

CTLCV Candidate Survey

Please complete this survey by July 30, 2016.



First Name: *

Susan

Last Name: *

Eastwood

Running For: *

House

Senate

District Number: *

53

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:

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:

Drinking water is one of our most precious resources and protecting water quality must be a top priority.

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:

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:

I worked with the advocates fighting against the decision to sell 1.8 million gallons/day of water to a private company, as mentioned above. Whatever your position on the sale and bottling of water, the process was flawed due to a lack of transparency. Putting a permit requirement and regulations on sales of water would help to ensure that this type of deal gets proper review and allows the community to weigh in, and would help to make sure that the public water supply is not jeopardized in favor of profit.

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:

Absolutely. As Chair of our local Clean Energy Task Force I have worked for years to educate and improve access to energy efficiency measures and renewables and I hope to be a champion in this area if elected.

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:

Yes, interim targets are essential to keep us on target if we want to meet the ambitious goals we have set for reducing CT's GHG emissions by 2050.

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:

As a member of Ashford's Planning and Zoning Commission, I helped to rewrite our town's subdivision regulations to encourage more open space. At the time, I suggested such a fee. As a member of the Open Space committee of the Conservation Commission, I was active in successful efforts to purchase the development rights to two large farms to keep them in agricultural use. I would support this program as well.

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:

Yes, there are better alternatives!

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 have testified on this issue at the CT Legislature and worked to pass several EPR bills, and I am active with the CT Product Stewardship Council.

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:

Yes, I work to promote "shared solar" in my professional capacity with Clean Water Action CT. I also coordinated a four town Solarize program that was very successful in bringing solar to many homes in our area, as well as getting ZRECs to put solar on three municipal buildings in Ashford. I have seen firsthand how many people would like to enjoy the benefits of solar but cannot, and I feel that it is crucial to pass "shared solar" quickly so the CT can meet this demand, and also because it could help the state to reach its goal of reducing GHGs by 80% below 2001 levels by 2050.

11. What environmental concerns are you most passionate about?

I am most passionate about the need to address climate change, however, I feel that to do so, we must address energy issues as well as issues of water quality, health and community resilience. I am also passionate about issues of environmental health and justice. These go hand in hand, as our lower income communities are often subjected to greater exposure to pollution and poor air and water quality. I have worked to take toxic chemicals out of consumer goods for the last ten years and, while we have made great progress, I am dedicated to continuing the fight until our laws protect our children, families and workers from exposures to known toxins in everyday goods.

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?

We are a rural, or suburban district, so water quality and preservation of our natural resources and rural quality of life is of key concern to most residents. We are part of the Last Green Valley and we want to maintain our dark skies. There is a great demand for renewable energy options, including storage for solar energy, and I think this could be an issue that will need to be addressed legislatively so that towns and residents can have access to shared renewables through the grid. We need to plan for the resiliency of our communities in the face of a changing climate and the legislature could help to encourage this. Support for farms and farmers' markets are one of the ways I would like to support community resilience. I support current efforts to promote electric vehicles and public transportation but would work to ramp these up to increase access in rural areas.

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!



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