

Mary Alice Herbert

Candidate for Secretary of State (Vermont)

I'm a 77-year-old retired public school teacher with four middle-aged children. I'm part of the last "American Dream" generation and see the difference between my comfortable retirement and that which they are likely to face. My family moved from North Carolina to Chelsea, VT, where my late husband, Fred, and I each taught one of Republican Governor Ray Keyser's children. We moved to Putney in 1963.

I became a regular Liberty Union candidate for Secretary of State in the 1980s, but in 1996, the year I retired from teaching in Brattleboro, I "ran" against Howard Dean instead as "The Kindergarten Teacher Who Wants to Teach the Governor a Lesson." Big issues then were that Dean refused to support the single-payer health care plan the VT Democratic party had proposed and that the state teachers retirement was being consistently underfunded.

The Liberty Union Party Platform, which defines my political philosophy, says that "Government ought to move in the direction of assuring that the wealth and resources of the world will be used to provide a materially secure life for all, simultaneously preserving the planet and its resources for future generations."

As a Liberty Union candidate I'm also endorsed by the Socialist Party-USA, which chose me as their candidate for Vice President of the United States in 2004. (Convention delegates were impressed that I had come in 3rd in a field of 8 candidates for governor of VT and Howard Dean was a presidential candidate in 2004.)

This was a wonderful opportunity to travel around the country and see how SP members ran their chapters and participated in local issues. I went by Amtrak to South Carolina, Texas, and Ohio and flew to Wisconsin and California. Everywhere I went, I was surprised by how interested people are in Vermont. I was asked about our ban on billboards and if we really do have the only state capitol without a McDonalds. I was impressed by all the Vermont products, especially our cheese and maple syrup, which were on sale everywhere. This brought home to me how important branding, trademarks and regulation of companies exporting our products are and that this is the purview of the VT Secretary of State.

I believe this office should use its leverage over new businesses and corporations to help build the green energy network which will employ many of

the young people we need to keep in Vermont. Electricity produced by wood or wind power provides five full time jobs per megawatt. Efficiency Vermont, which could be expanded, provides three, while nuclear power plants employ only one worker per megawatt. We could also employ many of the 211 Vermonters presently employed at the VT-Yankee Nuclear Plant. This office should also use its leverage to help close VT-Yankee and send its owner, the duplicitous Entergy Corporation, back to Louisiana.

As Vermont's single-payer health system begins to take effect, it's important that we license health care workers of all kinds -- another good job possibility for young Vermonters. And, as my fellow retirees, who are committed to living here year-round, age and increase in number other job possibilities will grow. We'll need all kinds of services in order to stay in our homes and will be able to pay for them.



It is important that the businesses licensed by this office fit into the need to lessen our carbon footprint and protect our rural productive environment. Cooperatives, non-profits, and community-based businesses that support local food production and consumption, provide public transportation and low-income housing should be given preference.

