

# Michelle McCabe: Candidate Profile

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Born and raised in Connecticut, Michelle Lapine McCabe is a graduate of Vassar College, BA, and the University of Texas Austin, MA. After years of museum work, McCabe returned to Fairfield, Conn. to start a family. Spurred by her passion for local agriculture and student health, she joined a newly formed PTA Council Committee, Fuel for Learning Partnership.

Over subsequent years, and as chair, McCabe successfully advocated for an increase in the healthy options for school meals. Her advocacy led her to a position at the Yale Rudd Center for Food Policy and Obesity. Over a three-year period at Yale, McCabe developed policy briefs and recommendations, created parent advocacy tools, served on the Governor's Agriculture Council, and held leadership roles with the Connecticut Food System Alliance.

In 2014, McCabe joined the Council of Churches of Greater Bridgeport where she works today. As the director of the Center for Food Equity and Economic Development, McCabe knows first-hand the importance of investing in people and businesses to grow our economy, and the ways to use innovation to Connecticut's advantage. Instead of simply applying band-aid solutions to food insecurity, McCabe creates jobs, helps people launch businesses and become self-sufficient, and develops more efficient systems for food distribution that reduce the burden on taxpayers.

In 2018, motivated by her professional experience, McCabe ran for the state senate in the 28th District of Connecticut in a close race with the incumbent. Today, McCabe is once again running to bring her experience and innovative approach to Hartford in order to invest in Connecticut to ensure a sustainable, resilient, and equitable future.

### **Statement on Top Three Issues Facing Easton**

Easton and Connecticut face a critical choice in determining their future. The pandemic and tropical storm revealed fault lines that must be corrected to ensure that our towns and state are resilient and sustainable. Easton played a critical role during the pandemic, with the town's farmers stepping up to provide our area with food when the supply chain was upended and grocery stores no longer safe. Today, Easton has an opportunity to strengthen its agriculture sector while simultaneously addressing climate change.

As senator, I plan to lower our electricity costs by encouraging competition in the energy market. Solar and farming are symbiotic industries. Utilizing incentives, removing barriers such as easement restrictions, and investing in energy storage options, Easton's farmers will be able to diversify their revenue while residents enjoy increased clean energy options at lower prices. Additionally, in partnership with our universities, private investors, and farmers, I will support carbon-sequestering which rewards farmers for capturing carbon in the soil.

Second, Easton's sustainability relies on bringing new residents to town, which requires that we support the community's outstanding school system. State funding and resources must be made available to support teachers as they pivot between online and in-person learning environments. Our most valuable resource are the boots on the ground—our teachers, paraprofessionals, custodians, and other on-site professionals. We need a system that gathers best practices and gaps in capacity from these key stakeholders and translates the information into an implementation plan—one that assists in the granular level of logistics and guides state-level coordination of resources.

There were missed opportunities this past spring and summer. We lost both efficiency and cost savings without a stronger effort at coordinated purchasing of cleaning supplies, classroom supplies, PPE, computers, Bluetooth headsets, webcams, online resources and training platforms, and a state negotiated high-speed broadband access on-site at schools and for low-income neighborhoods alike. Many districts still do not have the materials and tools needed to successfully educate our children—the state can and must step in to provide support.

Finally, Easton's sustainability requires that we pay attention to the issue of affordability. In addition to lowering electricity rates, I plan to tackle the high cost of medical insurance and expanding mental health care access. As your senator, I will champion State Comptroller Kevin Lembo's public option, which would allow residents, including self-employed and small business owners, as well as seniors, to join the insurance pool of state employees and benefit from lower prices and better coverage. Additionally, I will continue to support our seniors' ability to age in place by offsetting property taxes and ensuring a well-compensated and trained workforce of caregivers.