

# CTLCV Candidate Survey

Please complete this survey by July 30, 2016.



First Name: \*

Gail

Last Name: \*

Lavielle

Running For: \*

House

Senate

**District Number: \***

143

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**Party: \***

Democrat

Republican

Working Families

Other : \_\_\_\_\_

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www.laviellect.com (campaign site, not yet active)

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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:

During the 2016 session, I testified in favor of SJR 36. I was a co-sponsor of both the original resolution and of the amendment. Several years ago, I also voiced my opposition to the Haddam Land Swap by voting against the conveyance bill. I strongly support protecting state conservation lands, and will work to ensure the passage of the constitutional amendment resolution in 2017.

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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:

Yes, I would oppose legislation that undermines drinking water protections. Water is a scarce natural resource that I believe we must carefully conserve and protect.

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:

This data is critical for water planning, and I believe that it must be publicly available.

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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:

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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:

Again, water is perhaps our most important natural resource, and it should be widely accessible. I was a co-sponsor of SB 422 during the 2016 session.

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**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:

Yes, I would oppose diversion of these funds.

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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:

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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:

Given the state's current financial condition, I do not support any new taxes or fees at this time. But I checked "uncertain" because I do believe that any town whose population wants to create a dedicated source of revenue to fund land conservation and stewardship should be able to do so, particularly because the avenues municipalities have for raising revenues are very limited in Connecticut. Therefore, I do like the idea of enabling legislation to facilitate local funding of something as important as land conservation. I just do not believe this should be done through a real estate conveyance fee, and would rather see municipalities find other ways to fund local conservation efforts.

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**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:

I would support this provided that all stakeholders have been allowed to contribute input. I represent part of Westport, and its program provides an excellent example of what communities can do when they are allowed to pursue their own local conservation and environmental protection efforts.

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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:

Yes, I would absolutely support this for tires. I supported both SB 828 (PA 11-24) regarding the state's paint stewardship program in 2011, and HB 6437 (PA 13-42) creating a mattress stewardship program in 2013.

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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:

I absolutely support this.

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## 11. What environmental concerns are you most passionate about?

- Land conservation and open space
  - Water quality, sustainable agriculture, & locally grown food
  - Transportation
  - Pesticides
  - GMO labeling
  - Energy
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**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?**

- Transportation – mass transit improvements, traffic congestion, complete streets and bike safety, condition of roads and bridges
- Preservation of open space
- Materials used on school and municipal fields (concern about crumb rubber and pesticides)
- Helping both residents and businesses conserve energy to reduce energy costs
- Preserving municipalities' ability to make local decisions on certain environmental matters (for example, imposing local restrictions on pesticides that are stronger than those imposed by state law)
- GMO labeling and support for locally grown food producers

Throughout my time in the House, I have been a vocal advocate for upgrading our transportation infrastructure, protecting dedicated transportation funds from diversion, and making our roads safer for cyclists and pedestrians. I have pushed to move commuter rail upgrades to the top of the transportation bonding priority list, and to obtain increased federal funding for mass transit. I will continue to do all of these things and take any other measures that I believe will help reduce traffic congestion and its environmental consequences, and make mass transit a practical and convenient solution for all of our state's residents.

I will be strongly supporting the constitutional amendment protecting state conservation lands (see my response to Question #1).

As Ranking Member of the Education Committee, I have consistently voted to extend the ban on using pesticides at schools to high school fields and will keep working to pass such legislation.

I served on the original GMO labeling task force, and hope during this session to work with colleagues on both sides of the aisle to find a way for Connecticut to advance in requiring disclosure to consumers of information on food ingredients with GMOs.


As always, I will support measures that help residents and businesses conserve energy, and I will work to help CT towns and cities find and implement local solutions for protecting and conserving their resources and surroundings.

As ever, I thank the CT League of Conservation Voters for its advocacy for the environment and for being a valuable resource to us as legislators when we must make critical decisions that

will affect our environment for years to come.

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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](mailto:ctlcquestionnaire@gmail.com) or call our office at 860-236-5442. Thank you!



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