

# Environment is No. 1 issue on Cape

By GARRY BLANK

I grew up on Cape Cod, and after graduating from the University of Pennsylvania and Boston College Law School I returned because I love the natural beauty of the Cape and all it has to offer.

I believe the most important issue to everyone in the 5th Barnstable District and Cape Cod is a clean and healthy environment.

Keeping the Cape clean will not only lead to better health, but will also increase commercial activity, appropriate industry and the productivity of our labor force, and encourage tourism.

To maintain the best environment possible we must hold our military and local industries fully



GARRY  
BLANK

accountable for adherence to all current regulations. My opponent consistently votes against fully funding the Department of Environmental Protection and indicates he is willing to take a "wait-and-see" approach with pollutants such as perchlorate and nitrogen invading our drinking water, rivers and estuaries because he feels that the science is "not conclusive" for our district.

I totally disagree. We know certain yet-to-be-identified plumes of perchlorate exist and are spreading. Immediate remedial planning and timely action will avoid a debt much greater than the costs of taking action now. Delay will lead to poorer health, increased health-care cost, decreased productivity and declines in tourism and new commercial and appropriate industrial activity on Cape Cod. We must enforce current regulations and deny all waivers.

I am committed to holding commercial and industrial organizations accountable to the community. As your state representative I

will press the federal government to continue to expand the containment and cleanup of all plumes with urgency. Our district has one of the highest incidences of cancer in the commonwealth. I support breast cancer research, as well as programs for public awareness and early breast cancer detection, funding for which my opponent voted to reduce on July 16, 2003. As money becomes available, I would move to fully restore the prior funding level to the Silent Spring Institute.

We must have regional wastewater treatment. We know that the 5th Barnstable District shares the same sole source aquifer with the rest of the Cape. Our septic systems allow wastewater to get into our drinking water, estuaries, ponds and oceans. Ten years ago the U.S. Geological Survey estimated as much as 25 percent of the Cape's groundwater pumped from some of the Cape's public wells was contaminated by wastewater.

We must plan and create sup-

portable regional infrastructure that will assure smart growth. Affordable employee housing and efficient public transportation will help to ensure a flourishing Cape economy. Swift planning and action are necessary now to conserve the natural beauties and wonders that we love about Cape Cod; we will be able to afford this as our local and state economies improve.

I look forward to working hard to accomplish these and many other goals with your help. Please feel free to visit my Web site, [www.GarryBlank.com](http://www.GarryBlank.com), or call me at 508-888-1700. I am committed to social justice and knowledgeable about local problems, including the need to increase state aid to education and the importance of assuring affordable health care for the Cape.

---

*Democrat Garry Blank, Sandwich town moderator, is running against state Rep. Jeff Perry in the 5th Barnstable District.*