



## Issue Essentials

Oct. 29, 2018

### **Webber, Environmental Hero? More like Environmental Zero**

*The United Nations' [recent report](#) on climate change warns that time is running out to make the transformational changes needed to avoid an environmental crisis. The challenge is as much political as it is technological, so strong leaders are needed. Where does Jay Webber stand? He's consistently ranked among the lowest of NJ Assembly members on environmental issues.*

- NJ Clean Water Action's [NJ Legislative Scorecard](#) (2015-2017) has awarded Webber the infamous label of "**Environmental Zero**" since 2010. He earned his worst score in 2017 (the most recent scorecard) with a measly 13% for taking only two positive actions for the environment out of 17 opportunities identified. He even received two demerits for showing lack of leadership on a variety of pro-environmental issues.
- But that's not Webber's only low score. The NJ League of Conservation Voters [rated](#) Webber a 29% for his few pro-environment votes in 2017. His lifetime score of 34% is only modestly better. Of the 22 pro-environment bills that appeared before the NJ Assembly in 2017, Webber voted for six and abstained on one (abstaining is considered a vote against the environment). What exactly did Webber vote against? Only "minor" environmental legislation such as:
  - Establishing offshore wind energy projects.
  - Funding for lead paint mitigation, including emergency relocation of families with a child whose blood shows elevated lead levels.
  - Prohibiting changes to the NJ Department of Environmental Protection Flood Hazard Rules that would allow for development in floodplains, destroying natural buffers that prevent flooding and filter polluted water before it reaches waterways.
  - Requiring NJ to rejoin the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI), whose goals are to reduce greenhouse gas emissions that cause climate change and to provide funding for programs that encourage lower CO2 emissions.
- Webber also voted against: legislation that encourages green building projects by giving priority to those permit applications; the Highlands Water Protection Act, which prevents development in the Highlands that would threaten water quality; requiring municipal green plans that address issues important to NJ's future, such as smart growth, storm resiliency, and environmental sustainability.
- NJ is now second only to CA in solar power capacity, but this may not have been achieved if Webber had his way. In 2012 Webber was one of only a handful of assembly members who [voted against the "solar bailout"](#) that helped prevent the collapse of the fledgling industry.