



Sierra Club 2024 Candidate Questionnaire

Please provide the information requested below.

Candidate: Party: **Democrat**

Campaign Committee Name: **Powe for Kentucky**

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The questions below are representative of some of the diverse environmental issues that the members and supporters of the Sierra Club consider a priority. Your responses will be considered confidential, will NOT be posted online or released to the public, and will only be seen by Sierra Club volunteers and staff. For any additional information on the issues raised below please feel free to reference Sierra Club's website, www.sierraclub.org.

QUESTIONS If you have additional comments on any of the issues discussed below please include them in the questionnaire or attach a separate document.

- 1. Water Kentucky has more inland waterways than any other state. Currently our waters are impacted by 37 leaching coal ash waste sites, and also by "forever chemicals" such as PFAS, detected in 90% of our waterways. Coal ash contains contaminants like mercury, cadmium and arsenic, and multiple health impacts are associated with PFAS. What ideas will you promote for protecting the health of our waterways and the citizens who live in these areas?**

What I found to be true in my role as a Constituent Services Analyst is that though we have laws that protect and promote the health of our environment, we are lacking when it comes to holding those that break these laws accountable. KRS 224.10-100 outlines the regulations clearly and lists actions words such as: exercising, preparing, encouraging, providing, developing, securing, collecting, conducting...what is lacking is ENFORCING. If the agency has no power to enforce these laws and regulations, there is no reason to abide by them. I have often informed constituents that our legislators write the laws, they do not have the power to enforce them, and this is true. But they do have the authority to assign a body responsible for the enforcement of those laws and legislation should reflect the penalties associated with choosing to ignore them. I fully believe that accountability forces people to put more thought into their actions and our waterways and citizens would be the beneficiaries of this forethought.



2. Climate Resilience How serious an issue for your level of government do you believe climate change to be? What actions would you support (a) to mitigate climate change and (b) to improve Kentuckians' resilience to likely severe weather events?

I think it would be hard for anyone to deny that our severe weather events are increasing in both number and voracity. As our temperatures continue to rise year after year, our rainfall has increased and what used to be tornado season is now a year-round event. This isn't just serious to me; it should be serious to us all. My first act will be to publicly acknowledge that climate change is not a myth, and our ignorance of the issue clearly does not eliminate the damage that is being done. In 2022, the Inflation Reduction Act was passed on a federal level, and Kentucky needs to follow suit with similar legislation. We need to ensure that tax breaks or similar incentives are afforded to those that switch to solar energy and electric vehicles. We have done a better job with our early warning systems, but there is more work to be done as less households have cable television. Regarding resiliency, everyone's natural response is to blame FEMA for the length of time it takes for federal funds to be released after a weather event. The reality is that determinations are generally made within 10-15 business days. I found out that most of the time these monies are released to local government agencies and that is where they sit while a determination is made on how to disseminate the funds. This can drag on for quite some time, which negatively affects those in need. There must be a deadline for local bodies to distribute these funds to their communities. That would be a focus and a priority for me as your State Representative.

3. Clean Energy Utilities, corporate investors and Kentuckians are increasingly looking to reduce their emissions by transitioning to solar energy. To date over 35 large-scale solar projects in Kentucky have applied for permits or are in development. What is your vision for clean energy in Kentucky? What are your thoughts on rooftop solar? On hydro? On energy efficiency?

There are currently 17 states with a 100% clean and renewable energy target goal. Sadly, KY is not one of them. My vision is to be on that list with a goal for a law that is enacted within the next 2 years. Illinois and Virginia have a target year of 2050 to be 100% clean/renewable and we should be able to match or beat that goal. Solar, hydro and energy efficiency are synergistic. Solar panels block sunlight, keeping the home cooler and lowering utility bills. They also harness excess energy and transfer that back to the electric grid which reduces the need for electricity. Hydroelectric power utilizes water to produce electricity. It's a win-win-WIN. I am in full support of all renewable energy sources.



- 4. Agriculture Regenerative agriculture is a management philosophy that seeks to improve soil health. At its core, regenerative agriculture is the process of restoring degraded soils using practices (e.g., adaptive grazing, no-till planting, no or limited use of pesticides and synthetic fertilizer, etc.). What is your vision for sustainable/regenerative agriculture in Kentucky? What policies would you propose or support to promote or enhance sustainable/regenerative agriculture in KY?**

I was honored to be selected as a member of the Planning and Development Advisory Committee for Frankfort/Franklin County. We have spent a great deal of time reviewing the plans for how to preserve our rich farmland and promote continued agricultural improvement in our community. In my current capacity, I am limited to hoping that our legislators respect our recommendations and adhere to what the community as a whole is requesting. As a State Representative, I can ensure that the proposals are approved as submitted and that the citizens desire for our leadership to support regenerative agriculture is upheld.

Kristie Powe

Democratic Candidate for KY State Representative

District 57