**Smith Kelly Democratic Party State Representative 89**

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

It would help if our elected leaders stopped spreading non-scientific misinformation about climate change, evolution, and other science fundamentals. Of course, we also need to adequately fund education in the state of Kentucky - both P-12 and Higher Ed. We need to make sure that educational professionals - not politicians - are writing and vetting textbooks, and we need to make sure that all kids have access to up-to-date textbooks. We need to look for evidence of what works in developing student successful in STEM education, and implement those best practices across the state.

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?

To ensure access to clean water, we need to maintain and strengthen environmental protections in Kentucky instead of bowing to the demands of the fossil-fuel industry to weaken regulations. To ensure sustainable and ethical agriculture, I would want to make sure that small and organic farmers receive the same (or better) state subsidies as big agriculture. I am not an agricultural expert, but it's my impression as a citizen that local and sustainable farming are well supported in Kentucky. I spoke with two farmers in my district, and they had no complaints. The KY Proud initiative is a great way to promote local food. I would be curious to learn from the Kentucky Academy of Science about any ideas you may have for better managing Kentucky's agriculture.

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)?

I support every effort to create a just transition for Kentucky. ""Friends of Coal"" have put forth the notion that because coal is what economically sustained our region in the past, that it is what we still need to rely on. But both market and environmental pressures show the falseness of that narrative. So the energy and environment argument for moving Kentucky forward is intrinsically connected to the economic argument for moving Kentucky forward. Many groups, including Kentuckians for the Commonwealth, are working to make this argument so that we can shift public attitudes toward acceptance of more sustainable and progressive options (see http://kftc.org/issues/sustainable-energy-solutions). I believe we need to invest in renewable resources like wind and solar energy and limit use of fossil fuels. From what I've read, the risk v. benefit of nuclear energy is complex (see https://www.wired.com/2016/04/nuclear-power-safe-save-world-climate-change/) and the costs and time investment required to start new plants is impractical, at best.

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

Honestly, I think you cannot have economic stability without environmental health and safety - the two are not mutually exclusive. The World Health Organization has a plethora of information about this (see http://www.who.int/heli/risks/en/). I believe that all of us - individuals, business owners, and even companies - should value a healthy environment a necessary component of a thriving economy. Short term gains in the form of eased regulations are not worth the long term effects on our communities.

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?

Well, I'll repeat my sentence from the first question: It would help if our elected leaders stopped spreading non-scientific misinformation about climate change, evolution, and other science fundamentals. I also think the state of Kentucky should stop its attack on our universities. From rhetoric that downplays the importance of a college education in today's economy to slashing budgets and forcing universities to compete against each other using a ""performance based funding"" model that favors larger schools, Governor Bevin and the Republican majority in Frankfort have been suppressing opportunities for innovation in science and technology by scholars across the state. This needs to stop. Universities need to be adequately funded so that they can continue to educate the next generation of Kentucky's leaders, creators, researchers, and inventors."