



2020 Candidate Survey on the Environment

Matthew Lesser Democrat
Senate , 9

1) 100% Zero Carbon:

Do you support codifying this legislation?

- Yes

2) Environmental Justice:

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

- Yes

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?

- Uncertain

I have always supported the conveyance tax. I would support this with guardrails to prevent this from inadvertently worsening environmental justice issues and segregation.

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

5) Climate Change Education:

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

- Yes

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)?

- No

I support much stronger oversight over MDC and intend to champion legislation to provide that. But I agree with the MDC's own independent ratepayer advocate that PURA is probably not the best way to provide oversight, as PURA's main function is ensuring a reasonable rate of return for for-profit utilities. As a quasi-municipal body, MDC isn't supposed to have any rate of return. I would be willing to work with CTLCV to find appropriate governance reforms.

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)?

- Yes

10) No New Gas Infrastructure:

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

- Yes

Open Question:

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

- I will work on protecting open space (including possibly creating a new state park in my district), continue my national leadership in pushing the insurance industry to divest from carbon (I chair the Insurance Committee), and urge climate change resiliency through land use and insurance changes. I have long supported efficiency and renewables on the Energy Committee, and have authored various laws pertaining to environmental issues, from restricting the trade in snapping turtles to preventing fracking waste from being disposed of in Connecticut.

Additional Comments:

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