

# CTLCV Candidate Survey

Please complete this survey by July 30, 2016.



First Name: \*

Steven

Last Name: \*

Kolenberg

Running For: \*

House

Senate

**District Number: \***

144

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**Party: \***

Democrat

Republican

Working Families

Other : .....

**Campaign Mailing Address: \***

97 Harvest Hill Lane, Stamford CT 06905

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**Phone: \***

2034610063

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**Website:**

kolenberg2016.com

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**Email: \***

steve@kolenberg2016.org

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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:

Yes, absolutely. Public lands belong to the people of Connecticut and it's our birthright to enjoy what John Muir called "the people's cathedrals" Sale of such properties must be viewed extremely carefully and I believe the 2/3rds requirement satisfies this need.

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:

Fresh water is getting scarcer and scarcer everyday in this country, its important we keep our water clean by preventing industrial activities from taking place near a fresh water supply. I'll be proud to oppose any legislation that attempts to circumvent these important protections.

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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:

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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:

What Nestle is doing in states like California is shameful. We can never cede a human right like water to the profit motive, no matter how bad our budget troubles become.

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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:

If a program grows the economy while reducing greenhouse emissions, why should it ever be cut? I'll never vote in favor of sending RGGI funds to anything but it's intended purpose.

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:

Climate change is the single biggest threat facing our species since the Black Death. In Game of Thrones terms, climate change is the White Walkers and Winter is Coming. We need to do everything we can to reduce our greenhouse gases, not just for us but for the survival of our species.

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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:

YES! Stamford is severely lacking in significant public green places. Our biggest impediment to this is of course financial. Enabling legislation to help us get get the money to build more green places is vital!

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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:

Plastic bags are a real danger to wildlife and take thousands of years to degrade naturally. Paper bags hold more groceries anyway and I'd be happy to support legislation banning the sale of plastic bags.

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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, tires are another example of a really serious environmental hazard that needs to be controlled better. We have to make sure the take-back program doesn't involve burning or another system that would send dangerous materials into the atmosphere

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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:

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

For me it's climate change. As I stated before, it's an existential threat facing our species. We need to begin to reduce carbon emissions while seeking out sustainable, renewable energy. I also believe strongly in wildlife conservation and on a national level I'd like to see wildlife corridors built between national parks to promote biodiversity and reduce inbreeding. I'd like to see the return of many native species to the East Coast, especially black bears, grey wolves and the brook trout.

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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?

The 144th is largely landlocked and suburban, meaning there are very few environmental issues strictly in our district. That being said, Stamford has a great deal of problems, especially along the coast. Westcott Cove and the area directly past Stamford Harbor are basically dead zones due to nitrogen pollution. We also have some serious issues in North Stamford with development ruining vernal pools and ponds that have become stagnant and unable to support life. One pond in district, Coopers Pond, has become full of sludge and overabundant algae because of run off from the surrounding streets as well as the failure of various pipes and drains feeding into the pond.

If elected, the first thing I'll do is try and get DEEP to do a study of Cooper Pond and see if there's any way to improve conditions there. I'd also suggest that the money cut from the Clean Water Fund during the 2015 budget vote be restored and a further increase of about 7%-10% be implemented. Finally, the Long Island Sound Study findings and recommendations need to be implemented to preserve this important waterway. Much progress has been made in the Sound, but that progress must be ongoing.

As an added note, environmental issues are one of the pillars of my platform and if elected I'll make a strong advocate for our natural spaces in the legislature. The environment doesn't care if you're Republican or Democrat. We all must do what we can to keep our state clean!

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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