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## Election Day: Asking For Your Vote

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

Thank you to everyone who took the time to speak to me at their door, or on the phone. I have learned a lot, whether it's from talking to nurses about healthcare, teachers/social workers about schools and mental health, or people in the trades about small businesses and apprenticeships. **I'm asking for your vote on Tuesday!** Here are my priorities based on what I'm hearing from residents:

### Priorities if I am re-elected:

- **Primary Care:** Raise reimbursement rates and/or find better ways to recruit & retain physicians and healthcare workers. In South County we have a shortage and people have had trouble finding a new doctor after theirs retired
- **Coastal Resiliency:** Have comprehensive cost-benefit estimates for all the options available to preserve our shoreline (my bill from earlier, the Act on Coasts) so that families can continue to enjoy the beach for years to come
- **Cost of Living Issues:** In addition to **negotiating lower prices for prescription drugs** (see bill: [Prescription Drug Affordability Board](#)), **rising home insurance premiums** are affecting a lot of families and seniors in our area. I want to take a deeper dive into this topic and see what our options are.

Insurance companies pulling out of Florida is just a preview of what is likely to happen to coastal communities like ours the next time there is a big hurricane.

- **Support public education and career/technical education:** The cost to build a house has increased, which partly contributes to rising home insurance premiums. There is a shortage of tradespeople. We want to expose kids to different careers early on in high school, with more options for apprenticeships and solid pathways to jobs that pay well.

## Help Us By Holding Signs on Election Day!

We want a good showing of community support for Democratic candidates up and down the ballot. Contact us at [victoria4ri@gmail.com](mailto:victoria4ri@gmail.com) or 401-388-0696 if you can volunteer for a 2-hour shift on Tuesday outside of a polling place. We usually pair people up so you have someone to talk to. Here are pictures from 2 years ago!



# GENERAL ELECTION

NOVEMBER 5, 2024



## Important Dates for the General (Nov 5th)

**October 16th - Nov 4th:** Early voting at your town hall, during regular business hours Monday-Friday

**Nov 5th:** Vote at your polling location. Look up your polling place at [vote.ri.gov](https://vote.ri.gov)

**If you have not sent in your mail ballot yet, please drop it off at a mail ballot drop box at your town hall.** If you mail it, it probably won't arrive in time to be counted.

Look Up Your Polling Place

# State & Local Ballot Propositions

## No on Question 1

- A broad coalition of civil rights advocates, reproductive rights advocates, and labor advocates urge voters to reject Question 1 ([read more here](#)) so as not to risk opening up our entire constitution
  - Main reason to reject a new constitutional convention: The U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that there can be no government limits on how much money corporations spend on referenda campaigns, including proposed constitutional amendments that come out of a convention. We now live in a world of unfettered special interest spending and out-of-state money that distorts campaigns.
  - What's the alternative? Constitutional changes on critical issues like separation of powers and voting rights may be done, and have been done in the past, by questions placed on the ballot by the General Assembly.
  - What's the cost? The bipartisan preparatory commission has estimated that the cost could be close to \$5 million taxpayer dollars.

## Local Propositions: Many Charter Revision Questions

- Look for your voter guide in the mail! Both Charlestown and Westerly have charter revision questions on the ballot on Nov 5th. Preview your ballot questions online at [vote.ri.gov](http://vote.ri.gov)

## Letters of Support

Endorsements: I'm honored to have the support of labor unions ranging from educators to healthcare workers, social workers and agricultural workers, etc. They fight tirelessly to help workers - middle class families - have family-sustaining jobs. I'm also honored to have the support of District 38 residents - see the letters to the editor linked below:

[https://www.thewesterlysun.com/opinion/letter-gu-has-kept-her-promises-and-deserves-reelection/article\\_93b573a8-90b9-11ef-8d11-cb7fcfd22cbf.html](https://www.thewesterlysun.com/opinion/letter-gu-has-kept-her-promises-and-deserves-reelection/article_93b573a8-90b9-11ef-8d11-cb7fcfd22cbf.html)

