

2020 CTLCV Environmental Summit Media Report



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Publication/Date	Impressions
Hartford Courant Lamont Administration weighing major shifts in regional power grid, natural gas January 15, 2020 https://www.courant.com/news/connecticut/hc-news-trinity-environmental-summit-20200115-q6iewwqw6bb7degdhfnrt4ony-story.html	2,123,668
Republican American Water, pesticides, fossil fuels are state's top environmental priorities this year, officials say January 18, 2019 https://www.rep-am.com/local/news-local/2020/01/18/water-pesticides-fossil-fuels-are-states-top-environmental-priorities-this-year-officials-say/	434,964
New Haven Register Connecticut League of Conservation Voters hosts annual Environmental Summit January 6, 2020 https://www.nhregister.com/news/article/Connecticut-League-of-Conservation-Voters-hosts-14953289.php	433,379
Connecticut Mirror CT taking 'a serious look' at exiting regional power market January 16, 2019 https://ctmirror.org/2020/01/16/conn-taking-a-serious-look-at-exiting-regional-power-market/	165,355
WNPR Conn. Energy Head Taking 'A Serious Look' at Exiting Regional power Market January 15, 2020 https://www.wnpr.org/post/conn-energy-head-taking-serious-look-exiting-regional-power-market	91,115
Journal Inquirer Environmental officials want to reverse course on natural gas January 18, 2019 https://www.journalinquirer.com/politics_and_government/environmental-officials-want-to-reverse-course-on-natural-gas/article_8ebe192e-3996-11ea-ad17-67643f8321c3.html	54,709
Wilton Bulletin Connecticut League of Conservation Voters hosts annual Environmental Summit January 6, 2020 https://www.wiltonbulletin.com/news/article/Connecticut-League-of-Conservation-Voters-hosts-14953289.php	38,420

WBUR

As Mass. Considers Carbon Pricing, Conn. Takes 'Serious Look' at Exiting Regional Power Market

January 17, 2020

<https://www.wbur.org/earthwhile/2020/01/17/connecticut-iso-new-england-possible-exodus-power-grid-carbon>

Connecticut Examiner

A Pesticide Ban, New Revenues, Among Issues Highlighted at Environmental Summit in Hartford

January 16, 2020

<https://ctexaminer.com/2020/01/16/a-pesticide-ban-new-revenues-among-issues-highlighted-at-environmental-summit-in-hartford/>

Connecticut Construction Digest

CT taking 'a serious look' at exiting regional power market

January 16, 2019

http://ctconstructiondigest.blogspot.com/2020/01/ct-construction-digest-friday-january_17.html

Total Print/Online Impressions:

3,341,610

**Please note: Where some media is indicated as not available, it is because the information is not public and accessible unless via subscription service.*

<https://www.courant.com/news/connecticut/hc-news-trinity-environmental-summit-20200115-q6iewwqw6bb7degdhnfnrt4ony-story.html>

Hartford Courant

Lamont administration weighing major shifts on regional power grid, natural gas

By, Gregory Hladky
January 15, 2020

Connecticut's top energy and environmental official said Wednesday that state officials are considering dramatic changes that include withdrawing from the regional power grid and reversing course on pro-natural gas policies.

Katie Dykes, commissioner of Gov. Ned Lamont's energy and environmental agency, told a Trinity College summit that a "lack of leadership" at ISO-New England on the issue of cutting use of fossil fuels has Connecticut evaluating whether the state should leave the regional power grid.

Dykes said ISO-New England's policies are driving larger investments in natural gas pipelines and power plants that this state "doesn't want and doesn't need." She also said recent Trump administration energy rulings threaten "to punish states for moving away from fossil fuels."

Last month, federal energy regulators approved new rules for the nation's largest energy market covering Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Maryland that experts say helps fossil fuel power plants and discourages investment in renewable energy.

Former Gov. Dannel P. Malloy's administration strongly pushed use of natural gas as being cleaner than using oil or coal to produce energy, arguing natural gas could serve as a "bridge fuel" until renewable energy like solar and wind could generate enough power.

We're working hard to turn this ship around.

"Natural gas is not a 'bridge fuel,' it's a fossil fuel," Dykes told the crowd of about 280 people who attended the environmental summit put on by Trinity College and the Connecticut League of Conservation Voters.

"We're working hard to turn this ship around," Dykes said of Connecticut's past pro-natural gas policies. Those past policies included support for new multi-billion-dollar pipelines to bring more natural gas into New England.

