



## #VOTECLIMATEJUSTICE

### 2024 Candidate Climate Justice Questions

*Here are some question ideas to gauge political candidates' understanding of climate justice issues.*

*In practice, you can't usually ask candidates this many questions – so just pick whichever ones you're most drawn to and adapt as needed. Be sure to find out the format of an event beforehand to understand when/how questions are answered. Sometimes there are no audience questions, sometimes you can send chat questions (for virtual events), or hand them in on written notes (for in-person events).*

#### CORE QUESTIONS FOR CANDIDATES

1. In general, do you agree with the goals of Maine's 2020 [climate action plan](#)?
  - a. Do you believe it is too ambitious or not ambitious enough?
  - b. Are there some categories you feel should be prioritized?
  - c. Are there some categories you feel are overemphasized?
2. How does the climate crisis present itself in your community specifically?
  - a. How is the climate crisis connected to other issues you and your constituents care about?
  - b. With that being said, how would you address the unique climate justice challenges we face in Maine?
3. Tribal sovereignty made some progress last legislative session, but there will need to be further efforts by the state to fully recognize this goal. If you support tribal sovereignty, how will you make sure these efforts are prioritized?
  - a. If you do not support tribal sovereignty, what are your hesitations?
4. Do you support floating offshore wind in federal waters off Maine's coast?
  - a. If so, how would you build public support for these projects?

- b. If not, what are your hesitations around these projects?
  - c. Do you understand why siting a port in Maine is important to expedite commercial-scale production to develop offshore wind?
  - d. Do you understand the economic benefits of an offshore wind port?
  - e. How will you ensure the benefits of offshore wind goes to Maine communities?
  - f. Have you been following the port siting discussion in Searsport and what are your thoughts?
5. How will you make sure all stakeholder voices are heard throughout the offshore wind decision-making process?
- a. Do you think anyone is being left out of the discussion?

*If you're hosting a candidate forum, here are some further questions to consider...*

## **JUST TRANSITION**

1. How will you ensure the benefits from the installation, maintenance, and economic gains from climate solutions are equitably distributed?
2. What are some examples of legislation you would support to rapidly decarbonize Maine's economy?
3. What will you do to ensure that communities most vulnerable to climate change and/or most dependent on fossil fuels are prioritized in an energy transition?
  - a. How will you do outreach to these communities in a way that ensures existing upgrades are accessible?
4. How would you support workforce development to expedite the transition to electrification in our state?
5. When it comes to climate solutions such as solar and wind, what do you believe is the best way to balance public and private ownership of resources?
6. Do you [support efforts to divest Maine Public Employees Retirement System](#) (MainePERS) from fossil fuels? How would you make sure they actively follow through on divestment?

## **SOCIAL AND ANTIRACIST JUSTICE**

1. How, if at all, does Maine's affordable housing crisis tie into the climate crisis?
  - a. What are some solutions that can improve both issues simultaneously?
2. How could Maine be doing a better job welcoming New Mainers?
  - a. How are New Mainers supported in your community?
  - b. How could you grow this support? What gaps might still exist?
  - c. How do you see the climate crisis and/or solutions relating to the experience of asylum seekers and other immigrants?

## **CLEAN TRANSPORTATION**

1. Transportation is the largest contributor to Maine's greenhouse gasses at 54%. What is your preferred strategy to reduce these emissions and transform the transportation sector?
2. Maine invests less than a dollar per capita for public transportation whereas Vermont invests \$12 per capita/per year.
  - a. What is your view as to how Maine could better prioritize public transportation?
  - b. What unique challenges does Maine face in this sector?
3. A large portion of automobile trips are two miles or less.
  - a. How would you promote safer walking and cycling in our cities and towns to encourage residents to replace auto travel with healthier and less polluting modes of travel?

## **AFFORDABLE AND ENERGY-EFFICIENT HOUSING**

1. For new construction, would you support updating building codes to make sure all new homes are of an energy saving design since heating, cooling and lighting of buildings is responsible for 30% of Maine's greenhouse gas emissions?
  - a. How can we ensure the costs of efficiency upgrades aren't passed on to new homeowners and renters?

## **LAND MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH**

1. What is your plan to revitalize Maine's rural communities?
  - a. How can we increase food security in the state?
  - b. How can we support farmers' resilience to climate change and fight against PFAS?
2. Solar power has seen a recent rapid expansion in Maine. Many communities are passing moratoriums or restrictions on siting solar arrays as they see important agricultural lands and diverse forest ecosystems converted to solar farms.
  - a. How do you envision Maine's role regulating the siting of solar arrays?
  - b. How would you balance protection of important natural resources and farmland with the proliferation of renewable energy?
3. How will you fight water privatization in Maine and empower citizens at the municipal level to protect their water from being extracted by large corporations?
4. Do you support the "Pine Tree Amendment" – a green amendment to Maine's constitution guaranteeing the right to a healthy environment?