



CANDIDATES CLIMATE QUESTION 2019:

“As bipartisan Congressional support for carbon tax legislation increases (i.e. Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act), it’s likely the future will hold carbon use related fees for both individuals and governing bodies. Throughout our state, local governments are adopting resolutions and establishing plans to power their communities with 100% renewable energy. What actions would you take to decrease your municipality’s carbon footprint, promote renewable energy, and save future taxpayers the burden of carbon tax fees?”

CANDIDATES’ RESPONSES in the order they were received:

NOTE: These responses have not been edited. Candidates on BWA’s board or staff were not included.

Larry Sebring (Stroud Twp) :

The Second-Class Township Code does not directly authorize Township supervisors to regulate energy consumption or emissions. The Federal Environmental Protection Agency and the State Department of Environmental Protection are the regulatory agencies in this regard.

However, during my past tenure as Stroud Township Supervisor, our Board adopted one of Monroe Counties most comprehensive recycling programs which required yard waste recycling and regulated outdoor burning. Outdoor burning was all but eliminated significantly reducing emissions as a result. The Ordinance was updated regularly during my tenure to the point it became a model ordinance for the Commonwealth.

The Second-Class Township Code and the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code does authorize local governments to reasonably regulate land use and development. I believe the Township Sub-Division and Land Development Ordinance can be further amended and refined in the following areas:

- Review and reduce the percentage of land disturbances during development of land. Maintaining undisturbed land areas and promoting natural vegetation management is good land management and recognized as a best management practice in land preservation.
- Review and amend parking regulations regarding parking lot size requirements. Too many sites are developed with far too much impervious surfaces that are seldom used. This would not only reduce storm water run-off, but also assist in recharging ground water supplies through soil absorption. And the radiant heat back into the atmosphere from parking lots could be reduced.
- Further regulate on site lighting requirements for developers. Require lower energy consuming LED fixtures for outdoor lighting and require timers to turn off or reduce the amount of lights after business hours.
- Encourage the use of non-intrusive roof mounted solar panels on commercial properties.
- Review the landscaping requirements of the ordinance to require additional tree planting and increased landscape areas on a development site.
- Regarding emissions, we should review and upgrade all traffic signals to promote traffic movement and decrease the amount of time vehicles sit idling waiting for a green light. Traffic signal control systems utilizing optical detection and ultrasonic vehicle volume density are

technologies that should be implemented to enhance vehicle movement and reduce the number of idling vehicles. Maintaining traffic signals to operate at maximum efficiency is also very important.

In conclusion, regarding regulations on energy consumption and carbon emissions, I would endorse and support legislation that would help manage and reduce our carbon footprint.

Howard Beers (Ross Twp):

In 2011, I had a goal to reduce the carbon footprint of Ross Township. I proposed installing 90 solar panels at the township building. These panels will produce green energy for the next 30 years! Over the past 8 years these panels have produced approximately 230 megawatts of energy to power the former township building.

Moving forward, in my next term, I would like to also add solar panels to the new building to further reduce our impact on the environment. This would also save tax payers money by reducing the amount of proposed future carbon tax.

Carrie Panepinto (East Stroudsburg Borough):

I would recommend the Borough investigate changing over the street lights to LED technology, which would improve our carbon footprint and save on maintenance costs over the life of the fixtures. There are programs available that allow for the Borough to purchase the fixtures from the owners (ex. PPL or Met Ed), if not already owned by the Borough, and pay for the new fixtures using the savings in electricity. Additionally, many of the LED fixtures come with technology that allows the light levels of the fixtures to be dialed down when no traffic or pedestrians are detected or to be turned up in case of emergencies to provide first responders enhanced illumination. Many fixtures also have ports to allow for the installation of additional sensors or services such as public WiFi that could provide additional benefits in the future.

I would look into programs that can help local municipalities reduce their carbon footprint. For example, our facilities should undergo energy audits which would identify improvements we could make to Borough buildings and operations to increase their efficiency. Once again there are programs that allow for these improvements to be paid for with the savings in electricity, oil, natural gas, etc. We should also investigate changing over the municipal fleets to alternatively fueled and electric vehicles, especially for driving within the borough. Some of these changes may cost money upfront, but over time we will recoup the costs in energy savings and maintenance costs.

Lloyd Vought (Tobyhanna Twp):

I'm Lloyd Vought, candidate for Tobyhanna Township Board of Supervisors on November 5.

I support H.R. 763 Energy Innovation & Carbon Dividend Act of 2019.

Some things I've noticed should be changed in our township that would benefit us all:

1. Stop letting your vehicles run more than a few minutes. Big trucks included.
2. Fix oil and gasoline leaks coming from your boat motors. This has an immediate negative effect on amphibians and fish. Eventually we could be drinking that gasoline and oil.

3. Stop burning tires, insulation or wiring and other items while permitting them to smoulder for hours.
4. There is a cattail field between Route 940 and Lake Kathryn (in Camelot Forest) which stops the road salts in the winter and the pollutants from the tar being washed into Lake Kathryn when it rains. I disagreed with spraying and killing any of the cattails. Its imperative we all attempt to protect our air and water.

Ellen Gndt (Pocono Twp):

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. I apologize I did not have sufficient time to properly research the Act and provide meaningful input. However, I support your effort to stimulate the conversation with local governing officials and encouraging them to take a leading role toward clean energy future.

Jacob Pride (Smithfield Twp):

I support the geothermal energy system that our municipal building operates with. I fully support adopting a resolution to make Smithfield a 100% renewable energy municipality. Other, smaller steps would include banning single use plastic bags and other harmful products of that nature. I will work to bring environmentally friendly jobs into the township, including geothermal projects, solar projects, and the like. Responsible, environmentally conscious economic development is the best way to ensure taxpayers do not buckle under the weight of carbon taxes.