

Our Senator
SAM
ZURIER

Standing up for Providence

Dear Neighbors:

Thank you for electing me last year to represent our neighborhood in the Rhode Island Senate. As I begin my re-election campaign, I wish to share with you my background, my record and my goals.

I have deep roots in our neighborhood. I grew up on the East Side, graduating from Classical High School in 1976. I then left for college, graduate school, judicial clerkships, and service in the Environmental Protection Division of the Massachusetts Attorney General's office. I returned to our neighborhood in 1990 to practice law in Rhode Island and raise a family. My children attended the Providence Public Schools for middle school and high school, where they received a valuable academic education from their teachers, and a valuable social education from their classmates from across our City. I have worked to improve our community through service on the Providence School Board (2000-02), the Providence City Council (2011-18), and as a member of the East Side Public Education Coalition, which advocated for the successful re-opening of Nathan Bishop Middle School in 2006-09.

Through my experience as a parent and from community service, I saw many of the gaps in our City's public schools, not only for my children, but even more so for the thousands of other students whose families lack the resources to fill in those gaps. Almost three years ago, the State took over the Providence Public Schools, but the takeover has not produced results that justify the lack of accountability. Closing this gap is one of my top priorities as a senator. I introduced legislation that the General Assembly passed to require the School Department to submit reports to the Providence School Board, which has been largely frozen out since the takeover began. This is only a first step, and I would appreciate the opportunity to advance this issue further in the next General Assembly session.

From my work on the City Council, I saw the serious financial challenges Providence faces. The City needs a stronger financial partnership with the State. To begin that process, I successfully advocated for the State budget to include increased State aid to cities and towns with tax exempt property, yielding an additional \$1.7 million for our City. This also is but a first step in a project I would like to continue working on next term.

In 2019-20, I assisted *pro bono* a South Providence neighborhood association to prevent the siting of a solid waste transfer station that would have added to the excessive burden of pollution affecting that neighborhood. While our legal strategy succeeded for that particular project, the experience demonstrated why we need stronger State laws to protect our environment and to advance environmental justice. As a member of the Senate Finance Committee, I advocated for additional resources for our Department of Environmental Management and a pilot "no fare" operation of RIPTA's R-Line that were added into the legislative budget, while voting against an "advanced recycling" plant that could have harmed our most vulnerable citizens. If you vote for me to return, I will continue to work to protect our environment, placing special emphasis on ensuring Rhode Island successfully carries out the ambitious, critical goals established in the Act on Climate.

As a member of the Senate Finance Committee, I helped to develop the legislative budget that included more than \$250 million for affordable housing, as well as initiatives to mend holes in the State's safety net. There is much more work to ensure our State makes the best use of the \$1.2 billion it received through the American Rescue Plan Act. I also was proud to receive recognition for my work on gun safety laws and reproductive freedom from Moms Against Gun Violence and Planned Parenthood, respectively. I hope to return to the General Assembly to advance progress in these vital areas.

In short, I am grateful for the opportunity you gave me to stand up for Providence at the State House, while also working on some of the most urgent issues facing all of Rhode Island. I now ask for your support to continue working on these and other projects that are important to our neighborhood, our City and our State. Please visit my website, www.samzurier.com, for more information, or send me an email at sam@samzurier.com to share your ideas and concerns.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

