



## 2018 Candidate Survey on the Environment

### Julie Kushner (Democrat)

Senate District 24

**1) 100% Clean Energy by 2050:**

**Do you support transitioning to 100% clean energy by 2050 or sooner?**

Yes

I fully support a transition to 100% clean energy. As we've seen with the ongoing and devastating fires out in California, last year's record-setting Atlantic storm season, and so many other natural disasters, climate change is already ravaging people and communities near and far. The transition must be swift, but it must also be equitable. I'm eager to work together on programs and laws that will guide us towards a clean and equitable energy future. The communities - mostly poor, women, and black and brown - who are most affected by the impacts of climate change here and around the world must be the first communities to benefit from programs like shared solar. I'm also eager to work together on plans for worker transitions, so the workers in our coal mines and building our natural gas pipelines today have the opportunity for union jobs installing solar panels and building a modern grid tomorrow.

**2) State Water Plan:**

**Will you support the plan as submitted to the legislature and affirm that water is a public trust?**

Yes

Our waters are certainly a public trust and must not be auctioned to the highest bidder. Whether for recreational enjoyment, drinking water for current and future generations, or as habitat for protected and endangered species, clean fresh water is a major asset of the state of Connecticut. We cannot afford for these precious natural resources to be held hostage by corporate interests.

**3) Municipal Funding Pilot for Open Space:**

**Would you support legislation that would allow, but not require, certain municipalities to establish a dedicated fund to protect local open space, farmland and water resources through a limited conveyance fee on buyers of real estate?**

Yes

I've already been hearing from members of my district, particularly in the northern communities of New Fairfield, Sherman, and Bethel, about the importance of protecting our current open space and acquiring new open space. But these communities are also concerned about the high municipal mill rates. The program proposed above appears to be a strong solution to the open space and stewardship needs of our communities and would allow for continued protections of the open spaces that make our communities vibrant, provide climate change resiliency, create habitat for countless species, and offer recreational opportunities to the next generation.

**4) Plastic Bag Pollution:**

**Would you support a statewide ban on single-use plastic bags (or a ban/fee hybrid) to significantly reduce plastic bag pollution in our state?**

Yes

Protecting our lakes, streams, rivers, Long Island Sound, and the oceans - and their inhabitants - from plastic pollution will be a key problem for the world in the 21st century. But any legislation to curb this pollution, whether its a ban or fee on plastic bags, or other single-use plastics, must not have a disproportionately negative impact on our poorest residents. We must protect our environment while avoiding the creation of regressive taxes.

**5) Gas Pipeline:**

**Will you support the repeal of the pipeline tax established in 2015?**

Yes

Connecticut's clean energy future can't be built while we're still constructing new natural gas pipelines across our state. Particularly in light of the Synapse report indicating that pipeline expansion will not benefit consumers by driving down energy p Connecticut's clean energy future can't be built while we're still constructing new natural gas pipelines across our state. Particularly in light of the Synapse report indicating that pipeline expansion will not benefit consumers by

driving down energy prices, the pipeline tax should be repealed. We must use government resources to support clean energy of the future, not the dirty fossil fuels of the past.

**6) Carbon Pricing:**

**Would you support carbon pricing for Connecticut?**

Yes

Despite the political difficulties surrounding this issue, carbon pricing is certainly one of the ways that we can begin to address the huge negative impacts of climate change on our planet. I would be interested in working with environmental advocates and other activists to ensure we built a robust carbon pricing scheme that didn't disadvantage poorer Connecticut residents and truly put the burden on those companies, particularly fossil fuel companies, who have misled the public about the costs of fossil fuels for far too long. Ensuring equitable investment of revenue in the communities most impacted by climate change, with those revenues going directly into sustainable projects and clean energy products, should be an important component of any carbon pricing proposals.

**7) Additional Comments:**