Last month, ISO-New England President Gordon van Welie defended his agency's policies, arguing that its most important responsibility is to make sure there is no interruption in the

flow of electricity to the region's consumers. He insisted New England has "one of the cleanest, most efficient fleet of resources in the country."

Natural gas has become a major source of friction between Connecticut environmentalists and Lamont. Activists have been demanding that Lamont kill plans to build a 650-megawatt natural gas fueled power plant in Killingly.

[Environmentalists clash with Lamont as natural gas plant set for Killingly tests Connecticut's promise to address climate change »](#)

Connecticut is the only state in New England where a new natural gas facility is set to be built and environmentalists argue that plant contradicts Lamont's proposal to drastically cut Connecticut's carbon emissions by 2040 to help combat climate change. The Killingly proposal has drawn protests from local and state environmentalists.

Dykes' statements Wednesday on natural gas appear to contradict statements she made in September that natural gas has been "a bridge from coal and oil." At the time, Dykes said state officials could see "the end is in sight" for natural gas use.

The commissioner declined to say if her Department of Energy and Environmental Protection still has the authority to halt the Killingly project, saying only that the agency is still considering several permits required to have the plant be built.

Wednesday's Trinity College summit was the 30th annual such environmental conference sponsored by the school and the League of Conservation Voters.

Speakers at the conference voiced major concerns over the impact of global warming, emerging hazardous pollutants like the chemical compounds known as PFAS, reducing transportation-related carbon emissions, Connecticut's ongoing garbage disposal crisis and preserving Long Island Sound and this state's forests.

In January of last year, Lamont spoke before the environmental summit and promised that, "Everything I do in the next four years, I'm going to do looking through an environmental lens." This year he sent Dykes and Lt. Gov. Susan Bysiewicz to speak for his administration at the conference.

"He cares about these issues," Dykes said when asked if Lamont's is fulfilling his promise to environmentalists.

Dykes declined to offer any specifics about the Lamont administration's plans for funding environmental programs that include clean-up and testing for PFAS in drinking water systems and wells across the state.

But Dykes called PFAS chemicals "persistent and toxic" even at extremely low levels and said they are now "ubiquitous" in Connecticut's environment.

[Task force recommends statewide testing of public water systems after hazardous firefighting foam spill »](#)

The “catastrophic outage” of the massive regional garbage plant in Hartford in late 2018 and much of 2019 highlighted a crisis that Dykes said, “is still hanging over us.” Connecticut is continuing to send hundreds of thousands of tons of garbage and refuse out of state for disposal and the unresolved problems with the Hartford plant could make that situation even worse, Dykes warned.

She predicted that dealing with the ongoing garbage disposal problems would be a major topic of debate in the 2020 General Assembly session that begins next month.

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<https://www.courant.com/politics/capitol-watch/hc-pol-environmental-scorecard-lawmakers-20191118-iyi5ewf5rbefrhh57i743y23iu-story.html>



Water, pesticides, fossil fuels are state's top environmental priorities this year, officials say

By, Kurt Moffett
January 18, 2020

HARTFORD — Protecting the state's water supplies, eliminating toxic pesticides and continuing to transition from fossil fuels to renewable energies are among the state's top environmental priorities this year.

State and local officials gathered Wednesday for the 20th annual environmental summit at Trinity College. The summit was sponsored by the Connecticut League of Conservation Voters and Trinity College's Program on Public Values.

Speakers were grouped together and given a specific topic to address. The topics were: forests and carbon sequestration; plastics and recycling; greenhouse gas reduction; clean, equitable transportation; toxins and pollutants; Long Island Sound resiliency and youth climate priorities.

From the forest panel, Susan Masino, professor of applied science at Trinity College, spoke about the importance of preserving forests. She said though Connecticut is 60% forest land, it has the least amount of reserved forest in the region. She said Connecticut needs to protect some of its forests like a national park, of which the state has none.

"Natural climate solutions are the key to solving the (climate change) crisis," Masino said. "Even if we converted to all renewable energy, even if we have a zero carbon budget, if we don't protect nature, what do we really have?"

Colleen Murphy-Dunning, the program director at Yale University's Hixon Center for Urban Ecology, advocated for the planting of more trees in urban areas to reduce temperature. She said not only is the world's population growing, so is the amount of energy used per person. In the United States over the past 40 years, there are fewer people living per household, but the sizes of American households have grown from an average of 1,600 square feet to 2,800 square feet.