On Reproductive Rights: [https://www.thewesterlysun.com/opinion/letters/letter-gu-for-38th-district-senator/article\\_d853e6e6-93b8-11ef-a1dd-e3e3db04b8cc.html](https://www.thewesterlysun.com/opinion/letters/letter-gu-for-38th-district-senator/article_d853e6e6-93b8-11ef-a1dd-e3e3db04b8cc.html)



From State Rep Sam Azzinaro on our collaboration: we've co-sponsored a number of bills (him as the primary in the House, myself as the primary in the Senate) for Westerly veterans, first responders, and high school students: [https://www.thewesterlysun.com/opinion/letters/letter-in-support-of-victoria-gu-for-district-38-senate/article\\_3c846b8e-9942-11ef-969b-b71452f04d4d.html](https://www.thewesterlysun.com/opinion/letters/letter-in-support-of-victoria-gu-for-district-38-senate/article_3c846b8e-9942-11ef-969b-b71452f04d4d.html)

[https://www.thewesterlysun.com/opinion/letters/letter-gu-s-hard-work-is-paying-off-for-district-38/article\\_7321964c-8a80-11ef-801a-7f4a188dd602.html](https://www.thewesterlysun.com/opinion/letters/letter-gu-s-hard-work-is-paying-off-for-district-38/article_7321964c-8a80-11ef-801a-7f4a188dd602.html)

[https://www.thewesterlysun.com/opinion/letters/letter-gu-kept-promises-in-her-first-term/article\\_edc8ecac-957e-11ef-bc47-fbf12fc3156c.html](https://www.thewesterlysun.com/opinion/letters/letter-gu-kept-promises-in-her-first-term/article_edc8ecac-957e-11ef-bc47-fbf12fc3156c.html)

**Who Supports Victoria Gu  
for State Senate?**

RHODE ISLAND SEIU, RHODE ISLAND AFL CIO, NEARI, UNITED NURSES & ALLIED PROFESSIONALS, NASW PACE ACTION COMMITTEE, UAW, 251, RI WFP

Educators, healthcare professionals, firefighters, social workers, municipal workers, bus drivers; automobile, aerospace and agricultural workers, and working families.

**VICTORIA GU**  
For State Senate District 38

## My Letter to the Editor

I wrote this letter to give voters an overview of our unique housing challenges in South County and steps we can take to preserve existing “affordable” units, help towns fund affordable housing on their own terms, and address short-term rentals. [https://www.thewesterlysun.com/opinion/letter-gu-s-working-on-affordable-housing-issue/article\\_0fdd407e-90b9-11ef-a99a-eb427f3f2ac1.html](https://www.thewesterlysun.com/opinion/letter-gu-s-working-on-affordable-housing-issue/article_0fdd407e-90b9-11ef-a99a-eb427f3f2ac1.html)

## Past Meetings/Events



### **Westerly-Pawcatuck YMCA Receives \$700k in funds for Renovations**

Thank you also to Senator Jack Reed, Senator Sheldon Whitehouse, and Congressman Seth Magaziner for supporting the YMCA with congressional funding! I was also glad to deliver a legislative grant to the Ocean Community YMCA's Westerly-Pawcatuck branch to help them improve their facilities. As a former volunteer at after school programs for low-income students, I know how important it is to have safe, supportive spaces for kids after school, and YMCA provides scholarships to those who need it. Link to WesterlySun

article: [https://www.thewesterlysun.com/news/westerly/ymca-gets-700k-for-new-phase-of-renovations/article\\_fd747e50-9245-11ef-a3e8-ebabbf0945c4.html](https://www.thewesterlysun.com/news/westerly/ymca-gets-700k-for-new-phase-of-renovations/article_fd747e50-9245-11ef-a3e8-ebabbf0945c4.html)

## Meet and Greets in October

We had many neighborhood gatherings in October and we were able to have really in-depth discussions about issues

In Shelter Harbor: People had questions about everything from housing policy to shoreline access, shoreline erosion and the state budget.

