

CLIMATE & ENVIRONMENT

What specific actions would you take or propose to protect the climate and the environment? If possible, please name specific ties to New Jersey.

Beth Ellen Adubato

Pardon my "conversational" opening line, but this is the one that always gets me. Don't they have to live here, too? Don't they have children? Don't they have grandchildren? Do they know something we don't know or is there a place to which they all plan to escape? Back to policy talk--again, we are going to have to repair what this administration has done regarding environmental protections, new sources of energy (just last week they declared that "wind" is a security risk), the forever chemicals that were just okayed, and so many other attacks on the environment.

We need to support a clean energy economy, electric vehicles, clean energy investment in vulnerable communities. We need to hold polluters accountable; companies, for example, like LeFarge that dumped chemicals into the water in Alpena, Michigan and people wondered about the high cancer rates of children there. Guess what—my boss wouldn't let me cover that story as a TV reporter in 1997! An important note: one of my professors for my MPAP was former NJ Governor Florio. He made the companies comply with strict environmental laws. People said the companies would leave, but guess what—they didn't.

New Jersey used to be quite polluted and we took serious steps to tend our Garden State. We have the second-strictest laws on automobile emissions in the country (after California). We remediated brownfields. We passed those laws in the 90s, under Florio. We cleaned up some of our polluted rivers, such as the Passaic. Our drive to re-purpose the brownfields, however, appears to have stagnated. Clean energy investment in New Jersey should include repurposing more old warehouses and factories. We can build affordable housing, include renewable energy sources, and avoid more urban sprawl at the same time.

Due to climate change, sea levels are rising. Storms are occurring more often and with more rainfall. These changes can make it harder for communities to address flood risk. Counties in CD7 are susceptible to flooding and this will put a greater burden on our district. In 2012, HUD introduced a program to provide integrated flood risk reduction and "resilient" solutions to flood-prone areas. The "Rebuild by Design Meadowlands Project" is one such program. We need to increase the reach of programs like this to address other flood-risk areas. And of course, we need to reinstate all the programs that were embraced by the Biden Administration and were cut by this one.

Brian Varela

Right here in Lambertville, residents are living through a PFAS crisis. These "forever chemicals" are contaminating groundwater at levels more than ten times the federal limit. Across NJ-7, 80% of homes in the

Upper Raritan watershed rely on private wells vulnerable to this contamination. I'll fight to pass the bipartisan PFAS National Drinking Water Standard Act (H.R. 4168) to codify EPA's limits into law before the Trump administration weakens them further. Trump's administration has already extended compliance to 2031 and is trying to eliminate limits on four PFAS chemicals. I'll protect NJ7's waterways: the Delaware River along our Warren and Hunterdon border, the Musconetcong (a federally designated Wild and Scenic River and New Jersey's best trout fishery), and the Highlands watershed providing drinking water to five million people - all threatened by Republican attacks like the PERMIT Act (H.R. 3898) that would gut Clean Water Act protections.

On clean energy, I'll work to reinstate the tax credits in the Inflation Reduction Act which Republicans repealed. Trump's Day One executive order halting all offshore wind was ruled unlawful by a federal judge in December, yet his administration immediately issued a new 90-day "pause" citing bogus national security concerns. They killed Atlantic Shores, a project that would have delivered \$1.9 billion in economic benefits and powered one million homes. New Jersey had a path to 100% clean energy by 2035; Trump set us back. I'll fight to restart offshore wind, codify clean energy standards into federal law, incentivize electric vehicle usage, expand solar and energy storage, and ensure this transition creates union jobs. Climate change isn't abstract in NJ-7, it's flooding our downtowns during storms and warming trout streams in Warren and Sussex counties past survivable temperatures. We need to do everything we can to reverse the damage of the Trump administration and lower carbon emissions quickly.

Megan O'Rourke

1. Renew Bureau of Oceans and Energy Management (BOEM) permitting of NJ offshore wind development.
2. Reinstate the Inflation Reduction Act provisions that Congress defunded in the OBBB.
3. Tax carbon polluting industries such as oil and gas

Michael Roth

The climate crisis is already here and New Jersey families are paying the price. We can take on the climate crisis and grow New Jersey's economy at the same time by building clean energy in New Jersey, upgrading stormwater management, and holding big polluters accountable. In NJ-7, nearly half of our towns — including places like Lambertville — have reported higher than safe levels of PFAS in the water. And New Jersey has the most superfund sites in the country. Tom Kean Jr. said if clean energy were cut, New Jersey would face an “energy crisis” and then he voted to cut energy funding. I have worked across the country to build new clean energy sources to bring down costs, create jobs, and increase competitiveness. In Congress, I will fight to:

- Restore and expand clean energy tax credits that lower monthly utility bills
- Bring home funding to invest in modern energy infrastructure
- Make New Jersey a hub for clean energy jobs from battery storage to advanced manufacturing so costs can be cut while growing the local economy
- Restore and reauthorize FEMA's flood mitigation program

- Fight for funding to remove the trees and debris from our rivers that cause flooding and investing in stormwater drainage capacity and stormwater management
- Ensure clean drinking water for everyone in the district, by making corporate polluters pay, ensuring continued measurement of PFAS in our water, and advocating for funding from the emerging contaminants program so our towns have the resources to provide clean water
- Fund and clean up our superfund sites, making corporate polluters pay for it, and building clean energy jobs of the future on those sites

Rebecca Bennett

The most important thing we can do is actually support an all of the above approach to energy that doesn't attack our domestic wind and solar industry, starting with undoing the cuts in OBBB. We can either have a domestic industry or we can cede the space to China.

Tina Shah

The energy crisis and climate emergency have already arrived in New Jersey: our electricity bills are increasing by the month and flooding has become more frequent and severe, as we particularly experienced last summer. We must enact policies to drive down utility bills, solidify our energy security and improve climate resilience before we lose even more in costs and damages. Like so many of us, I'm frustrated with our government's inability to respond to today's reality.

In Congress I will fight for green policy that grows our economy and saves taxpayer dollars, including:

1. Reversing Trump's cuts to federal funding for climate resilient infrastructure to guard against flooding and rising sea levels along our coasts.
2. Restoring investments from the Inflation Reduction Act that Trump canceled that would begin new renewable energy projects, creating jobs across the state.
3. Fighting to preserve the decades-old policies that have ensured we have clean air to breathe, water to drink, and land to live on that Trump and his EPA are systematically dismantling.
4. Working to secure funding for New Jersey to modernize our aging electrical grid and lower costs by raising the supply, which is also threatened by Trump's cuts to the Inflation Reduction Act.
5. Making data centers that are popping up all over New Jersey pay for the electricity they use to keep from driving up costs for residents.