



West Hartford: 18th Assembly District

Candidate Questions for Connecticut State House

Rick Bush Republican



Rick Bush is a life-long CT resident. He has travelled extensively in Europe & the United States and he speaks conversational Italian. He has a double-major Bachelor of Arts in English & Political Science from The University of Connecticut and he is a Division 1 athlete. Rick is a husband and father of 4, a small business owner and a landlord. He has a home improvement contractor’s license, Real Estate Broker’s license as well as a Community Association Manager’s license. Rick is the President of the Connecticut Association of Real Estate Investors (CAREI), and he is on the board of directors and the treasurer of the Connecticut Coalition of Property Owners (CCOPO), He is also on the town of West Hartford Conservation Commission and he is a Commissioner of the MDC.

Jillian Gilchrest Democrat



Jillian Gilchrest is in her first term as Representative and serves on the Appropriations, Education, and Energy & Technology Committees. Prior to her election, Jillian worked as the Executive Director of NARAL Pro-Choice Connecticut and Senior Policy Analyst at the Permanent Commission on the Status of Women. She served on the West Hartford Board of Education in 2013 and holds a Masters Degree in Social Work. Jillian currently teaches at a handful of universities throughout Connecticut. She moved to West Hartford in 2008 because she fell in love with our community. Jillian is a grateful mom to two healthy & happy children.

1. The COVID-19 pandemic is putting pressure on the state budget more than usual. What are your priorities on structuring spending and revenue?

In 2019 CT only had 0.9% economic growth. My priority is to support small businesses, restaurants, tenants and landlords. Small business is the engine of growth and sustainability in CT and the reduction in jobs caused by the pandemic will seriously exacerbate the existing housing crisis. Without jobs tenants will be forced out of their homes and the current minimum wage increase is only hampering the process by increasing costs to small business. Instead of having the intended effect of lifting people out of poverty, it reduces jobs, increases costs and facilitates inflation. Landlords or “Housing providers” provide an essential service. It is critical not to disrupt the landlord tenant relationship and also to protect both tenants and landlords because this crisis is just unfolding.

The pandemic has created a great deal of need in Connecticut and our community. There are many families and individuals who are struggling financially. In this time of crisis, Connecticut residents have depended on their state government for financial support and much needed services. As a member of the Appropriations Committee, I want to ensure that Connecticut continues on the path of fiscal responsibility while bolstering our social safety net. I would like to see the federal government step up during these unprecedented times to provide states with much needed financial support so we can give Connecticut residents and businesses the relief they need.

2. There is evidence that zoning laws in individual communities across our state have contributed to social, economic, and racial


The zoning laws in question are related to the creation of ADU’s, accessory dwelling units. I believe that ADU’s are an important option for property owners who have enough space. As long as the new habitational space fulfills safety requirements and will be a valuable source of low-income housing for family members and seniors who want to age in place. As a racial inequity argument, property taxes set more of a barrier. Also, the question

Zoning laws have contributed to Connecticut’s extreme social, economic and racial inequity. As a community, West Hartford has declared racism a public health crisis. In order to combat this crisis, we need to address institutional racism which includes our state’s zoning laws. I would like to see the Connecticut General Assembly work on form-based design, regional planning

<p>inequities. What is your response?</p>	<p>seems predicated on the fact that social & economic inequity and racial inequity are combined for the purposes of this legislation. I would strongly argue that, NO, current zoning laws are not racially motivated and to suggest it is a huge misstep.</p>	<p>bodies, and local zoning reforms.</p>
<p>3. What is the role of the CT Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA) and is it fulfilling its duty to provide utility oversight? What would you propose?</p>	<p>The problem is that there is no competition. PURA needs to step up and make sure that Eversource does not exceed its authority as a for-profit organization when it increases customer pricing for the benefit of shareholders. Eversource is a monopoly and we are at it's mercy for delivery rates and storm repairs. The deal that allowed Eversource to purchase Northeast Utilities should have been more carefully vetted and there should have been more oversight built into the agreement. I would propose that the rate of investor return be correlated with performance. I would explore the possibility of breaking up Eversource and offering public ownership.</p>	<p>PURA is intended to balance the public's right to safe, adequate and reliable utility service at reasonable rates with the provider's right to a reasonable return on its investment. Currently, PURA is unable to fulfill its duty. Recognizing this, I supported legislation during the special session that strengthened PURA's oversight. As a member of the Energy & Technology Committee I look forward to working on additional policies during the 2021 session to provide the public with reasonable rates.</p>




