

Colorado General Assembly candidate survey on climate-related issues

Results posted on October 25th, 2016

The following survey on climate-related issues was sent to candidates for Colorado Senate District 14, House District 52, and House District 53 on behalf of the Fort Collins Sustainability Group (FCSG) and the Colorado Coalition for a Livable Climate (CCLC), of which the FCSG is one of 19 members. The CCLC develops and advocates strategies for reducing Colorado's greenhouse gas emissions to levels supportive of a livable climate. In alignment with the 191 nations that signed the 2015 Paris Climate Agreement, the CCLC defines a livable climate as one in which the global average temperature rise is limited to 1.5° C (2.7° F) or less by the end of this century, and believes that Colorado's emissions should become carbon neutral by 2030.

To date, Senator Kefalas, Representative Ginal, and Representative Arndt have responded to the survey. Their responses are provided below.

1. Do you agree with the statements contained in the Fifth Assessment Report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) to the effect that carbon dioxide (CO₂) emitted into the atmosphere by humans has been the dominant cause of observed global warming since the mid-20th Century?

Senator Kefalas (Senate District 14): Yes

Dr. Hans Hochheimer (Senate District 14) No response

Representative Ginal (House District 52) Yes

Ms. Donna Walter (House District 52) No response

Representative Arndt (House District 53) Yes

2. In 2008, Governor Ritter established two climate goals: to reduce Colorado's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions 20% by 2020 and 80% by 2050, both compared to 2005 levels. The Hickenlooper Administration failed to acknowledge either of those goals or to establish new ones when it released its "Colorado Climate Plan" in 2015. Would you support legislation requiring that future climate action plan updates include measurable goals based on the best available science that would both reduce Colorado's greenhouse gas emissions and increase Colorado's adaptive capability to respond to climate change, and which would be subject to near-term, mid-term, and long-term deadlines?

Senator Kefalas (Senate District 14): Yes

Dr. Hans Hochheimer (Senate District 14) No response

Representative Ginal (House District 52) Yes

Ms. Donna Walter (House District 52) No response

Representative Arndt (House District 53) Yes

3. In August of this year, a draft Executive Order by Governor Hickenlooper suggesting two new GHG emissions reduction goals was leaked to the press. The goals – which would affect the electric power sector only – would result at best in 8% statewide GHG emissions reductions by 2025 and 11% statewide GHG emissions reductions by 2035 compared to 2005 – both substantially less than the 2020 goal established by Governor Ritter. Do you think Colorado should adopt more ambitious goals consistent with what the best available science tells us is required?

Senator Kefalas (Senate District 14): Yes

Dr. Hans Hochheimer (Senate District 14) No response

Representative Ginal (House District 52) Yes

Ms. Donna Walter (House District 52) No response

Representative Arndt (House District 53) Yes

4. The 191 nations that signed the 2015 Paris Climate Agreement held that we should pursue efforts to limit the global average temperature rise over pre-industrial levels to 1.5° C (2.7° F) by the end of the 21st Century. One way to accomplish this would be for the nations that industrialized first (including the United States) to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030 (zero net GHG emissions), with the remaining nations (including India and China) to achieve that goal by 2050. The rapidly falling cost of renewable energy technologies places achievement of these goals within humanity's reach. Do you support the goal of carbon neutrality by 2030 for Colorado?

Senator Kefalas (Senate District 14): Yes

Dr. Hans Hochheimer (Senate District 14) No response

Representative Ginal (House District 52) Yes

Ms. Donna Walter (House District 52) No response

Representative Arndt (House District 53) Yes

5. Optional additional comments:

Senator Kefalas (Senate District 14): Thank you for the good work of the Colorado Coalition for a Livable Climate, and there is no question that we have very serious work ahead of us.

Dr. Hans Hochheimer (Senate District 14) No response

Representative Ginal (House District 52) No response

Ms. Donna Walter (House District 52) No response

Representative Arndt (House District 53) No response