



LEAGUE OF CONSERVATION VOTERS

IN THEIR OWN WORDS
2016 PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES ON WATER ISSUES

Updated: October 5, 2016

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Below is a selection of quotes and coverage of the presidential candidates' statements and actions on protecting our water, including the Waters of the United States rule and the clean water crisis in Flint, Michigan.

DONALD TRUMP (R)

CLEAN WATER RULE

Trump Proposed A Moratorium On Waters Of The United States Rule And Clean Power Plan, Adding That The Regulations Would Eliminate Jobs, Reduce Economic Output, And Reduce Incomes. During a September 2016 speech at the Economic Club of New York, Trump said, "Every year, overregulation costs our economy \$2 trillion a year and reduces household wealth by almost \$15,000. I propose a moratorium on new federal regulations that are not compelled by Congress or public safety, and I will eliminate all needless and job-killing now on the books – and there are plenty of them. This includes eliminating some of our most intrusive regulations, like the Waters of the U.S. rule. It also means scrapping the EPA's so-called Clean Power Plan, which the government itself estimates will cost \$7.2 billion a year. This Obama-Clinton directive will shut down most, if not all, coal-power electricity plants – all over the country, they're shutting down ... Energy reform is central to our plan as well. According to Heritage Foundation, by 2030, President Obama's energy restrictions will eliminate another half a million manufacturing jobs, reduce economic output by \$2.5 trillion, and reduce incomes by \$7,000 per person." [Donald Trump speech (48:05), [9/15/16](#)]

Trump: We Want Clean Air And Clean Water, But "You Don't Have To Destroy Our Country And Destroy Our Businesses." During an August 2016 rally in Wilmington, NC, Trump said, "We want safety regulations. We want environmental regulations. We're not people that don't want these things. We have to have that. We want clean air. We want clean water. We want clean water. To do that ... you don't have to destroy our country and destroy our businesses." [American Bridge, 160809_ARB_218_A (54:50), 8/9/16 (video available from American Bridge)]

Trump: "I Am A Huge Believer In Clean Water And Clean Air. Crystal Clean Water And Air." During an August 2016 interview, Trump said, "I am a huge believer in clean water and clean air. Crystal clean water and air. I'm a very big believer in that and we have a lot to do with that – keeping our water clean, and keeping our air clean." [[Miami Herald, 8/11/16](#)]

Trump Would "Rescind" The Clean Water Rule. In a May 2016 speech to the North Dakota Petroleum Council, Trump said that in his first 100 days in office, he would "rescind all the job-destroying Obama executive actions including the Climate Action Plan and the Waters of the U.S. rule." [Donald Trump Press Release, [5/26/16](#)]

Donald Trump has repeatedly called for abolishing the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The EPA is charged with executing and enforcing the Waters of the United States rule; if Trump eliminated the agency itself, the WOTUS rule would go with it.

Trump Suggested That He Would Abolish The EPA. During an October 2015 appearance on Fox News Sunday, Trump had the following exchange with host Chris Wallace:

WALLACE: Would you cut serve -- would you cut departments?

TRUMP: No, I'm not cutting services, but I'm cutting spending. But I may cut Department of Education. I believe Common Core is a very bad thing. I believe that we should be no -- you know, educating our children from Iowa, from New Hampshire, from South Carolina, from California, from New York. I think that it should be local education. If you look at a Jeb Bush and some of these others, they want them to be educated by

Washington, D.C. bureaucrats. So the Department of Education is one. Environmental Protection, what they do is a disgrace. Every week they come out with new regulations. They're making it impossible...

WALLACE: Who's going to protect the environment?

TRUMP: We'll be fine with the environment. We can leave a little bit, but you can't destroy businesses.

[Fox News Sunday, [10/18/15](#)]

Huffington Post Headline: "Donald Trump Would Cut Department Of Education, EPA." [Huffington Post, [10/18/15](#)]

Trump: In Order To Bring Down Deficit, "We Have Tremendous Cutting To Do," Including The Dept. Of Education And The EPA. In October 2015, Trump spoke at a No Labels convention, where he had the following exchange with an audience member:

QUESTION: Specifically, what are you going to be doing about the \$18 trillion deficit?

TRUMP: All right. Well, what we're going to do, I mean, we do -- and by the way, it's now \$19 trillion -- so we have now \$19 trillion in deficits, \$19 trillion. You know, if you look, we owe -- when I say that -- we owe -- this is what you're talking about -- we owe \$19 trillion as a country, and we are going to knock it down and we are going to bring it down big league and quickly. We're going to bring jobs back, we are going to bring business back. We are going -- we are going to stop our deficits. We're going stop our deficits. We are going to do it very quickly. Oh, how? Are you ready? Number one, we have tremendous cutting to do. You have a Department of Education that is totally out of control, massive costs. And you know, most of the -- and some of the Republican candidates like Common Core. I am totally against Common Core. I want local education. When I am in New Hampshire and Iowa and South Carolina, I want -- so important. So we're going to have that. We're going to save on Department of Environmental Protection [sic] because they're not doing it. They're not doing their job and they are making it impossible for our country to compete, and many, many other things. Hundreds of billions of dollars is going to be saved just in terms of running government.

