

Question	Block, Keith	Campbell, Garret	Fiegen, Kristie	Larson, Liz	Matson, Aaron	Mentzer, Sonja
How would you, in your elected role, support efforts to reduce economy-wide greenhouse gas emissions, including in areas such as the power sector, land use, industry, and waste management?	Smart development must be the cornerstone of South Dakota's next chapter. Now more than ever, our state needs leaders who can reimagine how we build, live, and work. I am excited to be a partner to groups like yours in exploring initiatives that will make our air cleaner, our soil healthier, and our water safe.	By supporting programs that would move businesses towards going green & or Carbon neutral. For instance a program that would give either a sum of money or a cut on taxes if a business replaces high carbon producing machines with a lower carbon producing alternative.	I have voted in favor of approving up to 3,278 megawatts of wind development and 238 megawatts of solar development in South Dakota. South Dakota currently generates over 77% of our electricity from renewable resources and 23% from traditional generation.  In the power sector in South Dakota, the PUC does not have the authority to determine what type of generation the utilities use or build. The South Dakota Legislature gave the PUC authority to issue permits for wind and solar energy capable of generating 100 megawatts or more of electricity. I make my decisions on permits according to the law, and the facts and evidence presented in the dockets.	Last year, I passed a joint resolution - SJR 605 - which passed the House and Senate almost unanimously. Nicknamed "Grasslands 605", the resolution affirmed the value of the great plains ecosystem and its role in creating clean air, clean water, sequestering carbon, and hosting biodiversity. Your group should join the SD Grasslands Coalition and sign up for their newsletters. Lots of great environmental info in there. My plan is to build on this plan in the coming years.	The first thing I would do is bring a voice to the Legislature of someone who acknowledges that greenhouse gas emissions are an urgent issue. The second thing is that I would fight to ensure the state government accepts the available federal funds to tackle this issue, like the approximately \$70 million that the governor turned down for rebates to help South Dakotans buy energy-efficient appliances and make home improvements. It is shameful that we were the only state to refuse these funds. After these things, I would look at what other states are doing in this area, and see what we can adopt in South Dakota.	I would support legislation that looks to reduce gas emissions.
SoDak 350 score:	4	4	4	5	5	4
What is your top environmental priority to support a sustainable future for South Dakotans?	In many cases, municipalities are great drivers for many of the major changes that will drive sustainability in the coming years. I will always prioritize local control and be a partner to the initiatives of city governments that seek to make our state sustainable. In Pierre, I will oppose any legislation that would prevent cities from implementing green initiatives and would support legislation to strengthen municipalities' authority over these decisions. Through my work with Friends of the Big Sioux, I've seen how such initiatives require buy-in from everyone at the municipal level. With better options from the state government, we can further enhance the process of cooperation.	Supporting the growth of the green sustainable energy businesses. Not only that, but finding a way to make state institutions use or produce green energy. IE solar panels on the roof of viable & replacing the windows with solar collecting windows. We can use the energy money gained from this to also increase said institutions funding/wages.	As carbon emissions are declining and traditional baseload evolves to intermittent renewables, we need to ensure we have electricity generation to keep the lights on 24 hours a day and 365 days a year. I will continue to work hard to ensure reliability is at the forefront by keeping the lights on for South Dakota families.	A lot of what we do, as legislators concerned with the environment in Pierre, is vote against legislation brought by others which will have a negative impact on SD and/or our environment. So while I appreciate the question, these votes against nefarious legislation are in essence, my priority.	My top priority is for the state to utilize the federal funds and programs that already exist for energy efficiency and renewable energy, such as the \$70 million mentioned above. Aside from working to ensure the state government made use of the programs, I would work to have the state government publicize such programs so that our citizens could utilize things like associated tax credits, etc. Closely behind that is working to encourage more production of renewable energy in South Dakota.	My top priority to our sustainable future would be regarding our water supply, ensuring clean water sources, practices, and measures that protect our water now and into the future.
