**Roberts Rachel Democratic Party State Senator 24**

\*EDUCATION

Access to quality public education is the bedrock of any society that wishes to reach its full potential. Our state has a revenue problem that must be addressed so that we can adequately fund our schools, pay teachers and maintain the promises of their pensions. Without new revenue we will continue to struggle to recruit and retain teachers, like we are seeing with the shortage we have no in physics.

STEM is a key to preparing our children for the new skills economy.

· 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?

Kentucky is an agricultural and environmental gem. Agriculture is not only the key to our produce, bourbon and tobacco industries but our farmlands are among the most beautiful in the country. Agro-tourism is a booming economy and one that Kentucky should absolutely be capitalizing on. Additionally, it is fed by environmental stewardship and provides compelling and economically advantageous reasons for farmers to practice sustainability.

Clean water is a human right. Our state must ensure access to potable, safe water for all its citizenry.

· 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)?

Climate change is the number one issue in my lifetime. Kentucky can be at the forefront of the renewable energy industry. We have the workforce, the lands and the natural elements needed to excel in this new economy. Expanding renewable energy creation is not only the right thing to do for our planet, but for our workers and our economy.

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

Tourism is a great start to balancing these two issues. Kentucky’s natural beauty is second to none and we should be the regional leader in eco- and agro-tourism.

· 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?

My grandfather was literally a rocket scientist for NASA. I grew up marveling in the stars, the universe and the idea that through the wisdom of science we could fly to the moon and back.

Government’s role is to first protect it’s citizenry and then to fund and oversee projects and public needs that are too big for any one town, municipality or state to source or fund on it’s own. Scientific breakthroughs make our citizens more secure, they provide us with life-saving technologies and medicines and thus should be supported in their efforts.

Ensuring that STEM remains an integral part of educational systems is vital to fostering a strong future scientific community.