In addition to that, I'm going to bring millions of jobs back into this country.

[No Labels, [10/12/15](#)]

When Asked What Departments He Would Cut "Right Away," Trump Named The EPA And Dept. Of Education. In September 2015, Trump had the following exchange with Fox News host Bill O'Reilly:

O'REILLY: Give me one big thing you're going to cut, right away.

TRUMP: I'm going to cut [the] big, big Department of Education, as an example ... I'm all for education, I want it to be local. Department of Education -- tremendous cuts. "Department of Environmental Protection [sic], where they're actually going around and causing damage, as opposing to saving damage -- tremendous amounts of money, tremendous fraud, tremendous abuse."

[Fox News, [9/29/15](#)]

FLINT, MICHIGAN

Trump: "I Shouldn't Be Commenting On Flint." In January 2016, Trump said, "It's a shame what's happening in Flint, Michigan. A thing like that shouldn't happen but, again, I don't want to comment on that. They've got a very difficult problem and I know the governor's got a very difficult time going. But, you know, I shouldn't be commenting on Flint." [Frank Thorp Twitter, [1/19/16](#)]

HILLARY CLINTON (D)

CLEAN WATER RULE

Sec. Clinton does not appear to have made any public statements explicitly about the Clean Water Rule.

FLINT, MICHIGAN

Sec. Clinton Promised To Help Cities Like Flint, Including Repairing Failing Water Systems. During an August 2016 economic policy speech in Warren, Michigan, Sec. Clinton said, “We will also help cities like Detroit and Flint: connect underserved neighborhoods to opportunity expanding, affordable housing, and we will repair schools and failing water systems as well.” [CSPAN, [8/11/16](#)]

Sec. Clinton: “It’s True, I Sweat The Details Of Policy,” Such As The “Level Of Lead In The Drinking Water In Flint, Michigan.” During her July 2016 speech accepting the Democratic nomination for President of the United States, Sec. Clinton said, “It’s true... I sweat the details of policy – whether we’re talking about the exact level of lead in the drinking water in Flint, Michigan, the number of mental health facilities in Iowa, or the cost of your prescription drugs.” [Los Angeles Times, [7/28/16](#)]

Sec. Clinton: Governor Snyder Should Resign, “But, That Is Not Enough. We Have To Focus On What Must Be Done To Help The People Of Flint.” During a March 2016 Democratic primary debate, Sec. Clinton said, “The Governor should resign, or be recalled ... But, that is not enough. We have to focus on what must be done to help the people of Flint. I support a hundred percent the efforts by your senators and members of congress to get the money from the federal government in order to begin the work that must occur to fix the infrastructure. The state should also be sending money immediately to help this city.” [New York Times, [3/7/15](#)]

Sec. Clinton: “As President, I Would Concentrate Resources On The City For Economic Development For More Jobs As We Fix The Water And Provide The Health And Education, Interventions That Children Need.” During a March 2016 Democratic primary debate, Sec. Clinton said, “I support what President Obama is doing. He called for and got accountability from the officials at the EPA to make sure the state is doing its job ... When it comes to the water itself, we are supporting a program that Mayor Waver announced through Flint Waterworks to pay people in Flint, not outsiders, but people here to deliver the water while we are fixing the pipes. I would do even more of that. As president, what we were able to put together was a beginning. As president, I would concentrate resources on the city for economic development for more jobs as we fix the water and provide the health and education, interventions that children need.” [New York Times, [3/7/15](#)]

Sec. Clinton: “People Should Be Held Accountable” For Water Crisis In Flint, Mich., Even If It Leads To Resignation, Civil Penalties, Or Criminal Penalties. During a March 2016 Democratic primary debate, Sec. Clinton said, “People should be held accountable wherever that leads. If it leads to resignation, or recall if you’re in political office. If it leads to civil penalties, if it leads to criminal responsibility. There has to be an absolute accountability, and I will support whatever the outcome of those investigations are.” [New York Times, [3/7/15](#)]

