

Green Team

Voter's Guide - 2020

The Second Baptist Church Green Team has prepared this guide to help members and friends consider environmental concerns facing people and Earth as we prepare to vote in the 2020 general election. It is our hope that this information will help you make informed decisions rooted in your faith and spiritual insight as you select who you would like to represent us as our elected officials.

We put this guide together because sometimes we neglect the fact that we are people of faith and spirit who profess that God is Creator of all life, Earth is our home, and that there is a sacred dimension of Earth and the natural world of which we human beings are an integral part. As such, it is essential that we remember that Earth and all life within, is a manifestation of the Divine. From a spiritual perspective, what we call the natural world should not be viewed primarily for human use; though we, like all of Earth's inhabitants, must harvest the fruits of Earth to meet our physical needs. Rather, Earth and all life is sacred, to be communed with in wonder, beauty and intimacy. As people of faith we are called to embrace and care for all life.

One important way to be a faithful caretaker of Earth, is through the choices we make as we vote. Our governing bodies—local, state, national, and international—set policies that impact the natural world and our human place in it, for good or ill. The Green Team, believing that we are called to be informed voters, hopes that you will consider the various candidates' positions on policies that will be mutually enhancing for all. The team chose just a few issues of concern, with questions to guide you as you check on candidate's positions. Contact information will allow you to read what they have shared and/or how you can contact them to ask about their positions related to their commitments to a healthy environment where all may flourish. Most likely, you have other concerns you will want to raise with them. Please note that we are not seeking to tell you how to vote. Rather, we are asking that you keep the health and wellbeing of Earth, God's planet, our only home, in mind as you prepare to vote in November.



Environmental issues we care about and want to see how candidates would vote

Review the following environmental issues, along with some suggested questions, listed by the Green Team. Note which are most important to you and how you stand on them. Add any of your own issues. Contact a candidate or candidates to find out how they stand on the issue or issues. When communicating with a candidate it might be helpful to start a conversation by affirming votes they've made in support of the environment and/or other issues you support.



Alternative energy

Connecticut's electrical power grid is its second-highest contributor to dangerously rising atmospheric levels of CO₂ (after the transportation sector). The primary source of the grid's pollutants is non-renewable natural gas which generates 50% of power output.

Governor Lamont's idea for neutralizing this looming environmental threat is to achieve a zero-carbon power grid by 2040. His plan calls for progressively replacing all carbon-producing energy networks with those powered by clean energy, such as solar, wind, and geothermal.

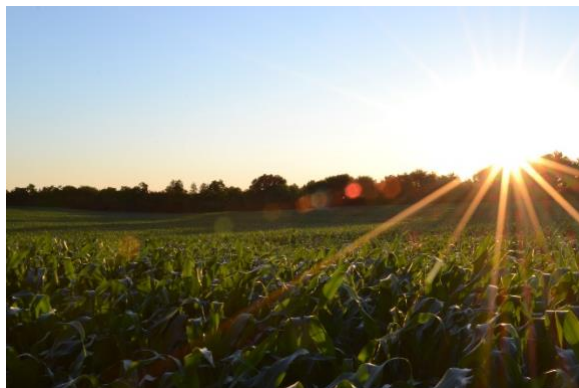
Science is instructing us: rising CO₂ levels in the atmosphere are causing destructive climate change; humankind must take responsibility for contributing to it; and we have far less time than we thought to reverse this globally dangerous trend.



What, specifically, must be accomplished during the upcoming term-in-office to keep Lamont's renewable energy plan on track?

Herbicides

Plants, birds, fish, reptiles, amphibians, and mammals (including humans) have all been affected by pesticide use. It appears that this man-made chemical was invented with the intention of improving and increasing crop yields to ensure continued health of the human population. Unfortunately, its use has come with unintended and fatal consequences. Governments around the world need to act in order to control pesticide application and prevent some of its harmful and increasingly common side effects.



