

With the election looming, I've been doing a lot of thinking about what Marana and the rest of Arizona's future could look like, depending on who we elect. That's why I chose to run for Marana Town Council in the first place: to ensure our community has the brightest possible future for generations to come. When it comes to voting for who will represent us in Congress, I believe there's one candidate who is best for Marana's future. That candidate is Kirsten Engel.

I first became aware of Kirsten through her incredible work on water issues in the Arizona Legislature. She has consistently fought to protect Arizona's water rights from abusive conglomerates, ensure the safety of our drinking water, and implement measures that will preserve our water supplies into the future. I don't have to tell you why that matters so much to a growing community like Marana. I am fully confident Kirsten will take her know-how to Washington and fight for our community.

Kirsten understands the complexities of governance and how issues are interconnected. For instance, she is a strong supporter of continued federal investment in infrastructure, like the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). This bill didn't just include money for roads and bridges, it had \$55 billion for drinking water and wastewater infrastructure, the largest ever investment in our nation's history. Of course, we know traditional infrastructure is incredibly important, too. We need to improve and modernize our highway and interstate systems, like the I-10; the IIJA is a major step forward in doing so.

The IIJA is an example of what forward-thinking leadership looks like, but couldn't have been accomplished without Democrats holding the House, Senate, and White House. Republicans knew how important these investments are to regions like ours, yet stood in the way of progress at every possible turn. It's hard to fathom, but only 13 Republicans in the House voted for the IIJA. Every single Republican from Arizona, those who see our needs with their own eyes, voted no.

In my view, that is unacceptable.

You know what else is unacceptable? The way Arizona has treated the education of its children. While I don't have kids in our schools, I know just how frustrated parents are. Underfunding, cutting extracurriculars, lack of teachers and staffing - these have been issues for years. Now, extremists are trying to ban books and rewrite history.

Kirsten Engel has a daughter in public school in Tucson. Unlike her opponent, Juan Ciscomani, who sends his kids to a fancy private school, she understands the shortcomings of a public education system that's ranked near dead-last in the country. I know she'll be a constant advocate for increased education investment and stand-up against those who seek to inject politics into our schools. Ciscomani, on the other hand, is a strong supporter of Governor Ducey's voucher program that further cuts public education funding and instead gives it to wealthy private schools. He can't be trusted to look out for Arizona's education system.

Listen, Southern Arizona has always been my home. I was born at Tucson Medical Center and spent much of my childhood in and around Tucson. No matter where my career took me, I always knew I wanted to come back to this gorgeous region. That's why after retiring from being a Foreign Service Officer with the U.S. State Department for 25 years, my husband and I decided Marana was the perfect place to settle down. Now, having been back here for almost a decade, I couldn't imagine living anywhere else. But this election is bigger than me, or any of us - it's about protecting our long-term future.

Whether it's water, infrastructure, or education, Kirsten Engel is the best choice for Marana and the rest of Southern Arizona's future. I'll be casting my vote for her to not only improve our current circumstances, but to ensure we leave our community better-off for generations to come. I encourage you to do the same.

— Marana Town Councilmember Jackie Craig