

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: ctlcv@ctlcv.org

Candidate Name: Jonathan Steinberg

Running for: House Senate District No: 136 Party: Democrat

Candidate/Campaign Mailing Address: 1 Bushy Ridge Road, Westport, CT 06880

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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 _____

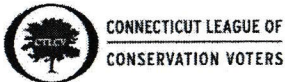
Part 1: If elected, what position do you expect to take on the following environmental issues?
Please mark boxes named "Support," "Uncertain," and "Oppose" with an x.

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		
Comments: CT is blessed by the foresight of previous elected officials in creating one of the best state park systems in the nation. We also have the CT Ag. Station to help us protect our parks and forests. We are barely spending enough for their upkeep. I wish we had the money to spend more, so I support the idea of a dedicated funding source.				
Transportation	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>Comments: I'm not totally clear on what you're proposing, but CT is already in crisis with regard to transportation infrastructure funding. We certainly can count on the Feds, our gas tax revenues are declining and the magnitude of the investment required now is in the many billions of dollars. I would further explore congestion pricing exit metering to fund infrastructure maintenance and I've long advocated for making infrastructure investment a top priority in capital budgeting.</p>			
<p>Property Tax Reform</p>	<p>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?</p>	X	
<p>Comments: I support the statement in concept, although I'm wary about how best to approach fundamental property tax reform. I believe that development, transportation and environmental concerns are inextricably connected and that any solution should take into account environmental considerations. But resolving the larger issue of tax equity and distribution won't be easy. I know that the Speaker has some bold ideas for real reform and I'm committed to working with him to explore the practicality of real change.</p>			

<i>Topic</i>	<i>Question</i>	Support	Uncertain	Oppose
Pesticides	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>Comments: As you know, I've been a tireless advocate in the battles with the chemicals industry in limiting the types and uses of chemicals, particularly in proximity to children and pets. I'm proud of the progress we've made but we still have a long ways to go. I will continue the fight to extend the pesticides ban to high schools and parks.</p>				
Pesticides	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>Comments: Yes, they should, but I think the bigger issue is educating municipal Public Works and Parks & Rec Departments on how to successfully implement an effective organic program. I think we also have to address the problem posed by the inappropriate application of IPM precepts which allow for spot pesticide application and undermine the commitment to "cold turkey" conversion.</p>				
Water Source Protection	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>Comments: As a major proponent of the recently passed Comprehensive State Water Plan legislation and as a member of the Shoreline Preservation Taskforce, I'm committed to aggressively addressing broad scale water monitoring and testing, storm prep and response. Education will be the key at virtually every level, from municipal stakeholders to builders, residents and commercial businesses.</p>				
Microbeads	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	

Comments: Again, I support the concept in principle, but I fear it will be very difficult to implement at the state level. I'm open to the conversation, but I confess I'm skeptical of the Legislature's ability to establish an effective bulwark.			
Conservation Lands	Would you support passing a state Constitutional Amendment to better protect state conservation lands from being given away for non-conservation purposes?	X	
Comments: Constitutional amendments have been proposed before. The key will be the language, avoiding loopholes but still providing some flexibility. What do you do about land swaps? We've been there before!			
Energy	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	
Comments: As House Vice-Chair of the Energy & Technology Committee and an author of the "Lead By Example" section of the landmark energy legislation, I'm proud of CT's progress in pursuing renewable energy and conservation. I hope the Green Bank will help us leverage private capital to promote more energy efficiency, but I'd agree that the fund should not be raided under any circumstances. I was very upset when certain colleagues attempted to pull off that last-minute shenanigan.			
Energy	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	
Comments: I have been a rather noisy advocate for microgrids, shared community renewables projects and fuel cells. I helped sponsor the share solar bill in the committee which died this year and will renew the effort in the next session, if elected. We need to pursue a path which doesn't overly threaten the utilities while facilitating the type of conversion of the grid and other technological advances (smart meters) which will lead to a new world of efficiency.			
Toxins	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	
Comments: I thought we'd get the bill passed this year' I'm very disappointed. I'll team again with Rep. Urban to get it done next time!!!!			



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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?

Broader impacts of climate change (would have said fracking waste, but we got that one addressed, for now!). As a legislator, I know I need to start with educating colleagues and making them appreciate the impact on their constituents. Then I think we need to be very specific about legislation that is easily understood and actionable.

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

Running Bamboo, septic system maintenance, shoreline preservation & flooding, aquifer/wetlands protection

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

Comments:

They're really all #1s for me! I serve on E&T and Transportation Committees, so I intend to have a direct impact on the outcome.