Do you, or would you support legislation that would reduce the use of destructive chemicals, particularly if they have been banned in other developed countries?

Plastics

Of the 8.3 billion metric tons of plastic that has been produced world-wide, only 9% has been recycled, filling our oceans, waterways, landfills, the air and our food. In the last three years, multiple studies have found microplastics in the air we breathe, in drinking water, our food and in our bodies. Since China and other southeast Asian countries have stopped taking our used plastics, we have found that the United States has the infrastructure to recycle only a very small percent of our used plastics – between 4 and 5 percent. In particular, the one-time use of plastics is a major national and global problem.

- Do you, or would you support legislation that would reduce the one-time use of plastics?
- Would you support legislation that would encourage the development of infrastructure that would provide for an increase in plastic recycling in the U.S?



Protecting Open Spaces and Reforestation

Protecting trees/forests and open space would help protect drinking water for 180 million people, stop erosion, reduce flooding, mitigate global warming (forests remove around 3 million tons of carbon from the atmosphere every year), provide habitat for plants and wildlife, and offer recreation and aesthetic values.

- Do you or would you support legislation that provides governmental funding of reforestation projects?
- Do you or would you support governmental legislation that creates new or maintains existing open spaces?

Know the Candidates

We have done our best to provide an accurate list of candidates and their contact information.

For District 7 State Senator

(District 7 covers Granby, Suffield, W. Suffield, Enfield, Windsor Locks and Somers).

For other districts check www.cga.ct.gov

Republican: John A. Kissel (incumbent) www.facebook.com/senatorkissel

Democrat: Frederick Moffa www.facebook.com/drmoffa

For State Representative by District

(Those listed cover Enfield, Suffield, W. Suffield, Windsor Locks, E. Granby, Windsor).

For other districts check www.cga.ct.gov

District 58 (Enfield)

Democrat: Tom Arnone (incumbent) www.facebook.com/tom.arnone

Republican: Mary Ann Turner www.MaryAnn@TurnerForEnfield.com

District 59 (Enfield)

Republican: Carol Hall (incumbent) www.facebook.com/RepHall59

Democrat: Gerald Calnen www.calnenforthe59th.com

District 60 (Windsor Locks, Windsor)

Democrat: Jane Garibay (incumbent) www.facebook.com/jane.garibay

Republican: Scott Storms www.storms.2020.com

District 61 (Suffield, E. Granby, Windsor)

Republican: Tami Zawistowski (incumbent) www.facebook.com/tami.zawistowski

Democrat: Jack Henrie www.jackhenrie.com

For US Representative

(listed for Suffield, W. Suffield, Enfield, Windsor Locks, Windsor). For other districts check www.house.gov

District 1 (East Granby, Granby, Windsor, Windsor Locks, plus others)

Democrat: John Larson (incumbent) www.larsonforcongress.org

Republican: Mary Fay, www.maryfay4congress.com

District 2 (Enfield, Suffield, plus eastern CT)

Democrat: Joe Courtney (incumbent) www.joecourtney.com

Republican: Justin Anderson www.justinandersonforcongress.com

Green: Cassandra Martineau www.cass4congress.rocks

Libertarian: Dan Reale www.danrealeforcongress.com

[NOTE: Neither US Senator is up for reelection in 2020]

For President

Republican: Donald Trump (incumbent) **www.donaldjtrump.com**

Democrat: Joe Biden **www.joe Biden.com**

Green: Howie Hawkins **www.howiehawkins.us**

Libertarian: Jo Jorgensen **www.jo20.com**

Resources

Earth Day Network, **www.earthday.org**

Interreligious Eco Justice Network, **www.irejn.org**

League of Interfaith Conservation Voters, **www.lcv.org** (Has a CT affiliate)

League of Women Voters, **www.lwv.org** (Has a CT affiliate)

National Resources Defense Council, **www.nrdc.org**

Interfaith Power and Light, **www.interfaithpowerandlight.org**