

# ANGUS MCQUILKEN

CANDIDATE FOR CONGRESS IN THE SIXTH DISTRICT  
MASSACHUSETTS PRIMARY ~ SEPTEMBER 1, 2020

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Although not a career politician, Angus McQuilken has been advocating for key issues for years. “I’ve spent the past 30 years in a series of leadership roles bringing about change by advocating for legislation that’s making a difference in people’s lives,” he said. After graduating from UMass Amherst, he joined Massachusetts Senator Cheryl Jacques as her Chief of Staff for 11 years. Along with Jacques, the state’s first openly lesbian senator, McQuilken says they played “a central role in leading the fight to protect marriage equality after the Goodridge decision,” which made Massachusetts the first state to legalize same-sex marriage. The pair also worked to pass student loan tax cuts, making student loan interest tax-deductible in the state.

Following his time with Jacques, McQuilken went on to become the Vice President of Public Affairs for Planned Parenthood of Massachusetts. During his time as VP, he advocated for the now-passed Emergency Contraception Law and Buffer Zone Law, both protecting women’s right to accessible healthcare. At the same time, he served as the Chair of the Massachusetts Coalition for Choice.

McQuilken has also cofounded another coalition, the Massachusetts Coalition to Prevent Gun Violence. “It would be fair to say that my life’s work as an advocate has focused on making sure that Massachusetts has the most effective gun control laws in the country- and we do,” he said. In running for Congress, he hopes to spread the success Massachusetts has seen with gun control nationally. “We’ve created a model here where it could save many lives if it was implemented nationally,” he said.

Most recently, McQuilken has served as a member of the leadership team at Massachusetts Life Sciences Center, an organization tasked with developing the life science industry in the area. The Center has been charged with implementing former Governor Deval Patrick’s \$1 billion life sciences initiative with the goal to make Massachusetts number one in the world in life sciences- “which we are now,” he added. McQuilken specifically has worked to bring life sciences companies to the state as part of the effort to keep Massachusetts as the leader in life sciences.

Many of the issues on McQuilken’s Congressional platform are ones he has already fought for in these previous roles. He calls these issues his “Top 6 for the 6<sup>th</sup>”. The list features affordable healthcare, economic recovery and job creation, gun control, combatting climate change, investing in transportation, and access to education. According to McQuilken, these issues are the ones he’s heard vocalized the most from the people of the 6<sup>th</sup> district. “I spent this past summer on a tour of this district, going to all of the 39 communities, and just listening to people. The priorities I’ve put forwards are what I’ve heard from people that are affecting them and their families.”

## **On Healthcare**

McQuilken is a fierce advocate for access to affordable and effective healthcare. He said he has seen examples of both extremely effective and ineffective healthcare, such as, “When I was diagnosed with cancer more than a decade ago, I had access to world-class care at the Dana Farber Institute. Not everybody has access to that care. And until they do, our healthcare is not as good as it needs to be.” He also believes now is an important time for the fight for women’s healthcare. “Those who would seek to undermine the progress we’ve made for women’s healthcare have the President they wanted, the Senate they wanted, and are very close to having the Supreme Court they need to overturn Roe v. Wade. We can’t let that happen.”

## **On Economic Development**

“I put forward two policies to ensure long-term economic development. One is a major federal investment in research dollars. Massachusetts is number one per capita in competing for funding from the National Institutes of Health and the National Cancer Institute. President Trump is proposing cutting funding for both NIH and the National Cancer Institute. That research saves lives, creates jobs, and is a major part of our economy here in Massachusetts.”

## **On Gun Control**

Gun control has been a pressing issue for McQuilken for a long time, as evident from his work with the Massachusetts Coalition against Gun Violence. However, the fight for gun control became a more personal issue for him more recently. “There was one week two years ago that really crystalized for me why the need for action is so urgent. In one weeks time, three of our four kids saw the impacts of this in their schools. Our daughter who was 10 at the time had an active shooter drill at her preliminary school. Our oldest, who was 15 at the time, had an Alice training at their high school, and then our middle son had somebody write “Are we next?” on the sidewalk outside their school.” He says that pushing for national gun control is his number one mission and will continue to be as a member of Congress.”

## **On Climate Change**

“I believe in science. Climate crisis is hitting us over the head already, and it will worsen as we fail to address it. We need to be in the middle of the global climate conversation. Right now, we don’t even have a seat at the table because the current president has removed us from all climate talks.”

McQuilken sees potential for the United States to not only be among the leaders in global climate discussion, but in the production of sustainable technology. “We lead the world in life sciences because we chose to. We can lead the world in the production of technology that’s going to combat the global climate crisis.”

## **On Transportation**

“I want to see a massive investment in transportation infrastructure. If we're going to make a capital investment, I see no better investment in capital than updating our transportation infrastructure in this country. Doing that, we can create jobs, address longstanding challenges in how people get to work, and address the climate crisis by providing people with safe and reliable alternatives to getting in a car and driving to work.”

## **On Education**

McQuilken hopes to improve access to K-college education but believes the Commonwealth’s higher education system is a more pressing issue than many realize. “Our public higher education system used to be an affordable option for families in Massachusetts. We lost that. It costs more than \$30,000 to send a student to UMass Amherst, including room and board.”

McQuilken brands himself as a champion of collaboration, as he says “the key to progress is to create coalitions for change.” Citing his résumé, he says there is definitive evidence of success in his previous coalitions and promises this won’t change any time soon. “If I’m elected I’ll be the hardest working member of Congress anybody has ever seen. I won’t take no for an answer, I’ll build coalitions of support for my view I’m putting forward in this campaign, and I’ll make change happen.”