

Poughkeepsie Journal Voter's Guide

Office sought: Governor of New York

Name: Howie Hawkins

Age: 57

Occupation: Teamster freight unloader at UPS

Party: Green

Ballot lines: Green

Education: Dartmouth College

Experience: (50 words maximum)

I've been an organizer in movements for peace, justice, labor, the environment and independent politics since 1967. In 1984 I helped co-found the Green Party in the US. My votes as a Green Party candidate have risen steadily, from 3% in 1993 to 41% in 2009 for Syracuse Common Council.

Why do you want to serve? (150 words maximum)

I want to enact a Green New Deal: full employment through public jobs for the unemployed in public works and services; universal health care through a single public payer; fully-funded public schools; tuition-free CUNY and SUNY; and massive public investment in a carbon-free renewable energy system, which will stimulate a sustainable economic recovery and head off runaway global warming. I believe these policies have majority support. They better represent the mainstream of New York's progressive political tradition than Wall Street Democrats and Tea Party Republicans who do the bidding of the corporate special interests that finance their campaigns. They want to cut and gut state agencies, public workers, and public services in order to continue corporate welfare tax breaks and subsidies for the rich. I want the rich to pay their fair share of taxes again. The basic choice in this election is their austerity plan vs. my prosperity plan.

What are the biggest challenge facing your district and how will you deal with them? (250 words maximum)

The economy is the biggest challenge: persistent high unemployment, sagging demand, growing inequality, and recurring structural deficits for state and local government. The solution requires progressive tax reform and a revitalized public sector. We've had 30 years of tax cuts for wealthy elites. We hoped they would invest their extra money in business expansion and new jobs would trickle down to us. But trickle-down economics failed. Economic elites speculated short-term in financial paper assets (claims to income from existing productive assets) instead of investing long-term in new tangible assets for production and employment. The rich must pay their taxes again in order to increase public spending and investment in the real economy of production. This will raise consumer demand and stimulate private investment to meet it. Instead of a property tax cap, we can provide far more property tax relief through a state takeover of Medicaid, which consumes 45% of counties' property tax levy. Counties can then cut property taxes while maintaining funding for schools and other public services. We should raise \$34 billion in additional state revenue through three progressive tax reforms. Stop rebating the Stock Transfer Tax to Wall Street dealers (\$16 billion). A 50% Bankers Bonus Tax on

the \$20 billion they paid themselves after the feds bailed them out with trillions (\$10 billion). Restore the 1972 progressive income tax structure (\$8 billion, while 95% of us get a tax cut). Subtract the projected \$9 billion deficit and we have \$25 billion for the Green New Deal.