"So what that means is we use more energy to cool and heat, and that energy consumption is partly what is driving climate change," she said.

Amy Blaymore Paterson, executive director of the Connecticut Land Conservation Council, said she advocates for a plan that would allow municipalities to put aside money for open-space purchases. She also wants cities and towns to examine their zoning regulations and long-term development plans to see whether they align with the state's environmental goals.

State Department of Energy and Environmental Protection Commissioner Katie Dykes said Gov. Ned Lamont has set a goal for a carbon-free energy market in the state by 2040, and "natural gas is not a bridge fuel; it is a fossil fuel."

"It's going to be a major legislative priority because we don't want to just have this as a target and an executive order that a future administration can overturn and back away from," Dykes said. "We want this to be in the general statutes."

State policies that encourage the use of natural gas also need to change, she said.

And in a jab at President Trump's administration, Dykes said, "The folks down in Washington are pushing a false narrative: that regulation hurts the economy, and in rolling back environmental standards and disguising it as streamlining. In this moment, I think DEEP has an opportunity – really, an obligation – to share the truth about regulation, which is that effective regulation is the key to a sustainable economy and a thriving democracy."

From the toxins panel, Tara Cook-Littman, an environmental and food policy advocate from Fairfield, said her main focus is on toxic pesticides, particularly chlorpyrifos. She said the chemical is used in "everything" from food packaging to pesticide sprays for golf courses, and has been tied to a large number of health problems, including impaired development, Parkinson's disease and some forms of cancer.

Chlorpyrifos, she said, was banned from indoor use in 2001, and after decades of study, the EPA decided in 2015 there was no safe level of chlorpyrifos for any use and sought to ban it.

The Trump administration, however, stopped that action in 2017 and the matter is now "stuck in the courts and going nowhere," Cook-Littman said.

She noted the Trump administration last year reiterated it has no intention of banning chlorpyrifos.

As a result, Cook-Littman said the states must take the matter into their own hands. Hawaii has banned the use of chlorpyrifos. California and New York also are in the process of banning it.

"Connecticut should be the next state to ban chlorpyrifos," she said.

Gannon Long, the assistant coordinator for Transport Hartford Academy, talked about the importance of people needing to change their perspective and attitude about their energy use.

A youth group led by well-spoken 16-year-old Sena Wazer told state lawmakers to tell them “what you need from us” in promoting proposed environmental legislation.

<https://www.nhregister.com/news/article/Connecticut-League-of-Conservation-Voters-hosts-14953289.php>



Connecticut League of Conservation Voters hosts annual Environmental Summit

January 20, 2020

Connecticut League of Conservation Voters hosts the 2020 Environmental Summit Wednesday, Jan. 15, from 9 a.m.-3 p.m., at Trinity College, 300 Summit St., Hartford.

Every year, CTLCV Education Fund brings together lawmakers, advocates, policy experts, and the public for a day of panels and informational briefings about the most critical environmental issues facing our state. Learn about our policy goals, ask questions of the experts, and discuss how we can better protect our natural resources, fight climate change, invest in clean energy, and more.

This event is free to attend. Food and refreshments will be provided. RSVP at conservationeducation.org/environmental-summit.html.

<https://www.wnpr.org/post/conn-energy-head-taking-serious-look-exiting-regional-power-market>



CT taking 'a serious look' at exiting regional power market

By, Patrick Skahill
January 15, 2020

The state's commissioner of energy and environmental protection said Wednesday that Connecticut is being forced to invest in natural gas plants it doesn't want or need.

Katie Dykes' comments on the future of Connecticut's energy policy were made during a forum at Trinity College, and they come as the legislature prepares to convene next month. Speaking to a crowd at the Connecticut League of Conservation Voters, Dykes said a "lack of leadership" at ISO New England, which oversees the regional power grid, is hindering the state's fight against climate change.

"We are at the mercy of a regional capacity market that is driving investment in more natural gas and fossil fuel power plants that we don't want and we don't need," Dykes said. "This is forcing us to take a serious look at the cost and benefits of participating in the ISO New England markets."

The department has scheduled a meeting on the issue [for Wednesday, Jan. 22](#).

Dykes' comments come amid a fight over a new natural gas electricity plant in Killingly, which was greenlit by ISO New England — and by state siting officials.

