



2020 Candidate Survey on the Environment

Kate Donnelly Democrat
House , 47

1) 100% Zero Carbon:

Do you support codifying this legislation?

- Yes

Yes, it must be codified to ensure that we are on a path for a zero carbon future so that future administrations continue to implement this goal. We need a solid plan to meet our climate goals which include those lined out so beautifully by CTLCV testimony. I am a strong advocate for clean energy, I am the chair of Hampton's Green Energy committee and our town, along with others across the state, have had great success with energy efficiency measures and solar for our towns. But we need statewide policies that help us, not hinder us. The Energy and Technology Committee has not shown strong leadership in stopping the use of fossil fuels and supporting renewables. We cannot rest on the success of the offshore wind project, we must continue with policies big and small to reach our goals. We can start by stopping the Killingly Power Plant. I started and facilitate a local group called "No More Dirty Power in Killingly" to oppose the Killingly plant. We have demonstrated, lobbied, and testified across the state to influence the governor and DEEP to stop this plant. The state cannot possibly reach our climate goals and continue to build fossil fuel plants and expand fracked gas pipelines. Renewables and efficiency projects will help our economy with good jobs and help us reach our goals.

2) Environmental Justice:

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

- Yes

The covid pandemic and recent Black Lives Matter protests have brought the problems of environmental justice front and center, as we deal with the repercussions of putting at-risk communities at greater risk by siting polluting facilities in these communities. Our state must

address this issue by closing and not building new facilities. The Hartford incinerator must be closed, Killingly, located in a distressed community, must not be built and we must update and strengthen our state's recycling program. The sentence in LVC's testimony says it all, "air pollution is disproportionately caused by white Americans' consumption of goods and services, but disproportionately inhaled by black and Hispanic Americans."

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

The municipal funding option is a great way for communities to preserve their land, especially where open space and farmland are in danger of development. It gives towns grappling with less support from the state an option for a sustainable source of revenue.

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

Recycling in CT is just not working as effectively as it should. increasing the redemption rate to ten cents and increasing the types of bottle for redemption will be a good incentive for people to take redemption more seriously. It is time to rethink recycling in CT and the bottle bill is a good start.

5) Climate Change Education:

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

- Yes

I believe that it is essential that climate change education be taught in our schools so that future generations understand the implications of, potential solutions for, and necessity of, voting and fighting for the survival of the planet. I believe mandating climate change education is the only way to ensure that it will be taught in every school.

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

It seems clear that this proposal makes sense because it will lead to more cleanups. DEEP has too many unfunded or poorly funded programs to do the jobs they must do. They need additional resources to implement this plan.

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

It is an injustice to give discounts to a corporation profiting off the water supply while residents' rates go up. Bottling a water supply into plastic bottles is an obvious example of corporate damage for profit. It is clear that they need state oversight to resolve this injustice.

8) Per-and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS):

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

- Yes

I support legislation that would prohibit PFAS chemicals. PFAS are a major problem and the task force recommendations for mandatory testing of public water supplies, as well as banning PFAS in firefighting foam and consumer products must be passed immediately.

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)?

- Yes

As long as the burden is on the states, Connecticut should move forward and ban chlorpyrifos in order to ensure that they are no longer used.

10) No New Gas Infrastructure:

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

- Yes

If the cost of building those pipelines was not passed along to ratepayers, but was paid by the companies, there would not be expansion. A tax on ratepayers has to be stopped. There are so many things wrong with this - ratepayers are paying for corporations to profit, most ratepayers do not "benefit" from natural gas in their homes, the dangers from the leaks from pipelines is never factored into any equation, it gives companies building gas-fired plants an advantage, and even with this advantage it still is less cost effective than renewables.

Open Question:

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

- In recent years, I have mostly worked on energy issues advocating for renewables and energy efficiency programs. Right now, my main focus is working in my town as the chair of the Green Energy Committee. We have solar on all town buildings, a new solar farm in town, done efficiency work on town buildings, and have run efficiency and solar campaigns for the town. We also educate residents through a film and lecture series, as well as testify for legislation. For the past year, I have been organizing local opposition to stop the Killingly power plant. My first action for the environment was attending the first earth day celebration, and I have been active on a variety of environmental issues since then. In the late 70's and early 80's I was active in the anti-nuclear power movement and formed an organization called the New Jersey SEA Alliance.
My partner and I live in beautiful northeastern Connecticut and run a business out of our barn providing progressive resources across the country. Over the years we have made our home and business as close to net zero as possible installing solar, heat pumps, and we own two electric cars. We participate in many activities to save our environment for future generations.

Additional Comments:

- It has been a pleasure answering these questions and learning more about the work that you do. I am very impressed with your testimony and fact sheets on these issues. Thank you for your work.