

CTLCV Candidate Survey

Please complete this survey by July 30, 2016.



First Name: *

Catherine

Last Name: *

Walsh

Running For: *

House

Senate

District Number: *

136

Party: *

Democrat

Republican

Working Families

Other :

Campaign Mailing Address: *

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Do you have a primary?

Yes

No

The issues described below are ongoing and likely to be on the legislative agenda for consideration in 2017. If elected, what position do you expect to take on the following environmental issues?

1. CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT- To place a constitutional amendment measure on the ballot in 2018, the General Assembly must pass a joint resolution for a second time in the 2017-2018 legislative session. Senate Joint Resolution 36/Resolution Act 16-1 was passed by both chambers in 2016. Would you support passing a state Constitutional Amendment to better protect state conservation lands from being sold, swapped or given away without a public hearing and a 2/3rds vote by the General Assembly?

Yes

No

Uncertain

Question 1 Comments:

I agree with this position, once land is swapped or sold we can never get it back.

2. PROTECTION OF CLASS I AND II LANDS- Connecticut has set the highest standard for drinking-water quality in the nation. Maintaining our high water quality relies on the protection of the recharge lands for reservoirs and wellfields, known as Class I and II lands. With increasing frequency, projects and legislation are proposed that would compromise protections for Class I and II lands, such as the legislative effort this year to allow rock mining in 100 acres of Class I and II land in New Britain. Would you oppose legislation that undermines traditional drinking water protections?

- Yes
- No
- Uncertain

Question 2 Comments:

3. WATER DATA FREEDOM OF INFORMATION- In 2002-2003, water utilities pushed through three security laws that require officials to redact (black out or delete) large quantities of information in documents, such as water supply plans. Basic data needed for comprehensive, statewide water planning mandated in 2014 (PA 14-163) is now being redacted from water utility records. During the 2016 session, state agencies (DPH, DPUC, DAS, DEEP) and the Governor's office attempted (unsuccessfully) to persuade water companies to cooperate in state water planning by releasing more data. Would you support legislation to allow these state agencies to make water utility data publicly available for planning purposes?

- Yes
- No
- Uncertain

Question 3 Comments:

There needs to be a balance. Documents should be made public to the state for water planning needs, we don't want to have a Flint problem in CT. However I'm concerned about potential security issues. Too much information in the wrong hands could jeopardize our water supply. We must take all steps to safeguard our water supply, and I would support legislation that would force disclosure.

4. WATER SUPPLY REGULATION- Privatization of public water for private bottling and sale is happening in communities across the country. In 2015-2016, citizens' groups protested the unilateral decision of a CT regional water utility to sell a huge volume of water to a single new customer (a water bottling company). The volume—1.8 million gallons per day—was approximately equal to total residential water use in the service area. The new customer was given a specially created discount to encourage large water purchases, while at the same time rates for households were increased, and no provision was made for prioritizing supply in droughts.

This question has two parts:

a. Would you support a permit requirement on new, supersized water diversions, for all new and existing customers asking for an additional 500,000 gallons per day above current use?

- Yes
- No
- Uncertain

b. Would you be in favor of regulating sales of our public drinking water supply to private for-profit water bottling companies?

- Yes
- No
- Uncertain

Question 4 Comments:

Regarding question A, I think 500000 is too low a threshold. I would probably lobby for a lower number , such as 200000 gals.

Regarding question B- I would be in favor of regulation, but would need to study details further to come up with a recommendation.

5. REGIONAL GREENHOUSE GAS INITIATIVE- Connecticut receives revenues from auctions for emissions credits conducted by the nine-state Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI). Under Connecticut statutes, these funds are dedicated to energy efficiency programs which help thousands of residents and businesses, and to the Green Bank, which leverages these funds to attract far more in private funding to finance renewable energy installations. Both programs create thousands of Connecticut jobs. Would you oppose any diversion of RGGI funds away from energy efficiency programs and the Green Bank?

- Yes
- No
- Uncertain

Question 5 Comments:

I'd need to know more information: ie...diverting to whom? For what purpose? Are we receiving our fair share?

6. CLIMATE CHANGE- The 2008 Global Warming Solutions Act (P.A. 08-98) mandates an 80% reduction in CT's greenhouse gas emissions below 2001 levels by the year 2050. The Governor's Council on Climate Change has been charged with developing strategies and interim targets to achieve that goal (Executive Order 46) and will issue a plan by the end of 2016. Would you support the adoption of new interim targets that will ensure CT is on a path to achieve the mandated 2050 emissions reduction goal?