In an emailed statement, ISO spokesperson Matt Kakley took issue with Dykes' critique. He said the Killingly plant won approval in a recent power auction but added that "securing an obligation in our market does not mean that a resource will be built."

"The states control what is built in their states, and new [plant] owners must meet the environmental and siting requirements of the state in which they are trying to build," Kakley said. "The ISO has no jurisdiction over those decisions. In this case, it was the Connecticut DEEP and other agencies who approved the permits for the plant."

Connecticut's Siting Council approved the Killingly project in June of last year. The DEEP [also wrote a letter in support](#). Opponents of the plant have staged protests throughout the state, and last September they sued [to block its approval](#).

Kakley also questioned the feasibility of Connecticut exiting a multistate energy market that dates to the late 1990s.

“If any one state seeks to cease participating ... it raises a host of complex questions that have yet to be answered,” Kakley said. “The markets ... were designed as part of a multistate regional framework and were not set up with carve-out provisions. In addition to changes to the ISO tariff, the states would need to determine what changes to their own laws would be required, as well as the impact of such a move on any existing contracts they may have.”

Connecticut’s legislature convenes on Feb. 5.

https://www.journalinquirer.com/politics_and_government/environmental-officials-want-to-reverse-course-on-natural-gas/article_8ebe192e-3996-11ea-ad17-67643f8321c3.html

Journal Inquirer

Environmental officials want to reverse course on natural gas

By, Will Healey
January 18, 2020

Environmental officials are eager to change course on the state's reliance on natural gas as they navigate toward a zero carbon electric grid by 2040 and take other measures to help the environment including ridding Connecticut of toxic PFAS chemicals.

Officials laid out these and other priorities this week during the Connecticut League of Conservation Voters annual Environmental Summit, saying they also need to look at alternatives to the way the state disposes of its garbage and recycling.

But achieving the goals aren't what keeps Department of Energy and Environmental Protection Commissioner Katie Dykes up at night. That's climate change, and after the unseasonably warm weather the state had last weekend, Dykes said she's "recommitted" herself to the fight.

Despite concerns over having an "opponent" rather than a "partner" at the federal level, Dykes highlighted during Wednesday's summit some of the state's environmental successes from the past year, such as instituting a plastic bag ban, keeping the Millstone Power Station open, and clearing the way for the procurement of up to 2,000 megawatts of offshore wind energy.

Nevertheless, officials aren't stopping there and are readying for the upcoming legislative session that starts Feb. 5.

One priority for next session seeks to solidify an executive order Gov. Ned Lamont issued last year — that the state's electric grid become zero carbon by 2040.

"It's going to be a major legislative priority, because we don't want to just have this as a target in an executive order that a future administration could overturn or back away from," Dykes said. "We want this to be in the Connecticut general statutes."

Dykes described several other efforts that seek to move the needle toward that overarching goal, including continuing to invest in renewable energy, energy efficiency, demand response, and energy storage; the decarbonization of the building sector; and conducting energy audits of state buildings.

Another significant priority, Dykes said, is moving the state away from natural gas, which she pointedly labeled a “fossil fuel” not a “bridge fuel” that stands between coal and oil and renewables. Dykes said she would be talking with legislators to address many of the “natural gas preferences” that are present in state statutes.

“It is a commitment of mine that we are going to be working hard to turn this ship around, so that we can put in place the mechanisms that we need to begin to move away from natural gas so that we can support the deployment of renewable resources in our zero carbon grid,” she said.

Another initiative is continuing to advance the state’s goal of putting 500,000 electric vehicles on the road by 2030.

Dykes said a draft “roadmap” to reaching that goal will be finalized in the coming weeks. She added that Lamont’s biennial state budget passed last year provides \$3 million annually to DEEP’s electric vehicle rebate program, bringing needed stability to a “popular” program. Dykes said the rebate program’s board also would establish a used electric vehicle incentive to make EVs affordable for everyone in the state, which she called an “incredible opportunity.”

Officials also have prioritized for this session a discussion about moving the state toward a “more balanced” waste system that “emphasizes waste reduction and recycling, and strives to maintain self-sufficiency.”

Dykes mentioned the “catastrophic” outage that occurred last year at the Materials Innovation and Recycling Authority trash-to-energy facility in Hartford. She said the facility was off-line for weeks leaving a third of the state’s municipal solid waste with “no place to go.”

Dykes said the crisis is “still hanging over us,” and that a discussion needs to be had about whether the state sends more waste to landfills or invests in “innovative technologies” such as anaerobic digestion or “innovative programs” such as pay-as-you-throw.

