

(this article has been slightly modified from its original version)



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Candidates sound off on ballot questions

By Alex Bloomabloom@eagletribune.com

We've compiled the ballot question stances of all the candidates for state offices in the Merrimack Valley. Candidates were given the option to explain their position, but asked to keep explanations brief.

Ballot Questions

Question 1: Eliminate sales tax on alcohol

Question 2: Repeal of Chapter 40B zoning law

Question 3: Reduce the state sales and use tax to 3 percent

Party Affiliation

DEM = Democratic Party

REP = Republican Party

GREEN = Green Party

IND = Independent

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17TH ESSEX (Andover, Lawrence, Tewksbury)

Patricia Commene, DEM

Question 1: No. Alcohol is a luxury, not a necessity, and the state desperately needs this revenue for essential core services like education and local aid.

Question 2: No. Chapter 40B is responsible for the construction of an enormous amount of the affordable housing in Massachusetts. At a time when household and family budgets are already stretched to the limit, I will not support the repeal of measures that help create affordable housing.

Question 3: No. A tax reduction of this size would devastate essential, core services like education and local aid. Even Republican Charlie Baker thinks that a reduction to 3% would be reckless and irresponsible. I support a rollback of the sales tax to 5%.

Paul Adams, REP

Question 1: Yes. Liquor taxes disproportionately impact participating retailers and distributors in the Merrimack Valley because of proximity to New Hampshire, and consumers forgo additional purchases they can make in the district. I actively fought last year's 25% sales tax increase.

Question 2: Yes. 40B continues to permit government interference in the free market, skewing supply and demand, thereby influencing price. 40B is also unscrupulous because it allows developers to override local zoning laws and distort neighborhood character. Instead, I support an Inclusionary Zoning Law for existing buildings and urban areas already deemed affordable.

Question 3: Yes. I support rolling back the sales tax rate to 5% immediately, and would work towards 3% over time. Beacon Hill raised taxes during the last 2 recessions and 8 times in the last 4 years. Unlike our one-party legislature, I support fulfilling the will of the people.

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