

# 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: [ctlcvt@ctlcvt.org](mailto:ctlcvt@ctlcvt.org)

Candidate Name: Gail Lavielle

Running for:  X House  Senate      District No: 143      Party: Republican

Candidate/Campaign Mailing Address: Gail Lavielle for State Representative, 109 Hickory Hill Road, Wilton, CT 06897

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

Do you have a primary? Yes       No  X

Are you an incumbent? Yes  X      No

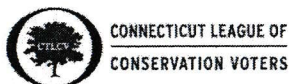
**Part 1: If elected, what position do you expect to take on the following environmental issues?**  
Please mark boxes named "Support," "Uncertain," and "Oppose" with an x.

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		
<p><b>Comments:</b> Yes, I absolutely would support this. Many revenue streams that are collected for specific services are diverted into the General Fund instead of being used to support and improve those services, and I do not believe this should be the case. During the 2012 session, I introduced (together with 26 co-introducers from both sides of the aisle who agreed to join me) HB 5067, which would have required revenues from all bus and rail fare increases to be used to operate, maintain, and improve bus and rail services. I pushed hard in 2013, introducing and co-sponsoring many bills, to require transportation funds collected for transportation purposes and placed in the Special Transportation fund to be used only for transportation purposes (lockbox). We were ultimately successful in inserting a provision that specified this in the 2013 DOT omnibus bill, SB 975 (PA 13-277), which passed and which I co-sponsored. The principle is the same for these DEEP revenues. Using park and forest revenues for parks and forests is a logical, transparent use of funds, and it would provide better support to the DEEP.</p>				

<b>Transportation</b>	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		
<p><b>Comments:</b> My interpretation of this question is: "Does CT need to invest more in transportation, given the projected drop in available federal funding?"                  Yes. This is one area where the state has not invested nearly enough over time to ensure safe, reliable, effective transportation, whether roads and bridges or mass transit. I believe the solution must include a mix of initiatives. Among the possibilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Making the Special Transportation Fund lockbox as firm as possible.</li> <li>- Significantly reordering state bonding priorities, putting not only repairing, but also upgrading and modernizing existing roads, bridges, and mass transit systems before building new ones. Also, investing first in infrastructure that already has a guaranteed, existing user base. It will be necessary to bond sufficiently and wisely to complete urgent transportation projects, while reducing borrowing in other, less urgent areas.</li> <li>- Strengthening advocacy for whatever funding is available at the federal level, and building awareness that lack of adequate transportation infrastructure in CT (inoperable bridges, etc.) effectively closes/limits access to all of New England.</li> <li>- Once transportation funding is protected for transportation purposes and overall wasteful state spending has been addressed, considering optional, voluntary forms of tolling (optional express lanes, etc.).</li> <li>- Using the soon-to-be-formed CT Port Authority to develop water freight traffic, which should help relieve road congestion.</li> <li>- Considering public-private partnerships for transportation infrastructure improvement as appropriate.</li> </ul> <p>Whatever solutions are chosen, I believe that it is imperative to have a long-term plan in place that provides for the full upgrade and modernization of our existing roads, bridges, and mass transit systems in a set period of time with fully dedicated financial resources that are not to be diverted elsewhere.</p>				
<b>Property Tax Reform</b>	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?	X		
<p><b>Comments:</b> Yes, particularly as the debate pertains to transportation and conserving open space. Of course, it's essential to see language of any proposal before supporting.</p>				

<i>Topic</i>	<i>Question</i>	Support	Uncertain	Oppose
<b>Pesticides</b>	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><b>Comments:</b> I would support it, and in fact I already have supported it. I voted in favor of SB 46 in the Education Committee during the 2014 session.</p>				
<b>Pesticides</b>	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><b>Comments:</b></p>				
<b>Water Source Protection</b>	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><b>Comments:</b></p>				

<b>Microbeads</b>	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		
<b>Comments:</b>				
<b>Conservation Lands</b>	Would you support passing a state Constitutional Amendment to better protect state conservation lands from being given away for non-conservation purposes?	X		
<b>Comments:</b> I am and have been a strong advocate for these protections. I voted against the Haddam land swap in 2011 and testified in favor of SB 70 (PA 14-169) in 2014. I would support reinforcement of these protections. A constitutional amendment can be a means of doing that – I support the concept, but would want to see and have input on the language before approval.				
<b>Energy</b>	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?	X		
<b>Comments:</b> I already have a record of protecting the Energy Efficiency Fund from raids. I was a co-sponsor of SB 1157 in 2011, which attempted to restore the fund. Also, please see my response to the first question in this document.				
<b>Energy</b>	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?	X		
<b>Comments:</b> With careful analysis of the barriers and the proposals to remove them in each case.				
<b>Toxins</b>	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?	X		
<b>Comments:</b>				



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

**Transportation.** Although the many problems with our roads and bridges and Metro-North have been in the spotlight over the last few months, our transportation infrastructure has been neglected for years. This must be addressed. I have already spent a significant portion of my legislative time on this, and will continue to do so. I have been a strong, vocal advocate of the transportation fund lockbox, helping get it into statute in 2013, and submitted a constitutional amendment proposal to reinforce it to the Transportation Committee in 2014 (and testified in favor of the resulting resolution). I also

introduced a bill in 2014 requiring that bonding to repair and upgrade commuter rail be moved to the top of the transportation bonding priority list. I have also signed letters addressed to the DOT, CT's federal delegation, Metro-North, and others requesting increased federal funding for Connecticut. The state of our roads and rails has begun to affect people's decisions to move to and stay in Connecticut, and safety is also an issue. The environmental consequences of ceaseless traffic congestion are enormous. I will continue to do the kinds of things I have been doing, and will leave no stone unturned in examining and proposing funding and management solutions.

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

- Transportation – mass transit, complete streets, traffic congestion, condition of roads and bridges.
- Helping both residents and businesses conserve energy to reduce energy costs.
- Preservation of open space. I played an active role in 2011 in pushing through HB 6557, which protected towns against frivolous lawsuits related to recreational land use, and in preventing it from being watered down by SB 445 in 2012. I also co-sponsored SB 347 (open space plan) in 2012, and SB 70 in 2014.
- Shoreline and coastal management (Westport, Norwalk).
- Protection and environmental stewardship of Long Island Sound.
- Preserving municipalities' ability to make local decisions on certain environmental matters. For example, Westport elected to pass its own ban on plastic bags, while Wilton did not. Similarly, many of my constituents would like for their towns to be able to choose to restrict pesticides more heavily than state law does.
- GMO labeling and support for locally grown food producers

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

**Comments:**