



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James Gaughran

## Senator Gaughran's Virtual Town Hall on The Environment

JAMES GAUGHAN December 15, 2021



On December 14th, State Senator Jim Gaughran hosted a Virtual Town Hall to discuss Environmental Protection. Residents were able to share their thoughts and ask questions about New York's Current Environmental Protection Legislation and what else we can do to protect New York's environment.

If you have any further questions for Senator Gaughran, please feel free to give our office a call at (516) 922 - 1811 or email us at [gaughran@nysenate.gov](mailto:gaughran@nysenate.gov)

Below are the questions that were asked and the section of the video they were asked at.

- 1. How can each of us reduce our carbon footprint (Both as Individuals and as Businesses)**
- 2. How will you ensure LIPA invests in more green electricity generation and begins to invest in district heating?**
- 3. Have you considered closed landfill properties as possible municipal food waste composting sites? The closed landfill adjacent to Covanta in Northport has been recommended by a consultant as a site for composting in Huntington. Can the state support such initiatives or provide leadership to municipalities who are interested?**
- 4. 1,4 Dioxane is ubiquitous, very dangerous to human health, and very difficult to treat/eliminate from water- both waste as well as drinking water yet it is an emergent compound existing in most cleansers, detergents, degreasers used by most households today. Moreover, it is not listed as an ingredient on packages because it is a resulting compound from other ingredients.**
  - 1. Why isn't 1,4 dioxane listed?**
  - 2. And secondly, why isn't it prohibited in products?**
- 5. School food programs continue to use cheap, non-nutritious, and highly processed foods. When will NYS provide leadership for cooking everything in the schools where Chefs design meals around locally produced, organic WHOLE foods?**
- 6. During a recent storm in Caumsett State Park, the NYS parks service had all of the trees chipped and removed. Chipping trees is a huge contributor to carbon release, and these trees could also have provided great resources to the environment for tree regrowth. "Nurse" logs**

provide phosphorus, nitrogen, carbon, water, and more to new saplings through the mycelial networks. Who is responsible for tree clean-up policy on state lands, and, is there legislation directing park managers to keep downed trees as close to their original spot as possible, or to remove Logs to nearby woods?

7. **Planting oysters are fairly easy, inexpensive, and a great way to clean our waters. Can NYS support planting oysters in New York Harbor as well as all around the Long Island Sound?**
8. **I have requested but have been unable to get emissions reports from Covanta? Why are they protected from supplying this information to the public?**
9. **Glyphosate (roundup) is a complete disaster all around contributing to human cancer and DEVASTATING the insect population. When is it going to be banned in NYS?**
10. **I have personal experience working with the NYS DEC, it is the most bureaucratic/frustrating organization I have ever dealt with and environmental challenges will never be resolved with the current organization, how do you plan to make the DEC into a functioning organization?**
11. **Suffolk County has the country's lowest per capital use of Sewers in Urban areas. With approximately 1.5 million residents, approximately 28% are connected to an actual Sewer system. That means that the other 72% or 1,080,000 residents are using some form of a Septic system that allows all that human waste to filter back down into the Aquifer. What are you going to do to help Suffolk County install and institute more Sewers?**
12. **for one, I would appreciate seeing some effort by our elected officials who represent Suffolk County to start addressing issues that actually matter to the County and those who live here rather than telling us how additional Green Spaces are going to help us. What difference does it make if all continue to be exposed to Carcinogens in our groundwater and we can't enjoy the Parks because of ill health?**

13. I would like the issue of gas leaf blowers and their contribution to air and noise pollution addressed. Some municipalities are attempting to ban them. There has been a discussion of subsidizing electric blowers but Landscape company owners say new machinery is too expensive and electric blowers take longer to do the work so it would increase the cost to consumers. This is a quality of life as well as an environmental issue. What are Senator Gaughran's thoughts on the commercial use of gas-powered leaf blowers?
  
14. Now that there's finally a State constitutional right to clean air and a healthful environment, what are your plans to address unhealthy smoke conditions from excessive open (or even indoor) burning of wood and other solid fuels within extremely dense suburban neighborhoods (where it's really not appropriate)?
  
15. I'm the chair of the Suffolk County Planning Commission and live in Huntington Station. The revitalization of Huntington Station has been stymied for the past decade because of the lack of wastewater infrastructure. Each summer, for days at a time our beaches close. Our harbors are full of toxic algal blooms. The common denominator is nitrogen, largely from our wastewater. The Planning Commission has closely followed the Reclaim Our Water effort and the development of a science-based Subwatershed Wastewater Plan, hailed by the DEC as one of the best 9-Elements plans in NYS. As a former chairman of the Suffolk County Water Authority, you are keenly aware of the symbiosis of the complete water cycle. I'm here tonight to ask you if you will be a champion on wastewater by supporting your partners in the Assembly to introduce legislation, to let the voters decide if they would like to create and fund a wastewater management district.
  
16. What can we do to help the Town of Huntington compensate for the loss of PILOTS when the Northport Power Plant is finally decommissioned?
  
17. I would like to suggest that a law be enacted in the state limiting time allowed for vehicular idling. The exhausts emitted by cars and trucks are detrimental both to the environment and to our health. I have seen many situations, including in state parks, where people heedlessly run

**their engines. School buses and limos are examples of offenders.**

18. **Unless, we get the biggest polluters in the world to stop polluting the air and the water we are wasting money, nothing from NYS will help.**
  
19. **Your work on the environment is noble but if you don't start doing something about your colleagues who have increased my family's cost of living with higher gas prices, higher food prices, home prices and high heating oil prices you will be looking for a new job come November.**