

# 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.

Candidate Name: Cristin McCarthy Vahey

Running for:  House  Senate      District No: 133      Party: Democrat

Candidate/Campaign Mailing Address:  
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Are you enrolled in the Citizen's Election Fund for public campaign financing? Yes  No

Do you have a primary? Yes  No

Are you an incumbent? Yes  No

- Email your completed survey to: [ctlcv@ctlcv.org](mailto:ctlcv@ctlcv.org)

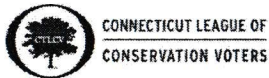
**Part 1: If elected, what position do you expect to take on the following environmental issues?**  
Please mark boxes named "Support," "Uncertain," and "Oppose" with an x.

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: I support assuring dedicated funds go to the care and keeping of our parks and forests, however these revenues may not be sufficient for the needs we have. I believe in properly maintaining our natural resources.				

<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		
<b>Comments:</b> We certainly need additional funds invested into our transportation infrastructure, particularly that which will reduce emissions and congestion. We must bring all stakeholders to the table, including adjacent states, to solve the problem. We must do so without overburdening the middle class and poor.				
<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		
<b>Comments:</b> Yes, I will advocate for the environment in that conversation.				

Topic	Question	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		
<b>Comments:</b> As a Mill River Guide and CT Audubon volunteer here in Fairfield, I have taught our students about the fact that what we do at home has an impact on our habitats, particularly our estuaries and waterways. I support extending this ban.				
<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		
<b>Comments:</b> I agree with limiting pesticide application as much as we can, as well as allowing towns the choice to do more in that area. However, if adjacent communities do not take similar steps, communities could still suffer. The state must work as a whole, as this is a system wide issue. What we do individually impacts the entire ecosystem.				
<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		
<b>Comments:</b> As a Selectman, I have participated in a Hazards Mitigation workshop with the Nature Conservancy, and serve as a voting member of our Water Pollution Control Authority. I recognize the critical need for accurate data in making decisions for our communities.				
<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> Again, a system-wide, global approach is necessary. We need to be sure we are not looking at causes and effects in isolation. This sounds like an important step and I would likely support this after learning more about microbeads.				
<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> As a member of Aspetuck Land Trust and CT Audubon, I support efforts at conversation and active management of our open spaces. They provide critical habitat. I would do so in my role as a legislator as well.				
<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		

<p><b>Comments:</b> Fairfield, under the guidance of Ed Bowman in our public works department, has been a leader in efforts to bring clean energy and energy savings solutions to Fairfield. I have strongly supported this work at the Board of Selectmen level. I have worked in concert with our town's Clean Energy Task Force to advocate for steps to be taken at the local and household level. I will continue to support these important efforts.</p>			
<b>Energy</b>	<p>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?</p>	X	
<p><b>Comments:</b> More efficiencies are found in collaboration. I support efforts to offer more opportunities for clean and renewable energy.</p>			
<b>Toxins</b>	<p>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?</p>	X	
<p><b>Comments:</b> Absolutely.</p>			



**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 options that include planning for mass transit and increased bicycle and pedestrian use are critical to both the environment and the economic well being of our state. I will push for comprehensive solutions and action to move forward with transportation solutions that will allow residents viable alternatives to using a single occupancy vehicle.

Another issue we are facing is the need for active land management in our conservation spaces. Funding and resources have been limited. In order to maintain the health of these areas, we will need to devote resources to supporting these efforts.

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

Protection of coastal and inland waterways and estuaries are critical to the 133rd. From issues with the Rooster River, the coastal impact of Storm Sandy and the day to day work of our wastewater treatment, we know how important it is to work together to protect these natural resources. Open space management and preservation, food safety and proper labeling, and environmental safety in our town and school buildings are all priority issues. Clean energy and the need for safe and reliable transportation alternatives are critical as well.

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

**Comments:**

Here at home, we have recognized that what we do on a family level does make a difference. We recycle extensively, compost, collect rainwater, use re-usable bags, use natural cleaning and lawn care products and have solar panels on our home. As hikers, campers, bicyclists and runners, we have experienced first hand the natural environment and have increased our awareness of the responsibility we have to protect it. As a local leader, I have supported efforts to protect our natural environment and will continue to do so if elected to the state legislature.