



### Survey of Candidates for the 2009-2010 Vermont Legislative Session

Thank you for your participation. Candidate responses to survey questions will be published in our candidate guide distributed to our members. Results will also be available on our web site.

Please feel free to expand on any answer that you feel needs elaboration (Limit 15 words per question). Additional written responses to questions will be made available on our web site.

Contact Cathy Davis at 863-3489 ext. 206 or [cathy@vermont.org](mailto:cathy@vermont.org) with any questions regarding this survey.

Displaying 17 of 38

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Submit date: **Sep 8, 2008**

#### Candidate Information

Name: **Ben Mitchell**

Address: **PO Box 511 Putney VT. 05346**

Phone & Email: **802-387-1647**

Office Sought: **:Lt Governor**

Legislative District:

Party Affiliation: **Liberty Union**

Employment/Occupation: **Educator**

List Public Service (10 words maximum) **community organizer and activist.**

Please describe your top 3 priorities if elected (10 words maximum) **End the war on drugs, socialized energy, socialized healthcare.**

**Providing that the plant is found to be safe and reliable through an independent analysis, would you vote to approve re-licensing of the Vermont Yankee Nuclear Plant?**

- Yes
- No

**Would you support building additional instate electric generation? (examples: gas-fired or nuclear generation plants)**

- Yes
- No

**Would you support placing wind power on ridgelines in your district?**

- Yes
- No

**Would you vote to support additional state investment in renewable electric generation?  
(examples: solar, wind, hydro power)**

- Yes
- No

**Vermont is expected to spend just under \$31 million on electric energy efficiency in 2008 Do you support doubling the energy efficiency charge on electric ratepayer bills in order to fund an increase to the energy efficiency utility's budget?**

- Yes
- No

**Please rank the following to describe your preference for ensuring the continuation of affordable electric service in Vermont: (Choose each category only once)**

	Very Desirable	Desirable	Undesirable	Very Undesirable
In-state renewable power	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Out-of-state renewable power	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
In-state electric generation (gas-fired or nuclear generation plants)	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Efficiency/Conservation	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Do you support economic tax credit programs and other incentives to encourage the retention/expansion of existing Vermont companies?**

- Yes
- No

**Would you vote to support a dedicated fund to promote tourism?**

- Yes
- No

**Do you believe the state has an effective plan to spur economic development?**

- Yes
- No

**Would you vote to support reducing workers' compensation benefits to align them with national averages and reduce costs?**

- Yes
- No

**Would you vote to support the expansion of state programs that assist start-up companies to gain access to capital?**

- Yes
- No

**Do you favor allowing all Vermont municipalities to enact local option taxes such as local sales or rooms and meals taxes?**

- Yes
- No

**Should money raised from Local Option Taxes be shared with the state?**

- Yes
- No

**To address revenue shortfalls and balance the state budget would you first look to:**

- Increase taxes and service fees
- Make across the board budget cuts
- Selectively cut budget items
- Reduce the size of the state workforce
- Reorganize state government in order to promote efficiency
- Other **Free all non-violent drug offender, and tax the sale of drugs.**

**Which of the following areas of the state budget would you examine first in order to address revenue shortfall?**

- Agriculture
- Economic development
- Education
- Human Services
- Natural Resources
- Transportation
- Other **Corections**

**Would you support changing the cap on household income sensitivity levels (currently \$90,000) for education property taxes to:**

- \$80,000
- Below \$80,000
- \$100,000
- Over \$100,000
- Keep at \$90,000

**Do you support changing to an income tax-based system for education funding?**

- Yes
- No

**Vermont's transportation funding is expected to decrease over the next five to ten years. Which of the following is the most important use of these funds?**

- Building new highway capacity that reduces congestion and supports increased economic activity
- Repairing and maintaining bridges, roads and culverts
- Increase state support for public transit

**To build new transportation infrastructure, repair/maintain existing roads, bridges and**

**culverts and increase access to public transit would you support:**

- Increasing the per gallon tax on gasoline
- Increasing user fees (license, registration)
- Combination of the above
- None of the above/other

**Do you support additional state fiscal investment in workforce training and education?**

- Yes
- No

**Would you vote to support legislation to consolidate local school districts in order to promote efficiency and improve K-12 outcomes?**

- Yes
- No

**Would you support a law to implement regional or district-wide teachers' contracts?**

- Yes
- No

**Do you support the investment of additional state funds to enhance child care subsidies?**

- Yes
- No

**Should Vermont elementary schools be required to offer free or reduced priced breakfast and lunch to income eligible children providing that the cost is not borne by the local property tax?**

- Yes
- No

**Vermont's Medicaid program for low-income uninsured Vermonters was underfunded by more than \$90 million in 2008 resulting in the cost of care being passed on to private health insurance payers through higher rates. To end the cost shift would you:**

- Support a new tax in order to fully fund the Medicaid program
- Support cuts to benefits under the program
- Support cuts to benefits with a new tax

**Would you support a new or expanded fee on employers in order to pay for health care reform measures?**

- Yes
- No

**Do you believe that Vermont's health insurance regulations raise health insurance premiums in the state?**

- Yes

No

**Community rating requires Vermont health insurers to offer all persons regardless of age, or health status the same plan for the same price. Would you support allowing insurers to offer modified plans with pricing based on the insured's age or health status?**

Yes

No

**Do you believe that Vermont, without a national health care plan, can significantly affect the delivery and cost of health care?**

Yes

No

**Would you support changing land use regulations to discourage development outside of town/village centers?**

Yes

No

**Would you support making land use regulations in already developed areas less restrictive in order to encourage more growth in these areas?**

Yes

No

**Which of the following do you believe is most important in order to ensure a healthy, clean Lake Champlain?**

Control non-point source pollution such as urban and agricultural runoff

Control point source pollution through additional investments in wastewater treatment facilities

**Please select your top three priorities for the most important policy issues affecting businesses in Chittenden County: (Hit the CTRL button and then select your top 3 choices)**

Please select 3 or less...
Education costs and outcomes
Economic expansion
Health care costs and quality
Tax and fiscal policy
Development and growth
Cost of living
Environment and climate change
Workforce development

**Please select your top 3 priorities for state spending on the following issues/areas: (Hit the CTRL button and then select your top 3 choices)**

Please select 3 or less...
Education
Economic development
Health care
Environment and natural resources
Human services
Transportation

**Please feel free to expand on your answers to any of the previous questions. Be sure to include the section and question number with your comments.**

**I believe in a single payer health care system. I believe in state control of energy -- free energy for schools and towns as a source of tax relief. I do not believe that free market competition is good for Vermont.**

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Displaying 17 of 38