SoDak 350score:	5	5	4	3	5	4
Extreme weather events such as floods, drought, storms, and record temperatures have impacted South Dakota in recent years. Most recently, in June 2024, southeastern South Dakota experienced record flooding caused by the wettest two-day period for this area in the National Weather Service's climate records dating back to 1893. If elected, how would you work to strengthen the resilience of South Dakota communities and infrastructure to extreme weather?	We have seen the consequences of outsourcing our emergency service's critical infrastructure. As a result, extreme weather events in states like Texas leave South Dakotans with less reliable emergency and disaster response services. The recent outages of the state's 911 services are just the beginning. If we don't take ownership over the services we rely on, we will continue to suffer for the shortcomings in other states' preparedness. If elected, I would like to see our emergency services returned to the state; providing jobs and security for the people of South Dakota.	We need to start shifting over our infrastructure to be more resilient to these weather conditions in both big & small ways. For instance adding more places that add shade, i.e. trees or overheads on bus stations, would help the average person to stay cooler during extreme heat. Adding more public water fountains would also help during these times as well.	As an experienced SD Public Utilities Commissioner, I am the chairperson of Southwest Power Pool Resource Adequacy Leadership Team (REAL). We are working to develop policies in our 14-state footprint to ensure we have reliability and affordability as our top concerns, especially during extreme weather events. We have developed policies on planning reserve margins, performance-based accreditation for conventional generation, and Effective Load-Carrying Capacity (ELCC) accreditation for renewable resources. We are currently working on resource adequacy policies regarding demand response, ramping capacities, and more.	Given that many elected officials have no recognition of climate change, and would like to cling to coal as an energy source, even though South Dakota is essentially 84% renewable energy at this point and leads the country in this area. I carry this knowledge and concern into every conversation I have and vote I give. This is the most important way to bring about change in the current political climate in Pierre. Build bridges and push concepts in a way that people can understand them.	I would start by listening to the experts in this area to see what they recommend. Ideas I have heard include things like using federal infrastructure funds to raise roads, improve dams and bridges in flood zones, working with communities to help them adopt strategic plans to respond to extreme weather events, and encouraging improved maintenance of areas for rainwater such as wetlands and buffer zones along creeks.	We know these types of events will happen again, we at the state level need to make sure resources are available to boost emergency service operations, national guard readiness for our states emergencies, that FEMA flood maps are being updated regularly, that residences are not zoned or built in these high risk flood planes, that we request federal dollars for our most severe weather events.
SoDak 350 score:	4	4	5	5	4	4
Total	13	13	13	13	14	12
Very Favorable		14-15				
Favorable		11-13				
Neutral		8-10				
Unfavorable		4-7				
Very Unfavorable		0-3				
Question	Motley, BJ	Muckey, Erik	Natz, Steve	Oakes, A. Gideon	Wittman, Kady	
How would you, in your elected role, support efforts to reduce economy-wide greenhouse gas emissions, including in areas such as the power sector, land use, industry, and waste management?	I support an environmental agenda that puts workers first. South Dakota workers are entitled to a future they can rely on and believe in; that means creating new, high paying jobs in the renewable energy sector, securing a livable environment for all, and promoting safe work places in labor sites around the state.	As an elected legislator, I will seek to enact policy and support existing partnership efforts statewide and federally that maximize that positive impact of investments in commercial and residential clean energy and energy reduction efforts, including the ongoing financial and technical support provided by the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA).	If elected I will advocate for more renewable energy sources in the State. Mostly wind and solar at this time. I would like to see a series of electrical distribution points for charging EV's across the State East to West and along I29 North and South. Whether that be public, private or State funded. The issue I believe is complicated getting the electricity to the point of use. Source to point of sale. Not only would it include buy-ins from many decision makers but it would require physical means and technology to create the system.	If elected, I will work wherever I can to remove barriers to emerging energy technologies, including those in the area of nuclear energy, wherein amazing breakthroughs are being made, from modular plant construction, to zero-emission energy production, to the upcycling of spent fuel. By reducing barriers, we can allow market demand and innovation to drive green energy production. Protecting property rights and encouraging competition wherever feasible are also cornerstones of my campaign, both of which will help empower landowners, many of whom want to adopt renewable technologies but feel shackled by the constraints of century-old technology and governmental protectionism.	Land use plays a crucial role in carbon sequestration and emission reductions in South Dakota. I will support policies that encourage sustainable agricultural practices, such as no-till farming and cover cropping, which help to capture carbon in the soil. Additionally, I will advocate for the protection and restoration of wetlands and forests, which serve as vital carbon sinks. Promoting smart growth strategies and green infrastructure in urban planning would also be a priority to reduce emissions from transportation and enhance overall sustainability.	