“This is an exciting session that’s going to be coming up, because this issue about MIRA is forcing a conversation that all of us need to be engaged in about what we want the future of our waste system to look like in the state of Connecticut,” she said.

Dykes also touched on the issue of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances known as PFAS, which are found in a variety of consumer products, including firefighting foams, and have been found to be toxic at low levels and deemed a “likely human carcinogen” by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

A task force, co-chaired by Dykes and state Department of Public Health Commissioner Renee Coleman-Mitchell, was created last year after 50,000 gallons of firefighting foam containing PFAS spilled from a malfunctioning sprinkler system at Bradley International Airport and found its way into the Farmington River in Windsor.

While DEEP has conducted soil sampling in the area of Rainbow Road in Windsor to determine if wells might be contaminated, the task force made several recommendations, including instituting a buyback program for fire departments using foam that contains PFAS.

"I'm excited about some announcements that are going to be coming on that front in just the next few weeks," Dykes said.

Lt. Gov. Susan Bysiewicz also addressed the summit, saying the state would continue its efforts to fight the climate crisis, noting that Lamont has been working with the governors of neighboring states to develop regional strategies in the face of the "stunning lack of leadership" and "backward movement" coming from White House on the environment. "Governor Lamont and I are committed to ensuring that Connecticut remains a national leader on climate action," she said.

<https://www.wiltonbulletin.com/news/article/Connecticut-League-of-Conservation-Voters-hosts-14953289.php>



Connecticut League of Conservation Voters hosts annual Environmental Summit

January 6, 2020

Connecticut League of Conservation Voters hosts the 2020 Environmental Summit Wednesday, Jan. 15, from 9 a.m.-3 p.m., at Trinity College, 300 Summit St., Hartford.

Every year, CTLCV Education Fund brings together lawmakers, advocates, policy experts, and the public for a day of panels and informational briefings about the most critical environmental issues facing our state. Learn about our policy goals, ask questions of the experts, and discuss how we can better protect our natural resources, fight climate change, invest in clean energy, and more.

This event is free to attend. Food and refreshments will be provided. RSVP at conservationeducation.org/environmental-summit.html.

<https://ctexaminer.com/2020/01/16/a-pesticide-ban-new-revenues-among-issues-highlighted-at-environmental-summit-in-hartford/>



A Pesticide Ban, New Revenues, Among Issues Highlighted at Environmental Summit in Hartford

By, Julia Werth
January 16, 2020

With the legislative session just three weeks away, advocates, legislators and business owners filled Mather Hall at Trinity College on Wednesday for the Connecticut League of Conservation Voters 2020 Environmental Summit to settle on an environmental agenda for the February 5 start of session.

“We got all the advocates and lawmakers in one room where everybody can hear the same thing about what we know the main drivers are going to be for environment and energy legislation this year,” said Lori Brown, executive director of the League. “It’s the whole environmental community in one room.”

From a bottle bill to banning pesticides to new sources of funding for land preservation, many of the priorities are second efforts at legislation that did not pass in 2019. Updating the bottle bill

Connecticut’s [bottle bill](#), adding a 5 cent deposit to most beverage containers, was passed in 1978 and first implemented in 1980. The bill was modified slightly between 2008 and 2010, but the redemption value and the type of beverage containers accepted — apart from adding water bottles in 2009 — has remained the same.

Environmental advocates, like Louis Burch, the Connecticut Program Director for the Citizens Campaign for the Environment, are calling for the bill to be updated to include non-carbonated beverages as well as wine and liquor bottles and to increase the handling and redemption fees.

“By expanding the bottle bill to include non-carbonated beverages we could increase recycling of single-serve beverage containers by 200 million,” Burch said. “The problem with glass is, most of the glass you put in the blue bin is not recycled. It gets smashed up and literally falls through the cracks. 60% of the glass comes from wine and liquor bottles, by putting a deposit on them we can get it out of the blue bin.”

[Last year](#) the Bottle Bill (HB 7294) passed the House but was not called in the Senate.

“It is always a challenge when a major stakeholder on the issue is unwilling to negotiate and work with us,” Burch said. “It is disappointing to see when Coca-Cola has the [‘Every Bottle Back’](#) program, and yet pushes against this bill. If you were genuine about this intention, there is no better way to do that than put a refundable deposit on every bottle you create. They are not being good actors on this.”

