

The Senate races are getting a lot of attention this year. But what happens in statehouses also matters. Most directly, it matters for the folks who live there. But governorships are often proving grounds for politicians who later emerge on the national scene. Today, I'll focus on a handful of races that look like they could go either way: Connecticut, Georgia, Florida, Illinois, and Kansas. What are the environmental stakes in these races? As usual, to avoid the risk of distorting the candidates' views, I've relied heavily on their own websites for information.

Connecticut. Incumbent Democrat *Dan Malloy's* [website](#) emphasizes his support for renewable energy, brownfield cleanup, and preservation of Long Island Sound. Republican *Thomas Foley's* [website](#) isn't very explicit but seems to call for an end to programs to support renewable energy ("End mandates and other costs added to electricity bills ") Foley also calls for a "red tape review to eliminate regulations."

Georgia. Democrat *Jason Carter's* [website](#) doesn't say a word about energy or the environment. Incumbent Republican *Nathan Deal's* [website](#) pledges "to protect our environment and natural resources to ensure its positive economic impact." It's not clear what that means, but it's worth noting that when he was in Congress his rating by the League of Conservation Voters was 15%. Carter, on the other hand, is endorsed by the Sierra Club.

Florida. Republican incumbent and Tea Partier *Rick Scott* makes a point on his [website](#) of his support for preserving Florida's natural beauty. He's not a man to flee from hyperbole, apparently. His website outs his "laser focus on removing the bureaucratic barriers to economic growth," which along with tax cuts has "created the perfect economic climate for the American Dream." On the Democratic side, *Charlie Crist* pledges to recommit Florida to the environmental stewardship that has been a hallmark of Florida's history." He also argues that "Florida is the sunshine state, yet it is also home to some of the most restrictive laws in the country against solar energy investment" - a situation he says he'll change.

Illinois. The Democratic Incumbent, *Pat Quinn*, claims on his [website](#) to be "the most environmentally friendly governor in Illinois history, making Illinois a national leader in sustainability and green technology." He's endorsed by the Sierra Club. Republican challenger *Bruce Rauner* is an unusual Republican candidate: the [NY Times](#) reports that he has given assurances he doesn't want to restrict existing abortion laws. His website doesn't say anything about the environment or energy - or for that matter about abortion, guns, or other Republican staples. This is also the only candidate website I've ever seen with a [tab](#) called "Cayman Islands," disputing claims that he's sheltering money there.

Kansas. *Sam Brownback*, the incumbent Republican Governor, doesn't say anything about his own positions on energy and environment, but his [website](#) does take a swipe at the Obama Administration's policies. His Democratic opponent, *Paul Davis*, stresses his experience as a lawyer representing small businesses on his [website](#), saying he understands how burdensome government regulations can be. He's said he would contest the proposed Clean Water Act jurisdictional rule. He seems to be positioning himself toward the conservative end of the Democratic Party, which still leaves Brownback well to the Right.

All in all, these elections should make for some interesting watching tomorrow night. In the long run, how they come out may have as much to say about the future of the country as how the Senate races go.