It turns out that the solar industry has two allies in unlikely places: Trump stalwarts Kellyanne Conway and Katie Miller (the wife of Stephen Miller). This is a reminder that, even in an era of hyper-partisanship, it is sometimes possible to create alliances across the ideological gulf.Despite polarization, there are some environmental issues that can bridge the partisan gap. T Some issues, like climate change, have become deeply polarizing. We shouldn't give up on those, but we should also pay attention to issues that have greater potential for reaching out to Trump supporters.

Doing so would serve several goals. It would make progress on at least some environmental issues during a time when even the word 'environmentalist' has become toxic to many people. By finding issues of common concern, it could help reduce distrust and stereotyping, which now make it difficult to even hold a conversation with many people about environmental issues.

And over the long haul, it could help build broader public support for environmental protection. We probably can't recreate the environmental consensus of the 1970s but we can at least dial back to 2008, when some prominent Republicans like John McCain and Lindsey Graham (!) were serious about climate action.

And finally, recreating the possibility of dialogue would be good for our ailing democracy.

Common Ground: State, Local, and National Parks

Support for local parks isn't a new idea. The 2016 Democratic platform discussed the issue in detail. It pledged to "launch an initiative to restore and revitalize more than 3,000 city parks within ten years, including by providing new national service opportunities for youth, veterans, and others." The plan was to do this "by restoring, updating, and investing $40 million annually in the Urban Parks and Recreation Recovery Program and $10 million annually in AmeriCorps to create and support opportunities for Americans to get involved directly in revitalizing open spaces and recreational sites in their communities."

Something along these lines at the federal level ought to be very popular. But it's also important for environmentalists to show support for parks at the local level, even though city parks aren't the kind of wilderness that gets Greens most excited. Still, local parks are important in people's lives. They build community and give people the chance to appreciate trees, birds, and the general idea that nature has

something to offer.

In terms of bipartisan appeal, maybe it's enough to say that President Trump, in his only known pro-environmental action to date, issued an executive order entitled "Making America Beautiful Again by Improving Our National Parks." It begins: "From the awe-inspiring Grand Canyon to the tranquility of the Great Smoky Mountains, America's national parks have provided generations of American families with unforgettable memories. It is the policy of my Administration to preserve these opportunities for American families in future generations…."

True, after that, the executive order goes downhill, with the main new idea being higher admission fees for foreign tourists to fund park improvement. But the fact that he singled out parks for praise is still significant. It suggests that he knows his voters care about the issue.

Making America Healthy Again: Regulating Toxics and Pesticides

The Trump Administration's position on pesticides and herbicides isn't popular with the MAHA crowd. When Trump issued an executive order designed to expand production and give the producer immunity, he sparked a backlash from MAHA supporters. As one MAHA activist said, "We are at an inflection point. This amount of attention on glyphosate is unprecedented. … I know for myself, and the others I'm working with, we have no intention of slowing down — corporate capture has led to the poisoning of Americans for long enough."

There's also a more general concern with toxic chemicals. The White House MAHA report says "the cumulative load of thousands of synthetic chemicals that our children are exposed to through the food they eat, the water they drink, and the air they breathe may pose risks to their long-term health, including neurodevelopmental and endocrine effects." The report also notes that "children are particularly vulnerable to chemicals during critical stages of development." The report singles out PFAs, microplastics, phthalates, biphenyls, and pesticides.

This is not to say that the Administration will really try to do something about these issues – that would upset too many corporate donors – but it's obviously responding to widespread concerns among its voters. Again, there may be some room for cautious work across the ideological gap on these issues.

In fact, some MAHA leaders and Democrats are now teaming up to fight provisions

in the farm bill favorable to the pesticide industry. As Politico reports: “MAHA activists feel betrayed after voting for Trump in hopes that his administration would crack down on chemical exposure they blame for driving up chronic illness and disease. And now these activists are so fed up that they’ve turned to working with a group of House Democrats to strip out the language.” The MAHA/Dem alliance was successful in having the pro-pesticide language stripped from the House bill.

Powering America: Geothermal, Hydropower, Nuclear (?), Batteries

Trump’s real passion is reserved for coal, oil, and natural gas. But Republicans have given support to some other technologies including geothermal, nuclear, hydro and batteries. I’ve added a question mark to nuclear since environmentalists are now split on fission reactors. Tax credits for all of these technologies survived the 2025 reconciliation act. It’s unconscionable that wind and solar aren’t on the list, but we should take every opportunity to encourage the development and deployment of technologies like geothermal and battery.

This is another area where cooperation with conservatives may be feasible. Part of the purpose is to achieve real gains in carbon reduction. But another purpose is to show that climate advocates aren’t fanatics dedicated only to the “woke” technologies of wind and solar. In terms of wind and solar, the argument that’s most likely to sell with Trump voters is that they can reduce electricity prices.

Empowering Communities: Protecting Public Participation and Cooperative Federalism

Progressives tend to pitch public participation requirements in terms of environmental justice. That’s not going to win over Republican voters. But, even if public participation rights are especially valuable to disadvantaged communities, there’s an obvious democracy argument for them that applies to everyone. Current opportunities to comment may not be a great way of giving the public more input, but they’re better than nothing.

The Trump Administration is trying to eliminate public comment and notice provisions wherever they find them, whether in rule making or permitting. Silencing the voice of the public could be a powerful issue among MAGA voters who feel that government decisions are dominated by special interests and elites.

This is an area where cooperation across the ideological chasm is clearly possible.

That won't happen, however, if we insist that we care about participation by some people and communities but not others.

Data Centers

The sudden expansion of data centers has raised concerns among environmentalists because many will be powered by fossil fuels, because of impacts on electricity affordability, and because of the water needed for cooling. As it turns out, data centers are a bipartisan concern. According to a recent NY Times report : "[A]s Charlie Berens, a Milwaukee-based comedian, put it recently at a meeting in Juneau, Wis., about a data center: 'This is the most bipartisan issue since beer.' That matches what is happening in Michigan, where citizens of all political stripes are filling once empty town meetings to voice their opposition. Republicans are strategizing with Democrats on Signal chats and Facebook pages."

Once people start working together on common causes, their attitudes toward each other may shift. Ask the *Times* report on data centers put it, "Once people come together, their work builds trust. That is breaking down divides, and making our entrenched, nationalized politics local again."

Engaging on these issues involves some compromises, since they aren't necessarily top environmentalist priorities. The potential payoffs, however, could be substantial: making progress under at least some environmental issues despite a terrible national political climate; dispelling stereotypes about environmentalists as extremists; and starting a long process of building bipartisan coalitions for more sweeping environmental actions. So let's embrace MAGrA – Making American Green Again.