SoDak 350 score:	4	4	5	5	5	

Question	Block, Keith	Campbell, Garret	Fiegen, Kristie	Larson, Liz	Matson, Aaron	Mentzer, Sonja
What is your top environmental priority to support a sustainable future for South Dakotans?	I would like the state to invest in the restoration of the Big Sioux River. The industries that have kept Sioux Falls families fed for generations have had a negative impact on our environment. It's time to pay back the debt incurred by our economic success and make sure that the next generation can enjoy one of our state's greatest natural resources as much as they enjoy the product of their labor.	Besides making investments in wind and solar energy that are affordable and supportive to communities across South Dakota, my primary concern is the ongoing need to preserve soil, land, and water quality across the state. Without partnerships and policies that continue to help producers and landowners steward land and water while helping them achieve economic sustainability, our community and economic resilience statewide is at stake.	There are many. I don't believe there can be or should be a TOP issue. Our water is in need of restoration. Rivers, lakes, streams and creeks. Nitrogen I believe is the top culprit. I also think moving from a fossil fuel infrastructure to a cleaner form of energy, i.e. Wind, solar and a source not yet identified is the way to a cleaner environment. We can move away from oil and gas. It just needs to be at a pace that does not create hardships for those who need energy the most...such as the AG sector.	South Dakota, at its core, is a state based on conservation. From century farms and ranches that have been passed down from generation to generation, to the nature preserves that are the backbone of the state's second-largest industry, our state has always looked to tomorrow when making the plans of today. Our energy policies need to reflect the interests, the well-being and the values of the people of South Dakota. My top priority is any project that helps ensure that my children and grandchildren grow up with infrastructure that is both secure and up-to-date.	My top environmental priority to support a sustainable future for South Dakotans is to advance the development and expansion of renewable energy sources. South Dakota has immense potential for renewable energy, particularly wind and solar power, which can play a transformative role in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and securing a sustainable energy future. Investing in renewable energy creates jobs and stimulates local economies, providing high-quality positions in manufacturing, installation, and maintenance, which contributes to economic growth and community development. Additionally, increasing our use of renewable energy sources helps reduce dependence on fossil fuels, enhancing energy security and stability while protecting South Dakota from fluctuating fossil fuel prices and supply disruptions.	
SoDak 350 score:	4	5	5	4	5	
Extreme weather events such as floods, drought, storms, and record temperatures have impacted South Dakota in recent years. Most recently, in June 2024, southeastern South Dakota experienced record flooding caused by the wettest two-day period for this area in the National Weather Service's climate records dating back to 1893. If elected, how would you work to strengthen the resilience of South Dakota communities and infrastructure to extreme weather?	Extreme weather hits low-income families first. I support efforts to modernize and democratize our energy grid, to put power back in the hands of South Dakotans. These efforts will ensure that people don't go cold in the winter or overheat in the summer. As our weather gets more intense, we will need increasingly comprehensive solutions to make sure that we're not leaving anyone behind.	We need to ensure funds appropriated for disaster response in our state are used to help strengthen communities in the process. Proactively, we must also connect communities to state and federal opportunities to enhance their energy usage and building standards, continue to improve infrastructure such as roads and bridges, and partner with our agricultural community to continue implementing practices that reduce soil erosion and water pollution.  Choosing to build partnerships that benefit South Dakota communities, especially among our most rural and remote towns and cities, is the critical factor that makes it possible for us to strengthen resilience, and that's what I will focus on.	This is a difficult question to answer. I am not versed on this subject. I will endeavor to make myself more educated. I do believe I have seen some papers that attempt to address "resiliency".	By prioritizing maintenance and upgrades to our infrastructure, we can help prevent the kind of power outages that disrupt life and harm local businesses. This is more than energy policy, it's about ensuring the stability and prosperity of our communities. Additionally, I will work to foster more localized energy production. By encouraging individual and community-based generation, we can reduce our reliance on external sources and keep energy dollars within our local economies. In addition to the potential for modular nuclear generators I mentioned earlier, this includes promoting development of localized generation projects, such as rooftop solar installations and wind turbines.	If reelected, I will focus on strengthening South Dakota's resilience to extreme weather by investing in infrastructure upgrades to withstand floods, storms, and heat. This includes improving flood defenses, enforcing climate-resilient building codes, and integrating climate projections into planning. I'll support enhanced emergency preparedness with better early warning systems and community education. Additionally, I'll advocate for funding research into climate resilience technologies and foster collaboration among local governments, businesses, and residents to develop effective adaptation strategies.	
SoDak 350 score:	4	4	3	5	5	
Total	12	13	13	14	15	
Very Favorable		14-15				
Favorable		11-13				
Neutral		8-10				
Unfavorable		4-7				
Very Unfavorable		0-3				

