**Banks Pat Democratic Party State Representative 73**

EDUCATION. In an age dominated by complex science and technology, how can we ensure that students receive adequate STEM educations?

We need to support our public schools and hire the best teachers! Give our students opportunities to grow and create. A dear friend that passed away a few years ago at the age of 90 told me a story. He taught chemistry and biology at Morehead University (Morehead Teacher’s College). When he first started teaching his students had to keep a journal that documented what they observed. They needed to draw and build their vocabulary to describe what they saw. Then when science books started having gorgeous color photos the students didn’t draw in their journals for reference because they had the photos. But then he noticed that they were not doing so well on his tests. He brought back the drawing (even drawing from the photos) and the scores went up. We need the visual and literary arts and sciences together because that is how we learn. They reinforce an in-depth, rich experience of a subject or idea.

• FOOD & WATER. How would you manage Kentucky’s agriculture so it provides healthy and affordable food grown in an ethical and sustainable way? What should government do to ensure access to clean water?

(A) There are best practices that we know work on the farm. We know that we should not grow plants in toxic soil. We know that it is best to limit toxic pesticides and herbicides to protect our pollinators (and us). We know that when animals have clean bedding and clean water and clean environment there is less disease and stress on the animals. I guess what I am trying to say is that we need to encourage the best, safest practices in our gardens, fields and farm lots.

(B) (B) Clean air and clean water is critical for our children, families and communities. It is also go for businesses. Business don’t flock to build on brown fields and abandoned coal fields. We need to encourage riparian zones along our rivers and creeks. Farmers should limit toxic chemicals they spread on their fields, they should work with nature not against it. We need garbage pickup throughout the state and we need a robust recycling system. We have the clean water act; we need to enforce it.

• ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT: With nonrenewable resources on the decline in Kentucky, how do we create a sustainable Kentucky? What are your stances on: hydraulic fracturing, nuclear, and renewable energy sources? What are your views on climate change, and how would they affect your energy policies (if at all)?

As our energy market changes we need to see opportunity to build new industries for the future. We need to support and retrain our energy workers and prepare them for future jobs. We need to build infrastructure to support the new businesses and provide good paying jobs for our workers. Let’s invest now and prepare for the future.

• ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND SAFETY: How do you balance economic stability with environmental health and conservation?

These are not mutually exclusive. A sustainable environment (for our families and communities) will in the long term foster economic stability. It is a false choice to say we have to live in a toxic environment so a company can make a profit. Then said company can go out of business when there is nothing left to exploit. That leaves the taxpayer (community) to pay the real price of that product.

• SCIENTIFIC INTEGRITY. How will you foster a culture that respects scientific evidence and protects scientists? What role(s) specifically, if any, should government play in stimulating innovative science and technology so we continue to benefit from them?

Government support of our research at public institutions is critical for a non-partisan, critical and intellectual inquiry not driven by short term market value or political pressure. Some things worth studying are not about profit but the shear wonder of the universe and quality of life.

Our scientists and teachers need to have their tenure protected so their work is not attacked or dismissed on political whims.