



2020 Candidate Survey on the Environment

Heather Somers Republican
Senate , 18

1) 100% Zero Carbon:

Do you support codifying this legislation?

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2) Environmental Justice:

Do you support the provisions that were contained in the Environmental Justice legislation?

- Yes
Wealthier communities sending their waste to our cities is unacceptable - we all need to be responsible for the waste we generate

3) Municipal Funding Option :

Would you support legislation to allow, but not require, municipalities to establish a dedicated fund for local open space, farmland, water resources climate mitigation strategies through a limited conveyance fee on buyers of real estate?

- Yes
As the former Mayor in Groton we established a dedicated open space fund that we still fund every year in Groton. It has resulted in being able to preserve open space so Groton has nearly 1/3 of its area dedicated as open space

4) Bottle Bill :

Do you support modernizing Connecticut's bottle bill by 1) expanding the list of beverage containers accepted, 2) raising the deposit amount on covered containers, and 3) raising the handling fee paid to authorized dealers for each container they collect?

- Yes
I had proposed a deposit on Nip bottles in a bill last term as a start - We must fix this broken system

5) Climate Change Education:

Do you support a requirement to teach climate change education in public schools?

- Uncertain

Our schools already teach climate change and I feel it is very important but I am hesitant to add another mandate to our school districts. If I felt they were not addressing this issue I would feel differently!

6) Transfer Act:

Do you support switching to a release-based cleanup program that would require sufficient DEEP oversight, mandated reporting of all cleanups and other safeguards to ensure a successful program that increases the number of sites cleaned?

- Yes

7) MDC Water:

Would you support legislation to require rates set by MDC to be approved by PURA (the state regulatory authority that sets rates for private water utilities)?

- Yes

I would also like to extend this thinking to CMEEC

8) Per-and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS):

Do you support advancing legislation that would prohibit PFAS chemicals wherever possible?

- Yes

9) Chlorpyrifos:

Will you support legislation to ban the sale and use of Chlorpyrifos in CT (as was the intent of House Bill 301 considered earlier this year)?

- Uncertain

I need to learn more about this.. but I definitely lean yes

10) No New Gas Infrastructure:

Will you oppose a tax on CT ratepayers to fund new gas pipelines?

- Yes

I do not believe the taxpayers should be paying for this infrastructure

Open Question:

What environmental issues have you worked on? What will be your top environmental priority for the 2021 legislative session?

- I have worked on the bottle bill, submitted anerobic digestion and food waste collection legislation, taxing nip bottles, ensuring the wind farm project answers to environmental requirements and and now serving on the environmental standards committee. I have submitted legislation for controlled environment agriculture farming to be taught at UCONN, to fix the property tax issue facing our shell fishermen so they can continue to grow oysters who are natural filters for our waterways. My priorities would again be food waste collection as I see garbage as a huge issue facing the planet, fixing the bottle bill and looking at revisiting our single stream waste collection system as I do not think it works. I would like to see us move to multi stream collection to increase recycling. I am also interested in incentivizing business to have rooftop apiaries to help increase the bee population and an awareness campaign to not cut lawns, highways etc while flowers are pollinating.

Additional Comments:

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