- Yes
- No
- Uncertain

Question 6 Comments:

As a general statement, interim targets are always good benchmarks. I also think, that in general, as time passes many times original targets are could be overly robust or not high enough. I feel that adjustments could and should be made along the way, in any project, if necessary.

7. PROJECT GREEN SPACE- Municipalities struggle to find adequate funding for open space acquisition and stewardship. Would you support enabling legislation that would allow municipalities to establish, if they choose to do so, a limited conveyance fee on transfers of real estate to provide dedicated local funding for land conservation, including farmland, forests and open space, and to fund land stewardship efforts, including in urban communities/public lands?

- Yes
- No
- Uncertain

Question 7 Comments:

Conveyance fees are paid by seller not the buyer. If it comes down to making or breaking a deal, it may be advantageous to allow some flexibility.

8. PLASTIC BAG POLLUTION- Plastic pollution is a global environmental problem. Westport, CT and other communities across the country have begun to address this issue by implementing bans on single-use plastic bags, citing their contribution to clogged waterways, damage to marine life, and toxic pollution. Would you support a statewide ban on plastic bags similar to the successful ban in Westport?

- Yes
- No
- Uncertain

Question 8 Comments:

9. TIRE RECYCLING- The value of scrap tire is declining and many post-consumer uses are going away. This is a recipe for illegal dumping which puts a financial burden on municipalities and can develop into a public health concern (tires are a breeding ground for mosquitos). Would you support full Expanded Producer Responsibility for tires--that involves producers and advocates--in designing the take-back program?

- Yes
- No
- Uncertain

Question 9 Comments:

A solution needs to be found asap. We can no longer expose our kids to cancer causing uses of all tires-astro turf.

10. SOLAR ENERGY- Residential solar energy is rapidly expanding, and is an important source of clean energy and jobs. But CT's residential solar market is limited due to the high percentage (about 80%) of renters and homes shaded by trees. Other states have successful "shared solar" programs that enable people who cannot install rooftop solar panels to purchase a portion of electricity produced by a larger solar installation. Would you support legislation expanding CT's insufficient shared solar pilot to a full-scale, statewide program that allows all CT residents to access clean energy?

- Yes
- No
- Uncertain

Question 10 Comments:

In theory yes, but need more information-the devil is always in the details. In the case of Westport, we have legislation within the P&Z regs. which must be and will be changed to allow for more solar possibilities. As Chair of P&Z, we are addressing our local road blocks within our community. We are working with members of the Green Task Force to update our regulations and our POCD.

11. What environmental concerns are you most passionate about?

Water, Water Water. I am especially passionate about maintaining an adequate and clean water supply. We must protect our aquifer and prevent salt water encroachment, contamination by pesticides and other noxious elements. The impact of upstream sewage and pesticides on downstream towns which spew into the Long Island Sound must be a priority. Watershed or River Basin Commissions must work together to maintain water quality .

12. What are the environmental priorities in your district? Do any require a state legislative solution? If elected/re-elected, what will you do to address these issues in 2017?

I'm P&Z chair and am focused on acquiring and maintaining our limited open space. I've written legislation and rezoned areas of town such as our forest known as Baron's South. The temptation of selling our limited natural resources is always real. We've rezoned and will continue to rezone our Parks and Open spaces from Residential zones to Dedicated Open Space Districts.

Safeguarding our aquifer and rivers is always a priority. We have adopted a sewer avoidance policy, and recommend bi annual septic pumping. We adhere strictly to CAM policies , and recommend pervious pavers, rain gardens, and silt fences at job sites. Natural species of vegetation is always encouraged.

We've re written our Landscaping regs, promoted re greening of the Post Road, and updated our plant selections. Our tree warden is involved with the commercial developers and public facilities in the choice of trees and soils and best practices for planting. We've recently conducted wild life studies, hydrology studies and are in the process of working with our Parks and Recs . personnel in establishing a trail system on Barons' South.

At this juncture my focus has been local preservation of resources, and I've been able to work at a local level.

If elected in 2017, I will focus on upstream management of water sheds. Safeguarding our water supply is my issue.

DO NOT LEAVE THIS FORM UNTIL YOU HAVE HIT THE "SUBMIT" BUTTON. If you have any questions or would like to submit additional information regarding your environmental record or positions, please email us at ctlcquestionnaire@gmail.com or call our office at 860-236-5442. Thank you!



