

## Candidate Column



Hello Friends and Neighbors.

Wow, it is hot outside. I jumped in my car to go pick up Rachel and the interior temperature read 112 degrees. These extreme heat waves, with some Texas cities experiencing 114 degree temperatures, are placing extreme stress on our power grid. It is still early in the summer. More extreme hot days are predicted in the next weeks and months, which will continue to stress the power grid and could lead to rolling blackouts in the coming days or weeks. We are now on water restrictions in Waco.

This horrific heat is a result of climate change. Period. Almost 100% of the actively publishing climate scientists agree that climate change is happening and that global warming is human caused. In fact, these scientists also agree that there is no convincing alternative, other than human behavior, to explain climate change. It is vital to remember that these scientists are focusing on evidence, not politics, when they conclude that we are causing this damage to mother earth. We only get one mother in this life time, and we will only get one mother earth. We must take care of our mothers, especially when they tell us they are sick.

Extreme droughts and higher temperatures will definitely interfere with Texas' farms and cattle ranches. Hot weather causes cows to eat less, grow slower, produce less milk and become ill. Reduced water availability will create challenges for farmers who irrigate their crops. Crop yields could decline by about 50% in fields that can no longer be irrigated due to water shortages.

These higher temperatures and drought are likely to

increase the severity, frequency and extent of wildfires, which harm or destroy our property, livelihoods and health. Over 10,000 acres burned in Abilene, Texas earlier this year. Wildfires are no longer just a "California thing".

These hot days are unhealthy, even dangerous, especially to our vulnerable populations, including children, the elderly, the sick, the disabled and the poor.

My opponent has two degrees in Veterinary Science. However, when he attended a Waco Friends for the Climate art show, he was asked if he believed in climate change. His answer – "Absolutely not". His votes in the Texas House definitely reveal his denial of this science. He opposed increasing in funding for renewable energy in Texas. He refused to spend funds to clean up abandoned polluted sites. He voted for Senate Bill 13, which prohibits any active Texas company that contracts with Texas to divest its investments in oil, natural gas, and coal. Most importantly, he refused to vote for a bill that would require stiff weatherization requirements on natural gas facilities to prevent another winter freeze like we experienced in February of 2021, in which two of my clients died when they froze to death.

The State of Texas is highly dependent on fossil fuel. Our state is also dependent on a liveable planet, with clean air and clean, available water. We must find solutions that quickly lead us to energy sources that do not destroy our planet, while respecting the impact that the fossil fuel industry has on our economy.

Your decision on the November 8, 2022 ballot could not be clearer. One candidate is a complete climate change denier. I believe that politicians should listen to scientists. I believe that climate change is real and that we must do everything possible to save our planet for our children and grandchildren, while respecting our State's deep commitment to oil and gas. We can walk and chew gum at the same time!

Please vote for Erin Shank for Texas House on November 8, 2022, because we definitely deserve better representation in the Texas House.