



2020 Candidate Survey on the Environment

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House , 143

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

If it wasn't clear prior to March, everyone now knows the importance of the environmental justice movement and how communities of color have borne the brunt of past environmental policy. Strengthening the 2008 law to include community input, including language considerations, among other provisions is pivotal in ensuring equity.

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

Ordinarily, my response would be "Yes," however I am sensitive to the budgetary challenges that will occur as a result of Covid-19. The idea of imposing new taxes at a time when people are struggling and we are trying to encourage investment and residency in our towns and cities, is something I would weigh further once presented. I am very open to the concept and it does seem to have been effective in other states.

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

The environmental movement has had to fight for attention over other critical needs from health care to gun safety. The cost to educate consumers on one environmental policy at a time is high and the learning curve steep. Publishers are starting to put out books with an environmental focus to teach our youngest children. Climate change education in the schools will help us reach our goals. If all children learn the facts and how to adopt good behaviors, the needle can begin to shift faster, away from partisan talking points and other influences. Much like school children began shifting their parents away from smoking, I am hopeful we would see the same impact across the many facets of climate change.

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 am supportive of this concept, but would want to see the details relating to the actual bill proposed. Currently, I am more inclined to approve PURA regulation over rates that are over a certain percentage rather than in all situations. There may also be other options as relates to MDC's governance structure.

8) Per-and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS):

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

- Yes

The prevalence of PFAS in humans around the world is troubling to say the least. I am glad that this topic is gaining recognition in the legislature.

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?

- Like many people, throughout my life, I always felt that "the environment" felt like too large a topic to tackle. For many years, I thought I was doing the right things by recycling, conserving electricity, minimizing driving and the like. I have long said that Mother Earth is the only force than can actually kill us, yet we spend much time and treasure fighting manmade wars instating of doing all we can to protect this resource.

I would very much like to see an environmental curriculum enacted as soon as possible to begin to address this problem and to foster long-term change. As I alluded to above, I believe that widespread education is one of the best long-term fixes to move the needle further and faster. We need everyone using the same playbook.

In the short term, it is critical that no new fossil fuel plants are built and no new gas infrastructure built or we lock ourselves into a course that will take even longer to correct.

Over the years, I have worked on various one-off projects such as preservation of open spaces through the Sierra Club and working with

various nonprofits such as the Council on Economic Priorities and Echoing Green. In Connecticut, I have submitted testimony and/or attended hearings at the municipal level and in Hartford, participated in climate-related activities hosted by the Fairfield County Collaborative and have worked to educate myself further on how we can meet and exceed the goals that Governor Lamont set out for Connecticut's Green New Deal.

Additional Comments:

- Thank you for the opportunity.