In some ways, Mike Pence is just what you'd expect of the GOP vice-presidential candidate. He's said that the climate change is a myth, opposed the Clean Power Plan,defended fossil fuels, and allowed a bill to end Indiana's energy efficiency program to become law. In Congress, he voted to allow destruction of critical habitat for endangered species, expand offshore drilling, and so forth. As I said, just what you'd expect.

But there's at least one deviation from the reflexive opposition to environmental protection common among conservatives. In March, he vetoed a bill that limited the state's ability to go beyond federal environmental requirements. The bill would have required that any such regulation be reported to the state legislature and that implementation would be delayed until after the end of the next session. After referring to the Flint water crisis, Pence said:

At a time when we must do all that we can to enhance public trust in the agencies charged with protecting our environment, this bill moves in the wrong direction and will therefore receive my veto. With this veto, Hoosiers can be assured that we will continue to have the necessary discretion and flexibility to create Indiana solutions at the state level and act in a timely way to protect our drinking water.

Pence also signed a bill to strengthen the state's program for acquiring and protecting environmentally sensitive lands. This law doesn't seem to have been controversial, but I'm sure that there are many Tea Party members who would object on principle.

It may not seem like much to say that a conservative Republican has failed to be 100% consistent in opposing environmental protection. We're at a point, however, where even small deviations from anti-regulatory orthodoxy are beginning to seem notable.