Sec. Clinton Op-Ed: Crisis In Flint, Mich. Was “Unconscionable ... Clean Air And Clean Water Are Basic Human Rights – And Our Rights Shouldn’t Change Between ZIP Codes.” In a January 2016 MSNBC op-ed, Sec. Clinton wrote, “What’s happening in Flint, Michigan, is unconscionable ... As president, I will make environmental justice a central part of my comprehensive commitment to low-income communities of color — by pursuing cleaner transportation; ambitious steps to reduce air pollution; dedicated efforts to clean up toxic sites; more resources for lead remediation; and greener, more

resilient infrastructure. Because clean air and clean water are basic human rights — and our rights shouldn't change between ZIP codes. Communities and kids across our country have been bearing the burden of environmental racism for too long. It's harming their health, their educations, every aspect of their lives and futures. We can no longer accept the status quo — and as president, I never will." [Hillary Clinton op-ed, MSNBC, [1/30/16](#)]

Sec. Clinton Op-Ed: "Our Country's Struggle With Racism Is Far From Over ... And Tragically, It's True In The Very Air Our Children Breathe And In The Water They Drink." In a January 2016 MSNBC op-ed, Sec. Clinton wrote, "We need to face some hard truths about race and justice in America. After 250 years of slavery, 90 years of Jim Crow, and decades of 'separate but equal,' our country's struggle with racism is far from over. That's true in our criminal justice system. In our education system. In employment, housing, and transit. And tragically, it's true in the very air our children breathe and in the water they drink ... And low-income white communities are by no means immune. In 2008, 525 million gallons of toxic coal ash, which contains lead and thallium, among other toxins, spilled in Tennessee, covering 3,000 acres of land, destroying 12 homes and flowing into the Tennessee River, which provides drinking water. The long legacy of coal mining has left Appalachia and other coal regions pockmarked with toxic sites in need of cleanup." [Hillary Clinton op-ed, MSNBC, [1/30/16](#)]

Sec. Clinton Sent Top Aide To Flint To Find out Ways To Help; Within Two Hours Of Her Publicly Calling For The Governor To Act, He Did. During a January 2016 Democratic primary debate, Sec. Clinton said, "I spent a lot of time last week being outraged by what's happening in Flint, Michigan and I think every single American should be outraged. We've had a city in the United States of America where the population which is poor in many ways and majority African American has been drinking and bathing in lead contaminated water. And the governor of that state acted as though he didn't really care. He had request for help and he had basically stone walled. I'll tell you what, if the kids in a rich suburb of Detroit had been drinking contaminated water and being bathed in it, there would've been action. So I sent my top campaign aide down there to talk to the mayor of Flint to see what I could to help. I issued a statement about what we needed to do and then I went on a T.V. show and I said it was outrageous that the governor hadn't acted, and within two hours he had." [CBS News, [1/18/16](#)]

Sec. Clinton: "Let's Focus On The Kids Because That's Where The Real Damage Is." During a January 2016 interview with MSNBC's Rachel Maddow, Sec. Clinton said, "Let's focus on the kids because that's where the real damage is. This is infuriating to me. I did a lot of work on trying to get rid of lead in residential housing in Upstate New York. I care deeply about this issue. We know it has an affects [sic] on behavior and educational attainment. So, we need to test kids. We need to provide quickly whatever health care they can get, whatever antidote is possible, and we need a fund for education, because some of these kids, if they've been too exposed, the damage may be irreversible. And we're going to have to do more to help them actually learn." [MSNBC, [1/14/16](#)]

Sec. Clinton, On Helping Flint, Mich.: "I Think There Is A Federal Role. I Would Make It A Federal Role," Especially If The Governor Refuses To Help is Constituents. During a January 2016 interview with MSNBC's Rachel Maddow, Sec. Clinton said, "I'm very pleased that FEMA is trying to do what it can there. In speaking with the congressional delegation, Senator Stabenow, Congressman Kildee and others, they're trying figure out how they're going to get enough funding so that kids can be tested ... I think there is a federal role. I would make it a federal role. Right now, as best I can understand, the governor, the Republican governor, Governor Snyder, is refusing to ask for the triggering of the federal help that he needs in order to take care of the people who are his constituents. I am just outraged by this. I find it, you know — lead is one of the most pernicious, horrible, toxins that kids are exposed to, and that has such serious long lasting effects on their behavior and their learning. I would be doing everything I could, and I would be expecting everybody in a position of authority to do the same. Let's find out how much it's going to cost to fix the infrastructure problem. I think finally the governor called on the National Guard, deliver water, do what you can to at least avoid further harm. But we need to do a full-fledged health study to determine of the 99,000 people who live in Flint, who has been exposed, how much? We need to make sure that no mother is mixing any food with water for babies. And so, the

information – literally people need to be going door to door. Because, you know, a lot of folks who are busy, maybe not even paying attention now, so, the churches, civic organization, not just the political authorities need to be fully engaged. And I would pull out every stop. I think I would look for any provision in the law that would permit me to override the lack of request from the governor if he refuses to still ask for what I think his people deserve to have.”
[MSNBC, [1/14/16](#)]