

2014 Candidate Survey



CONNECTICUT LEAGUE OF
CONSERVATION VOTERS

- BEFORE YOU COMPLETE THIS QUESTIONNAIRE, PLEASE SAVE IT TO YOUR COMPUTER AND USE THAT FILE TO RETURN TO US.
- Please complete this survey by August 1, 2014.
- Email your completed survey to: ctlcvc@ctlcvc.org

Candidate Name: Emily Bjornberg

Running for: House Senate

District No: 33 Party: Democrat

Candidate/Campaign Mailing Address: PO Box 334 Old Saybrook CT 06475

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Are you enrolled in the Citizen's Election Fund for public campaign financing? Yes No

Do you have a primary? Yes No

Are you an incumbent? Yes No

Part 1: If elected, what position do you expect to take on the following environmental issues?
Please mark boxes named "Support," "Uncertain," and "Oppose" with an x.

Topic	Question	Support	Uncertain	Oppose
Parks	Would you support state park and forest revenues going to park and forest operations and maintenance rather than to the General Fund?	X		
Transportation	CT is one of the 10 states most dependent on federal funds as a percentage of their transportation expenditures. More than half of the states and localities have moved forward on increasing their funding share. Do you favor this and how might we do it in CT?	X		

Comments:
My brother-in-law, Jack Hine is one of the supervisors at Hammonnasset. My husband worked there for years and was recently transferred to Headquarters and Operations in Marlborough. I am a big supporter of State Parks and want to make sure they sustain high quality in their workforce and operations.

<p>Comments: Our state has a significant backlog on updates to infrastructure repair. The state needs to pay more attention to this both with our dollars and by maximizing funds sought at the federal level. This state has the most highly trafficked rail corridor as well and we need to invest in rail transportation. We need investment in transit-oriented development opportunities along all of our mass transit.</p>			
<p>Property Tax Reform</p>	<p>CT's property tax burdens small towns, strangles cities, undermines mass transit and drives sprawl. Would you be an advocate on behalf of the environment in the tax reform debate, especially with regards to property tax?</p>	<p>X</p>	
<p>Comments: I am a staunch supporter of the environment and will do whatever I can to protect the health of our environment in any debate.</p>			

Topic	Question	Support	Uncertain	Oppose
Pesticides	The American Academy of Pediatrics and many other science and medical institutions have warned that pesticides (including herbicides) are harmful to human and ecological health. CT has a ban on use of lawn care pesticides on grounds of elementary and middle schools. Would you support legislation to extend this ban to high schools and public parks where children play?	X		
<p>Comments: I have children in our public school system – and absolutely support keeping toxic pesticides away from them! Inside our small towns many of our sports fields sit on top of or near our wells. So not only is pesticide application worrisome on sports fields because our children then roll around on them – but its also worrisome because when it rains those toxins end up in the groundwater which can then get pumped into our water fountains. I have no interest in knowingly spraying carcinogenic chemicals onto our fields.</p>				
Pesticides	Should towns have more authority to limit or guide pesticide applications within their borders, including roadside spraying and applications of pesticides in wetlands and surface water?	X		
<p>Comments: Pesticide use inside of wetlands needs is worrisome – because application is not limited but instantly mobile.</p>				
Water Source Protection	CT normally uses decades old data for setting standards and guidance for stormwater management. Would you support requiring the state to upgrade its standards using scientifically validated, up-to-date statistics on volumes of water associated with extreme storms and annual precipitation?	X		
<p>Comments: Absolutely. We need up to date data in order to make informed decisions!</p>				
Microbeads	Many personal care products such as shampoos and toothpaste are being manufactured using tiny plastic microbeads. Once microbeads are washed down the drain, they can enter lakes, rivers, and eventually the ocean through sewage overflows or pass through sewage treatment plants. Microbeads, like other plastics, can absorb toxic chemicals. They can be mistaken for food by aquatic life and can be passed up the food chain to larger fish, wildlife, and humans. Would you support legislation to protect our waterways from this new environmental threat?	X		
<p>Comments: Absolutely. Inside the 33rd State Senate District our economy depends on the health of our natural environment. We need it to stay healthy and well protected over the long haul in order to make our communities sustainable.</p>				
Conservation Lands	Would you support passing a state Constitutional Amendment to better protect state conservation lands from being given away for non-conservation purposes?	X		

<p>Comments: Conservation lands need to be protected in perpetuity. If we don't make this a priority people will stop supporting conservation efforts.</p>			
Energy	<p>Would you support policies or legislation to protect and expand the state's cost-effective energy efficiency programs opposing any attempts to raid the CT Energy Efficiency Fund for state budgetary needs?</p>	X	
<p>Comments: It is extremely short sighted not to invest in energy efficiency. Efficiency will pay off in spades down the line in many ways – including economically.</p>			
Energy	<p>While other states promote shared net metering and sub metering for solar, fuel cell and other distributed renewable sources, CT imposes regulatory barriers that effectively prevent development of these projects in our state. Would you support legislation that removes these barriers and enable clean renewable distributed generation to move forward?</p>	X	
<p>Comments: We need to make the distribution of clean, renewable energy efficient and easy for the consumer.</p>			
Toxins	<p>Would you support legislation that requires the Department of Public Health to identify chemicals of high concern to children, manufacturer disclosure of those chemicals and a process for recommendations to reduce exposure?</p>	X	
<p>Comments: YES!!! I have a seven year old and a four year old. I will do EVERYTHING I can to keep chemicals of high concern away from them.</p>			



Part 2: What environmental issue has lacked the attention in Connecticut that it deserves? As a legislator, what will you do to change that?

The state needs to pay more attention to preservation and restoration of its rivers. The state has a large number of old abandoned dams that are no longer useful and their presence along our waterways has a detrimental effect on the ecology of our rivers. Additionally, storm water drainage needs to be improved. I will fight to protect and conserve our waterways because the health of the lower CT river valley depends on the health of our rivers.

Part 3: What are the environmental priorities in your district?

Inside the 33rd the health of our environment is very closely tied to the health of our economy. So many businesses depend on tourism in the Lower CT River Valley. We need to have strong progressive voices inside the legislature that continually draw attention to the importance of our environment and the need to sustain its health over the long haul.

Part 4: If you are elected, what would be your top environmental priorities for the 2014 legislative session?

Please identify up to three and rank the three in order 1, 2, or 3:

- Parks
- Transportation
- 1 Pesticides
- Water Source Protection
- Microbeads
- 3 Conservation Lands
- Energy
- 2 Toxins
- Property Tax Reform
- Other (please explain)

Comments:

All of the issues listed here are important to me – so it is difficult to rank which ones I would prioritize above others. I will be a strong advocate inside the senate on behalf of our environment. I have been a member, steward, and volunteer for the Lyme Land Conservation Trust for many years. My father is one of the Directors. We are a family who has believed in conservation, and worked to draw attention to it, for quite some time. Additionally, we are a family that has lived in the Lower CT River Valley for seven generations. I want to make sure that we are doing everything we can to make our communities thrive seven generations from now. Without a good, strong, healthy natural environment that would be impossible.