



2022 Candidate Survey on the Environment

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House , 142

OPEN QUESTION

Outside of my own three committees, the Environment Committee is the one I follow the closest. As Vice-Chair of the Appropriations Committee, I am directly involved in the funding of state-sponsored environmental initiatives that are included in DEEP's budget. The two issues that I am most energized about relate to clean air/renewable energy and waste management. Going into the 2023 session, my top priority is developing new waste management systems, which should be a focus in light of the closure of the MIRA plant this year. It is critical for investments to address compostable waste - especially food waste, as this is a significant portion of waste that heads to the incinerator. Environmental issues are deeply important to me both as a legislator and as a mother. The social equity issues and effects around environmental degradation are clearly established and are concerning to me as someone who believes we should all have access to clean air and water. We must prioritize environmental conservation and clean energy as a responsibility to each other, future generations, and our planet's present and future health. I am committed to these goals.

1) ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE:

- Yes

In 2020, the House considered HB 5103, which was an important step in continuing to reverse our nation's long history on environmental justice issues. Unfortunately, the bill did not pass, but I would support changes like this bill which offered to address systemic problems of racial inequities in our state regarding siting decisions, thereby giving more of a voice to communities, and offered more enforcement mechanisms. Many proposed projects are taking place in lower socioeconomic communities, and these local communities have not been able to voice concerns or have transparency on these projects. Underprivileged communities deserve the protections and accountability this bill proposed. I will sponsor bills like this in the future.

2) WASTE MANAGEMENT:

- Yes
I would support initiatives like these and I have already spoken to the Environment Committee leadership about initiatives like this for the 2023 session. They are in agreement that these initiatives are a priority.

3) POLYSTYRENE:

- Yes
I have sponsored bills to address the damaging consequences of polystyrene and I will continue to champion legislation addressing this. It is a priority of mine to reduce the amounts of styrofoam headed to landfills or polluting the environment, along with endangering wildlife.

4) PFAS:

- Yes
I have sponsored bills to restrict PFAs and will continue to champion legislation like this as it is critical to eliminate these 'forever' chemicals in our state.

5) NEONICOTINOIDS:

- Yes
In 2022, the legislature considered SB120, of which I was a proud sponsor. Unfortunately, the bill was watered down in a compromise to ban Chlorpyrifos and include a study on banning the Neonicotinoids. I am pleased that this bill did pass, but I know we have work to do in 2023 to get the neonicotinoids banned in legislation. I will commit to championing legislation to get these chemicals banned.

6) RODENTICIDES:

- yes
I have sponsored bills to restrict rodenticides, such as SB239 and I will continue to champion legislation to reduce the amount of chemicals such as rodenticides that are polluting the environment and endangering wildlife.

7) DIESEL BACKUP GENERATORS/DATA CENTERS:

- Yes
I agree we need to look at emission levels and exhaust standards for businesses that use diesel generators, in order to ensure that their energy consumption levels and emissions impacts are held to sustainable environmental standards.

8) BEARS:

- yes
I would support legislation that looks at solutions to ensure animal welfare in dealing with all wildlife.

9) TREE CUTTING PROTOCOLS:

- Yes
I believe we need to look at these alternatives and use stronger scientifically founded and data-based solutions to address tree cutting protocols.

10) COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY:

- Yes
HB 5254 was introduced in 2019, which was an interesting proposal that would support local municipalities in raising local revenues to help fund local open spaces and other conservation efforts. I was not aware of this initiative until the end of session and it was not called for a vote, but I would like to propose this again and include Norwalk as well as other communities to help fund these investments. I agree that this could help with funding important sustainability efforts at the local level. I do prefer that it is not a mandate but an 'opt in' initiative.

11) RIPARIAN BUFFERS:

- Yes
Yes, in theory, I would support these however, I am not too familiar with how the buffers work, and I would be eager to learn more. I agree that initiatives like this would be a great benefit to local wildlife and protect our wetlands.

12) RANKED CHOICE VOTING:

- yes
- I am still learning more about ranked choice voting and how it could work in our state. I want to continue to study this as I agree that it would help with increased voter participation, which is a benefit to our whole state and its policies.