

Candidate Questionnaire

ACE Environmental Questions
For Area Candidates, 2002
March 21, 2002

Problem: PUBLIC HEALTH CONCERNS IN PA - The health of PA citizens is not taken into consideration when permits are issued by the PA Department of Environmental Protection.

Questions:

Would you work to do the following:

1. Insist that public health be the major priority in every pollution permit issued by PA Department of Environmental Protection? YES_____ NO_____
2. Raise state health standards to protect everyone, including the sick, and especially our children? YES_____ NO_____
3. Lower acceptable levels of contamination for all pollution sources in our air, water, and soil? YES_____ NO_____
4. Include an analysis of the area's synergistic and cumulative health risks in pollution permitting decisions? YES_____ NO_____
5. Demand the use of the Precautionary Principle in each permitting decision? YES_____ NO_____
6. Shift the burden of proof to the polluters, to prove their emissions are safe to human health, rather than forcing citizens to prove harm to their health? YES_____ NO_____

Problem: LAX REGULATIONS, UNPROTECTIVE STANDARDS, ABSENCE of COMPREHENSIVE MONITORING, and LACK of ENFORCEMENT of VIOLATIONS. The PA Constitution, Article 1, Section 27, adopted May 18, 1971 states that the people have a right to clean air and pure water and that the Commonwealth shall conserve and maintain them for the benefit of all the people. PA DEP's mission is to protect PA's Air, Land, and Water from pollution and to provide for the health and safety of PA citizens through a cleaner environment.

Question:

7. Will you work to strengthen all DEP regulations and standards? YES_____ NO_____
8. Will you work to insure strict monitoring and enforcement of pollution limits? YES_____ NO_____

Problem: RIGHT-TO-KNOW LAWS are being changed so the public is denied access to the kinds and amounts of hazardous substances that are being emitted into their air and water.

Question:

9. Would you vote to strengthen, not weaken, the public's right-to-know about the kinds and amounts of hazardous substances which are being emitted into the public's air and water and onto the soil? YES_____ NO_____

Problem: LINGUISTIC DETOXIFICATION ~ Deceptive and dangerous word games and double talk. Hazardous chemicals and other materials are renamed by our

protective agencies, to benefit polluters, all at great financial and physical expense to the public. Changing the names of hazardous substances does not remove the health risks.

Examples:

"BENEFICIAL USE" ~ The re-use of contaminated wastes and other dangerous substances, which can cause great harm to human health and the environment. This is about avoiding the regulatory process. It's a tragic trick on the public for polluters and regulators to avoid the regulation and safe handling of hazardous wastes, such as landfill gas, sewage sludge, and contaminated soil. It is NOT beneficial to the public to reuse hazardous substances, which should be cleaned up or disposed of safely.

RESIDUAL WASTE" - Another name for waste that can be hazardous
BIOSOLIDS" ~ Another name for Sewage Sludge
BIOMASS" - Another name for toxic Landfill Gas
SAFE FILL" - Another name for contaminated materials

Question:

10. Will you vote against legislation containing linguistic detoxification, and insure that all legislative language means what it says and is easily understood by the public? YES_____NO_____

Problem: SEWAGE SLUDGE is a toxic soup full of whatever went down the drain at hospitals, research and pharmaceutical labs, schools, businesses, industries and homes. Of 70,000 chemicals and combinations, only 8 are regulated. Wastewater treatment plants were not designed to produce fertilizer, yet PA promotes the use of sewage sludge as a fertilizer. Pathogenic, toxic sewage sludge is land applied on farms where food we eat is grown and where milk and beef cows graze. Two deaths in PA are considered to be attributed to land applied sewage sludge.

Question:

11. Will you vote to prohibit the land application of all sewage sludge and sludge products in PA? YES_____NO_____

Problem: BROWNFIELDS are contaminated sites often located in poor or minority neighborhoods. Newly proposed DEP "SAFE FILL" regulations allow the use of contaminated wastes for remediating BROWNFIELDS. DEP'S new "SAFE FILL" regulations contain regulatory loopholes and PA Act 2 lowered health standards. BROWNFIELDS will get browner and more dangerous, further contaminating soil, water, air, and public health.