Burch and other advocates plan to capitalize on what they see as a surge in support to create a sense of urgency on the issue for legislators in 2020.

A 1% fee on property purchases

The only consistent source of public funding for land conservation in Connecticut is the Community Investment Act, [enacted](#) in 2005 to preserve farmland, conserve open space, fund historic preservation and affordable housing.

Those efforts are supported by millions of dollars of fees levied on land recordings at the local level.

“The problem with the fund is that it is an attractive source of funding when legislators are seeking to close the budget gap. It gets raided and cut frequently,” said Amy Paterson, the executive director of the Connecticut Land Conservation Council.

During the 2019 legislative session one bill introduced by the legislature’s Environment Committee would have restored recent funds taken from the program account. Another [proposal](#) would have effectively ended the program by transferring revenues to the general fund.

According to Paterson, other bonded funds – including the Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust Program and the Recreational Trails and Greenways Program — are nearly out of funding.

“I want to emphasize the need to protect and enhance existing programs,” Paterson said. “In addition, there are opportunities for new funding sources that will give towns another tool to raise funding that won’t impact the mill rate.”

Paterson said that funding would come from offering towns the option of levying a conveyancing fee of up to 1 percent on the purchase of a property worth in excess of \$150,000.

“We are trying to get legislators to pass a bill that would enable towns to place this limited fee on sales. It would give towns the right, but not require them,” Paterson said. “Legislators are supportive of the concept, but there is big push back from realtors. They think it would hurt property sales. Experience in other states shows that people and businesses are attracted to a community more if there is open land, farm land, clean air and water. It should increase local property values.”

Ending fossil fuel expansion

A portion of taxes on utilities in Connecticut is designated for new natural gas infrastructure and development. But since Gov. Ned Lamont signed an [executive order](#) on September 9 targeting reductions in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030, advocates are hoping that this session will produce real changes in that law.

“Connecticut is theoretically on a path to cleaner energy, but there are a lot of policies expanding fossil fuels, specifically fracked gas,” said Samantha Dynowski, the state director of the state’s Sierra Club chapter. “At this time our goals are pointing us in the clean energy direction and renewables are abundant and yet we are still building fossil fuel powered plants.”

Dynowski said that removing this funding for new gas infrastructure is important even if the State Department of Energy and Environmental Protection has said that no new pipelines will be built.

“It’s still on the books so as we move to renewables, gas companies could still have gas shipped through us up to Canada and overseas if they want to,” Dynowski said.

We need to put as much effort getting off gas as we put into expanding clean energy, she said.

In the meantime, existing gas pipeline infrastructure in Connecticut is aging, and more than 1,000 leaks have been reported and gone unrepaired in the state, because companies are only required to repair leaks that are imminently hazardous or prone to exploding, said Dynowski.

The gas leaking from these pipelines is twice as damaging to our climate as carbon dioxide, according to the National Academy of Sciences.

“We need to strengthen our leaks detection, reduction and eventually reduce it down to zero,” Dynowski said. “We need a long-term plan to retire the whole system.”

A ban on chlorpyrifos

Last year the Environment Committee passed a ban on [chlorpyrifos](#), one of the most commonly used pesticides in the United States. That bill was never called in either the House or Senate, however.

“It was, and is, one of the top priorities of the Environment Committee, but we are up against some tough opposition,” said environmental activist Tara Cook-Littman.

The federal Environmental Protection Agency proposed a rule to [ban](#) the pesticide in 2015, but the agency backtracked on the proposal in 2017. Since then several other states, including New York in 2019, have passed bans on the pesticide.

According to a freedom of information request by Cook-Littman last year, chlorpyrifos is currently being used on several golf courses, a pick-your-own berry farm and a few apple orchards in the state.

"I'm really concerned for the people who live around those golf courses or eat those apples or berries. I'm hoping this brings light to the fact that it's still being widely used in Connecticut and it is important to halt the use of this chemical," Cook-Littman said.

Environmental justice

At each panel presentation at the summit, Brown said, she hoped there would be consideration of environmental equity.

"Let's think about who's not at the table when we are thinking about these policies," Brown said. "Sometimes we need to take a step back and ask who is using this system and who is benefiting."

From the Connecticut 2030 plan which includes funding for commuter rail updates and the expansion of roads and highways but not inner-city bus systems, to locating waste facilities in disadvantaged communities, advocates pointed toward inequities that they say legislators should keep in mind as they head into session.