



2018 Candidate Survey on the Environment

Ashley Gaudiano (Democrat)

House District 134

1) 100% Clean Energy by 2050:

Do you support transitioning to 100% clean energy by 2050 or sooner?

Yes

I support a goal of 100% clean energy by 2050. Connecticut efficiency programs have created more than 30,000 jobs, over \$1 billion in economic activity, and \$21 million in tax revenue. If we focus our energy on environmental regulations that produce positive environmental benefits, we can create environmental prosperity and economic growth for the state of Connecticut.

2) State Water Plan:

Will you support the plan as submitted to the legislature and affirm that water is a public trust?

Yes

I was glad to see Governor Malloy's executive order directing the state's WPC to implement the State Water Plan. However, I wish the Legislature had taken up this matter. There is far more impact when legislation goes through the process of being voted on by the General Assembly and then signed by the Governor. The people of Connecticut have a right to clean air, energy, and water. This act does just that.

3) Municipal Funding Pilot for Open Space:

Would you support legislation that would allow, but not require, certain municipalities to establish a dedicated fund to protect local open space, farmland and water resources through a limited conveyance fee on buyers of real estate?

Uncertain

We absolutely need to fund local land conservation efforts and open space acquisition. The ability for municipalities to opt-in to a conveyance tax program is

key. It allows them to assess their housing market and determine if this is a fit for them. I want to make sure we explore all other avenues of potential revenue before we add a conveyance tax that may hinder an already depressed Fairfield County housing market.

4) Plastic Bag Pollution:

Would you support a statewide ban on single-use plastic bags (or a ban/fee hybrid) to significantly reduce plastic bag pollution in our state?

Yes

Yes. The evidence about single-use plastics and their damage on the environment is insurmountable. I'd also encourage looking at a reduction/ban on plastic straws. I've raised this issue with our First Selectman in Trumbull and hope that we can begin to have serious conversations as a municipality about this effort. Part of this will come down to a marketing effort by the state to ensure consumers that a ban/reduction is not an end all, be all to their shopping efforts.

5) Gas Pipeline:

Will you support the repeal of the pipeline tax established in 2015?

Yes

We have to stop prioritizing natural gas as a bridge to clean energy. We've made a legislative commitment to clean energy and must strive to meet those milestones. Numerous studies state that we do not need any additional gas pipelines, and that even the ones we already have may operate under capacity in the coming decades. In a state where affordability is already a key issue for residents, we should strive to minimize taxes, especially those that don't achieve positive outcomes like the pipeline tax.

6) Carbon Pricing:

Would you support carbon pricing for Connecticut?

Yes

Yes. I'm encouraged by the formation of the Carbon Costs Coalition, which encourages regional legislative commitment to carbon pricing. Carbon pricing would allow for revenue generation or a return of funds to residents. Like with every bill, we need to balance the interests of businesses and environmental interests. I believe through strong partnerships, we can do just that, and ensure a

strong commitment to both the environment as well as business growth throughout Connecticut.

7) Additional Comments:

I have a strong desire to increase the reliance on solar power and other renewable energy sources both for municipalities and businesses across Connecticut. We must take as many steps as we can to improve the health of our planet's natural resources and to curb the impact of our changing climate. Our children deserve to inherit the cleanest environment in Connecticut that we can give them. And if elected to Hartford, I'll work tirelessly to make that a reality. I spent five years focused on promoting sustainable agriculture nationwide. I collaborated with many small and mid-sized farmers during my tenure working on issues of food justice and agriculture. I worked closely with the USDA and nonprofits in Connecticut and nationwide on advocacy related to SNAP redemption at farmers markets; expansion of food hubs; and increasing revenue streams for small and mid-sized farmers. I worked tangentially on issues related to sustainable farming and agriculture as well.

Second, I'm deeply concerned with reducing our reliability on plastics. I've discussed a phase out of plastic straws and plastic bags in our town and hope that over the coming months we can have serious discussions as a Town Council about passing ordinances. I've also discussed banning fracking waste. I've followed closely as other towns have done so, and I would be a fierce advocate for a statewide ban if elected to the General Assembly.

Outside my new Town Council role, for the last 10 years, I've focused my attention on issue-based advocacy -- through legal work, nonprofit communication and legislative advocacy, and grassroots action.