Question:

12. Will you vote to REWRITE ACT 2, to insure that PA health standards protect human health? YES_____NO_____

Problem: POLLUTION PERMITS in Pottstown, issued by DEP in June, 2001.
(1) Occidental Chemical in Pottstown, one of the most dangerous polluters in the state, was permitted to increase its HAZARDOUS air emissions. This would

increase health risks to tens of thousands of residents and children around and downwind of Occidental.

(2) Pottstown Landfill was permitted to transport its extremely hazardous, corrosive, explosive, flammable, unregulated, ever-changing landfill gas off-site. This gas would travel in a 5.5 underground pipeline through a heavily populated area, too close to schools, parks, residents, the Schuylkill River (a source of drinking water), and industrial railroad tracks which transport and store hazardous chemicals.

Questions:

13. Will you work to get these permits withdrawn by our Governor?

YES_____NO_____

14. Will you vote to end the re-use of hazardous landfill gas off-site and only allow it to be burned at landfills after it is cleaned up? YES_____NO_____

Problem: POTTSTOWN LANDFILL is a 300 acre industrial waste landfill which threatens the health and safety of our heavily populated area. This waste contaminates our air, water, soil, and ultimately threatens our health. Area residents are forced to live forever with contamination from the escaping gases and leachate produced by extremely hazardous substances in the wastes. The waste stream is becoming even more dangerous as more radiation and hazardous man-made chemicals are disposed of. This region's residents can not tolerate being subjected to and suffering the consequences from more dangerous wastes, either PA or out of state. The Greater Pottstown area has become a sacrificed zone for the profits of a world-wide polluter.

Question:

15. Would you protect the air, water, soil, and health of area residents by helping to stop all future Pottstown Landfill expansions, including vertical expansions, Upper Pottsgrove, or any other area? YES_____NO_____

Problem: RADIATION ~ The NRC proposes the release, re-use, and recycling of radioactive wastes. This will end up in commercial products, then enter the waste stream and landfills. DEP's Bureau of Radiation Protection is proposing that we legitimize dumping radioactive wastes in landfills under the guise of radiation monitoring. Research suggests there is no safe level of radiation.

Question:

16. Will you work to stop the use of PA landfills for disposal of radioactive materials? YES_____NO_____

Problem: WASTE IMPORTS threaten to destroy the air, water, soil, food, and health of PA residents. PA imports more waste than any other state in the nation. Ridge administration policies have opened the floodgates to the waste industry. PA waste imports doubled in the past 4 years. PA imported almost twice the amount of waste as we generated. PA residents live with the consequences of this contamination forever. The waste stream contains extremely

hazardous materials and their even more dangerous combinations. Hazardous gases and leachate are produced by over 50 PA landfills. A few waste companies are making profits at the expense of our air, soil, water, food, and health. PA urgently needs a waste bill, which will actually deal with the waste problems in PA. Neither the waste bill that just passed in the State House, HB 1436, nor the proposed Senate Bill SB 814, deals with stopping the flow of waste into PA. PA legislators can stop the flow of waste into PA if they have the political will to protect the people.

Questions:

Would you work and vote for the following:

17. ROLLBACK STATEWIDE OVERPERMITTING (There is already enough permitted space in PA for 12 years at the current rate of dumping) and REDUCE TOTAL DAILY VOLUME of waste dumped in PA to only what PA residents generate daily?

YES_____ NO_____

18. A REAL MORATORIUM (NO LOOPHOLES or EXCEPTIONS) on ALL LANDFILLS IN PA?

YES_____ NO_____

Problem: EMISSIONS TRADING ~ PA's public resources, AIR, WATER, and SOIL are the common property of all people, including generations yet to come, according to the PA Constitution. Polluters should not have a right to pollute our air, water, and soil. When emissions should be reduced to protect public health, polluting industries should not be permitted to sell pollution credits to other polluting industries under any circumstances. To protect public health and safety, we must eliminate pollution, not just move it around!

Question:

19. Would you work for and vote to ELIMINATE POLLUTION TRADING?

YES_____ NO_____

Problem: TOXIC MOLD can be a serious health hazard to humans.

Question:

20. Would you work to have the PA Department of Health set up a mandatory program to eliminate the risks of toxic mold in schools? Yes_____ NO_____