In Dunns Corners: We heard from a lot of first-time candidates running for town council or school committee. If anything from their personal journey or platform resonates with you, please help get the word out!



[Read about local candidates](#)



[Read WesterlySun article](#)

## Charlestown Breachway Emergency Fix is Complete!

The emergency fix is in for the Charlestown Breachway! The Charlestown Town Councilors, Governor's office, Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management, Coastal Resources Management Council of Rhode Island and Representative Spears and I were down at the Breachway this week to take a look at the work and talking about next steps in terms of funding the longer-term construction project.

## **Town Hall on Charlestown Breachway Repair**

Charlestown Town Council President Deb Carney, State Representative Tina Spears and I held this town hall a few weeks before the Breachway emergency fix was complete. We gave people an update on the timeline and budget considerations (DEM shifted \$300k in capital funds to support the fix and the Charlestown Town Council contributed from town funds), and we asked people to avoid parking or accidentally obstructing the trucks that are carrying heavy rocks down to the West side of the Breachway. Thank you to everyone who attended!



## **RI Housing Fact Book Presentation at the Haversham**

We heard some sobering statistics about Rhode Island's housing crisis: a family now has to make at least \$143,000 to afford the median home in Rhode Island (at today's interest rates). That easily prices out households where both parents are teachers/social workers/restaurant workers, etc. An estimated 25% of homeowners and 48% of renters are cost-burdened.



[See the 2024 Fact Book](#)





## Columbus Day Parade

Celebrating the Italian-American community in our corner of the state. Thank you to the organizers for putting the parade together and to Congressman Seth Magaziner and Senator Jack Reed for joining us! Also pictured: State Rep Sam Azzinaro

## Morning Radio Show (WBLQ)

In the past two years while in office, I've enjoyed giving updates to the community on legislation I'm working on, legislation that's coming up for a vote, state budget issues, and much more. I was on the radio several times these past two months to talk about what I've worked on and what I hope to continue working on:

Friday Oct 11th at 7:40am

Monday Oct 21st at 8am



## Meeting people in the neighborhood

We hosted coffee with the candidates at Fresh Cup Cafe in Westerly! It was great talking to people in the neighborhood, and people are enthusiastic about voting on Tuesday!

With School Committee candidate Angela Bethany Goethals, Town Councilor Mary Scialabba, and Town Council Candidate Alex Healy



# RI Medical Debt Relief Program Launched

In the RI State Budget in 2024, we allocated \$1 million to give relief to people with medical debt. It's unfortunately common that surprise illnesses or accidents can result in bankruptcy

To be eligible, an individual must be a Rhode Island resident who incurred debt in order to obtain necessary medical treatment and has an estimated income equal to 400% or less of the federal poverty line or possess medical debt that is more than 5% of their estimated income.

Undue's model mimics that of for-profit debt buyers but uses government grants and charitable donations to purchase large portfolios of medical debt for pennies on the dollar.

Once Undue purchases medical debt – held directly by the healthcare provider or by a debt buyer – it will work to identify those Rhode Island residents who are eligible for the debt forgiveness program. Any healthcare provider holding medical debt owed by a Rhode Island resident can partner with the state to participate in the Medical Debt Relief Program. However, participation is optional. Medical debt relief is source-based meaning Undue can only erase medical debts from participating partners.

Eligible Rhode Islanders will receive a letter directly from the General Treasurer and Undue, stating the amount of debt forgiven and the former holder of that debt (i.e. the medical provider). There is no application process. Debt will be cancelled automatically as it is identified, obtained, and abolished. Rhode Island Treasury will make a public announcement when medical debt is being relieved so the community can keep their eyes peeled for envelopes.

[Read the Debt Relief Program Announcement](#)



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