West Hartford: 19th Assembly District Candidate

<p>Candidate Questions for Connecticut State House</p>	<p>Tammy Exum Democrat</p>  <p>Tammy is the state representative for the 19th District. She previously served on the West Hartford Board of Education. Tammy has served on many community boards, including the West Hartford Special Education PTA and Parent Leadership Training Institute. She lives in West Hartford with her husband, Earl. They have three sons.</p>	<p>Candidate is unopposed.</p>
<p>1. The COVID-19 pandemic is putting pressure on the state budget more than usual. What are your priorities on structuring spending and revenue?</p>	<p>We need to continue to follow the science to keep the Coronavirus under control so our businesses can continue to reopen, operate and support the tax base. As our businesses and economy recover, we will need to go through the budget, line by line, to find ways to prioritize investments in healthcare, infrastructure, technology, upgrade our schools and public services. Thanks to the fiscal controls enacted in 2017, we are actually in a better place, from a budget perspective, than most states.</p>	
<p>2. There is evidence that zoning laws in individual communities across our state have contributed to social, economic, and racial inequities. What is your response?</p>	<p>When we have communities with a diversity of ages, abilities, incomes and ethnicities, and when those same communities are properly resourced, it creates opportunities for all community members to thrive. Restrictive zoning codes create obstacles to attaining diverse, mixed income communities. Zoning prohibitions often make it hard for affordable housing to be built, which often denies people of color, seniors, first time homeowners, people living with disabilities, etc. to have quality opportunities and resources. In CT we have concentrated areas of poverty, which is usually accompanied by poorer quality schools, healthcare and unsafe neighborhoods. The pandemic has further highlighted disparities and the correlation between zip codes and outcomes.</p>	
<p>3. What is the role of the CT Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA) and is it fulfilling its duty to provide utility oversight? What would you propose?</p>	<p>PURA regulates the rates and services of Connecticut's utility companies within given statutory constraints. I fully support the "Take Back Our Grid Act" directing PURA to establish new standards that utilities must meet, performance based metrics for determining progress, and enabling them to issue penalties if utilities fail to meet those standards. This bill will significantly improve PURA's oversight capabilities on Eversource and other utilities. I look forward to collaborating on good policy proposals that will be consumer-friendly, reimburse consumers for loss, investigate rate proposals, and ensure that any increases correlate with the value that customers are getting from the utilities.</p>	



West Hartford: 20th Assembly District

<p>Candidate Questions for Connecticut State House</p>	<p>Kate Farrar Democrat</p>  <p>As a proud UConn graduate, I live in West Hartford with my husband Chan and our dog Lizzie. I've spent a 20-year non-profit career leading meaningful change to improve the lives of working families. Most recently, I led the passage of Paid Family and Medical Leave into law in our state and expanded STEM education and leadership programs for middle-school girls and college women. I enjoy volunteering in our town for the Aurora Foundation, Foundation for West Hartford Schools, and as an Alternate on Zoning for West Hartford Town Council.</p>	<p>Candidate is unopposed.</p>
<p>1. The COVID-19 pandemic is putting pressure on the state budget more than usual. What are your priorities on structuring spending and revenue?</p>	<p>. State government must address long-standing economic inequities and put working families (including those out of work due to COVID-19) first in our economy. I will be a strong advocate to maintain public services, reduce economic burdens on working families and seniors by making our tax system more fair, invest in our infrastructure, and seek increased federal investment in our COVID response.</p>	
<p>2. There is evidence that zoning laws in individual communities across our state have contributed to social, economic, and racial inequities. What is your response?</p>	<p>Connecticut towns have some of the most restrictive local zoning laws in the nation which limit our ability to provide a diverse supply of housing for current and future residents. I will work to create more inclusive and fair housing choices, including reforming land use to enable accessory apartments and improving mobility for those with housing vouchers. These policy changes can address the inequities in safety, education, healthcare, and economic opportunities for many across our state, especially for people of color.</p>	
<p>3. What is the role of the CT Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA) and is it fulfilling its duty to provide utility oversight? What would you propose?</p>	<p>CT PURA has a responsibility to protect Connecticut consumers by regulating the rates and services of electricity, water, natural gas, and telecommunications companies. Utilities have a solemn responsibility to customers to provide reliable service. This includes making prudent and timely capital improvement investments to replace vital aging equipment and proper preparation to mitigate loss of service and improve emergency response. PURA's role is to ensure that utilities meet these obligations, keep rates reasonable, and end executive salary excess.</p>	



State Senate: District 5

Candidate Questions
for Connecticut State
House

Derek Slap Democrat



Derek lives in West Hartford with his wife and three children. He spent nearly a decade as a broadcast journalist and later went on to work in politics and the non-profit sector, eventually becoming VP of Advancement

at The Village, where he currently works. He was first elected to the General Assembly in 2016 as a state representative and then to the state senate in 2019. Derek is motivated by his progressive values. He passed a landmark pay equity bill in 2018 and co-sponsored legislation to cap the cost of insulin and ban untraceable ghost guns. He's currently Chair of the Aging committee and is leading the charge to combat age discrimination.

Phillip Chabot – Republican



Joelle Nawrocki - Independent

1. The COVID-19 pandemic is putting pressure on the state budget more than usual. What are your priorities on structuring spending and revenue?

When the pandemic hit, Connecticut was ranked by Forbes as one the best prepared states financially because of the large rainy day fund it established over the previous few years: thankfully we avoided Republican attempts to drain the fund and spend the money. Moving forward it's critical that we enact sustainable budgets, without shredding the social safety net or slashing support for education. Targeted spending reductions should always be on the table. Congress must also provide financial relief to states and this will go a long way to solving our future deficits.

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Invited to participate;
did not respond.

Invited to participate;
did not respond.

<p>2. There is evidence that zoning laws in individual communities across our state have contributed to social, economic, and racial inequities. What is your response?</p>	<p>. Connecticut is a very segregated state – one of the most in the nation – and local zoning laws often exacerbate the problem. Integration in our neighborhoods and schools helps people of different ethnicities and backgrounds to understand each other and root out systemic racism. We must also address inequities in health care, education, environmental zoning, and employment.</p>		
<p>3. What is the role of the CT Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA) and is it fulfilling its duty to provide utility oversight? What would you propose?</p>	<p>The Take Back our Grid Act, which the General Assembly just approved in special session is a good start with important reforms. Customers deserve rebates when power is out for extended periods, executive pay should be based on performance, and there should be more scrutiny for rate hikes. We have an out-of-state monopoly controlling electric distribution for most of the state and recently we’ve seen executives and shareholders do quite well while rate payers suffer and local jobs are eliminated. We deserve better.</p>		