

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?

High property taxes impact Connecticut homeowners and renters alike. The state needs to help towns reduce the reliance on property taxes. Successful pilot programs in Connecticut show that supportive housing is a good option to increase affordable housing. We need to work with towns to support planned developments and work with the federal government as well.

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

We passed historic increases in Education Cost Sharing funds to Towns in the last budget. There is still work to do. I will work to fully fund the ECS grants and address special education funding. Right now, the state reimburses 100% for the most disabled students and very little for others. We need a cost sharing approach with towns that shares special education costs.

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

Develop forward-looking energy policy that reduces energy costs, and helps the Connecticut economy and the environment at the same time. I will support conservation, alternative energy solutions and investments in Connecticut's industries that develop clean, renewable energy sources.



Beth Bye

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. We need regulation, but not a total ban.

Would you support legislation requiring universal full day kindergarten?

No

I believe in full day kindergarten, but this would be an expensive unfunded mandate for our towns.

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

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

No.

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

Yes.