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2016 Environmental Candidate Questionnaire

Candidate Name: Steven Cymbrowitz
Office Sought: NYS Assembly, 45th District
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1. Please share your accomplishments or experiences that indicate your commitment to advancing a pro-environment agenda. These experiences may be professional or personal.

I'm a longtime member of the Assembly's Environmental Conservation Committee and have received consistently high ratings on the annual scorecard released by Environmental Advocates of New York. I was a key supporter of legislation to impose a fracking moratorium, prohibit the manufacture and sale of personal cosmetic products containing microbeads, establish a solar energy incentive and finance program to encourage the use of alternative and cleaner power; identify products with chemicals dangerous for children, and keep recyclables out of landfills. I supported the Community Risk Reduction and Resiliency Act, which requires New York State to include future climate risk in a broad range of planning, permit, and funding processes, which was signed by Governor Cuomo in 2014. For three years in a row I've also led the fight to stop NYS from killing its mute swan population. The bill has passed overwhelmingly every year.

Please indicate your level of commitment to, and if applicable your recent personal and professional activity with respect to, the following issues:

(To ensure your responses address the issues NYLCV and its partners are most concerned about, please review [NYLCV's 2016 State Policy Agenda](#))

2. Ensuring adequate funding for the environmental agencies and programs

Along with my colleagues on the Environmental Conservation Committee, I fought hard for the more than \$1.4 billion allocated in the 2016-17 budget for environmental agencies and programs. This allocation includes \$300 million, the highest funding level to date, for the Environmental Protection Fund, which provides money for environmental initiatives such as recycling, waterfront revitalization, open space protection, water quality improvement projects, and support for Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

3. Addressing the causes and effects of climate change (e.g., clean energy and emission controls)

This is a priority issue and during budget negotiations my colleagues and I advocated for \$32 million in funding for climate change programs. The final 2016-17 SFY budget agreement provided \$24 million to the State's Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) for several new climate change initiatives. These included \$1 million for greenhouse gas management outside the power sector; \$4.5 million to conduct vulnerability assessments; \$14 million for the newly established Climate Smart Communities Program to fund clean vehicle, flood mitigation and coastal resiliency measures; and \$2.5 million for Climate Resilient Farms. I also support legislation (A.6072) that would authorize DEC to promulgate rules and regulations establishing a limit on greenhouse gas emissions. This bill has passed the Assembly each year since 2008.

4. Protecting the health of New Yorkers and their communities (e.g., toxics, air quality, food quality and security)

Protecting the health of New Yorkers and our communities is a high priority of mine. I sit on both the Health and Environmental Conservation Committees. I've supported legislation (A.129) that would extend New York State's school anti-pesticide laws to children's overnight and summer day camps. This bill has passed the Assembly every year since 2013. Another bill I've supported (A.2592) would require the Commissioner of Health to take action when an area of lead poisoning has been designated. Currently, the law leaves it up to the discretion of the commissioner to give written notice to an area that is deemed high risk or hold a hearing if the problem isn't remedied in a timely fashion. That is not sufficient. The Assembly has passed this bill every year since 2000. I'm also a multi-sponsor of another piece of legislation (A.5612-A) that would restrict the use of harmful chemicals in children's products and prohibit the sale of products containing the most dangerous chemicals. This bill has passed the Assembly every year since 2012.

5. Conserving and protecting natural resources (e.g., water, open spaces, habitat, organic recycling)

As a member of the Environmental Conservation Committee, I've taken a leading role in advocating for legislation and funding to protect our natural resources. I'm pleased that the SFY 2016-17 budget contains \$300 million for the Environmental Protection Fund (EPF), including \$14 million for municipal recycling, \$40 million for open space, \$20 million for farmland protection, \$16 million for waterfront revitalization, \$20 million for municipal parks, and almost \$50 million for various water-related initiatives. In 2014 I introduced legislation to impose a two-year moratorium on the Department of Environmental Conservation's plan to exterminate the mute swan population, which DEC has termed an "invasive" species. There is ample evidence to dispute DEC's claims. The mute swan bill has passed overwhelmingly every year since it has been introduced.

6. Investing in better, smarter infrastructure (e.g., transportation, electrical grid, green infrastructure, smart growth, rail transport of crude oil)

I have supported various initiatives that would advance New York State's investment in better and smarter infrastructure. With respect to the rail transport of crude oil, for the last two years I have supported a bill (A.7625) that would increase the requirements for major petroleum facilities to demonstrate financial responsibility and require railroads to submit financial preparedness information. During the most recent budget negotiations, my Assembly colleagues and I fought hard for a number of infrastructure improvements. We succeeded in providing an All Funds appropriation of \$10.88 billion, an increase of \$73.4 million over the Executive proposal, and providing \$198.7 million for operating assistance for upstate transit systems, an increase of \$5 million above the Executive proposal. We also modified the Executive proposal for a transportation capital program by providing \$27.14 billion, including \$1.99 billion for the Thruway Authority, \$3.99 billion for the DOT capital plan in year 2020-21, and \$21.17 billion for the 2015-2020 DOT capital plan, an increase of \$1.04 billion.