



CONNECTICUT LEAGUE OF
CONSERVATION VOTERS



2019 ENVIRONMENTAL PRIORITIES

STATE WATER PLAN

The State Water Plan was mandated by the legislature in 2016, and is the culmination of a million dollar, multi-year process of public hearings and diligent work by stakeholders, committees, agencies, lawmakers, and experts. It includes good-faith compromises by all parties to balance our development, recreation, and conservation needs, and it was unanimously approved by the Water Planning Council (WPC). In 2018, the Plan was delivered to the legislature for approval, but it was never brought to the floor because of an effort by utility companies to remove language reaffirming water as a public trust. Governor Malloy issued an executive order to the WPC to resubmit the Plan for approval this legislative session. The State Water Plan cannot be amended or altered. It must be approved as is—with the public trust language intact—during this session.

PLASTIC BAG POLLUTION

Single-use plastic bags are a growing threat to our environment. Greenwich and Westport have successfully banned these bags, and Stamford passed a ban which will go into effect in April. Nearly a dozen other towns are considering similar bans, and even businesses like Big Y are proactively removing them from their stores. Connecticut uses 400 million single-use plastic bags a year, and they often end up in Long Island Sound or other waterways. We can end their threat to our environment by passing a statewide ban on single-use plastic bags.

SOLAR NET METERING

In 2018, the General Assembly passed SB 9 to increase our investment in clean energy. Unfortunately, the bill also attacked our solar industry by changing how homeowners and commercial solar customers are reimbursed for the excess energy they produce. Under net metering, these customers could sell their excess power back to the grid at retail rates. But after the passage of SB 9, customers will now have to either sell all of their energy to companies like Eversource and then buy back what they need, or receive payments called tariffs for their excess energy at a rate to be determined by the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA). This was widely seen as a way for Eversource to attack competitors in the rooftop solar industry. Given our climate crisis, it is imperative that we make clean energy more, not less, accessible. We must fix the attack on net metering and ensure solar customers are fairly compensated for the energy they produce.





CONNECTICUT LEAGUE OF
CONSERVATION VOTERS

2019 ENVIRONMENTAL PRIORITIES

CARBON PRICING

Reducing the amount of carbon emissions we produce is a critical component to fighting climate change. Oil companies and fossil fuels are huge contributors to carbon emissions and air pollution—but they have not paid for the damage they cause to our environment or our public health. Attaching a price to carbon will encourage big businesses to reduce their carbon emissions and help Connecticut meet its energy targets. By following the successful model of programs like the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI), Connecticut can become a national leader by establishing a regional price on carbon.

MUNICIPAL FUNDING FOR OPEN SPACE

Towns and municipalities face ever tightening budgets, and have asked repeatedly for a reliable source of revenue to acquire dedicated open space, local farmland, or water resources. The Municipal Option would allow—but not require—towns to enact a 1% conveyance fee on buyers of real property in order to acquire and steward open space. Our parks, farms, trails, and beaches are what attract and keep residents in Connecticut. Communities in other states that have passed similar legislation saw their home values increase while also preserving tens of thousands of acres of open space.

ELECTRIC VEHICLES

Electric vehicle makers like Tesla are currently prohibited from selling directly to consumers in Connecticut, stifling growth and reducing consumer choice. Automobiles are the leading contributors to poor air quality. We must expand access to electric vehicles if we want to reduce emissions, lower pollution, and end our reliance on dirty fossil fuels. This means allowing Tesla to sell directly to consumers, but it also means investing in charging stations, infrastructure, and more electric public vehicles, especially buses.

DEEP FUNDING

The Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) is in the midst of a crisis due to a growing workload, reduced budget, and rapidly retiring staff. It has not been able to hire for critical positions, resulting in reduced efficiency. While DEEP has partnered with universities and nonprofits to meet their responsibilities, the agency must have the resources it needs to replace retiring staff members and fulfill its function.

