

30 Broad Street – 30th Floor

New York, NY 10004

212-361-6350

politics@nylcv.org  
www.nylcv.org

**2016 Environmental Candidate Questionnaire**

**Campaign Contact Information**

Candidate Name: David Buchwald  
Office/District: State Assembly, District 93 (Westchester)  
Website: www.DavidBuchwald.com  
Facebook Page: www.facebook.com/Vote.Buchwald  
Twitter handle: @DavidBuchwald

1. Please share your accomplishments or experiences that indicate your commitment to advancing a pro-environment agenda. These experiences may be professional or personal.

|  |
| --- |
| As a New York State Assemblyman I have received a perfect legislative score from Environmental Advocates of New York every year I have been in office. In addition to my experience and advocacy as a State Assemblyman over the past three and a half years, I bring a set of skills and perspectives that help me to advocate for a cleaner environment.  For five years I served as a volunteer Westchester County representative on the Metro-North Railroad Commuter Council (MNRCC). Appointed by the Governor, the MNRCC seeks to improve Metro-North to make it more convenient for the people of the Lower Hudson Valley. For my final three years on the MNRCC, I was the Council’s Chairman. During that time two of the accomplishments I was most proud of were convincing the railroad to add quiet cars to its trains and successfully pressing the railroad to issue a Pledge to Customers, the latter project being something I worked with Senator Schumer’s office on, building on his Airline Passenger Bill of Rights legislation. I believe that mass transportation is a vital part of the economic vitality of our region, and I continue to carry that perspective forward to the Assembly, where I serve on the Assembly Committee on Corporations, Authorities and Commissions, that, among other things, oversees the MTA.  As a Member of the White Plains Common Council, I played a role in overseeing development in the City. I supported efforts to focus businesses on creating outward-facing stores at street level to further encourage pedestrian traffic. I also authored the first-ever requirement for an energy efficient “white roof” to help reduce air conditioning costs in summer and combat the “heat island” effect that can impact downtowns. On the subject of watershed and stormwater management, I was a constant advocate of preventing development on a parcel of land next to the White Plains Reservoir, something that was assured in my final year in that office when the Common Council purchased the property and designated nearby property as parkland.  In addition, as Chairman of the White Plains Traffic Commission, I spearheaded a number of important efforts to make White Plains more bike-friendly and walking-friendly. Through the Traffic Commission, and working with Mayor Tom Roach, I shepherded the legislation establishing the first ever bike lane in White Plains. I also successfully pushed for more sidewalks in White Plains. I also voted to install charging stations for electric cars at municipal parking structures, something that I very much hope will catch on across the region. |

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](http://nylcv.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/StatewideAgenda2016-FINAL-lowres.pdf))

1. Ensuring adequate funding for the environmental agencies and programs

|  |
| --- |
| I am a strong believer in the value of the Environmental Protection Fund (EPF), which helps to reduce solid waste, prevent pollution, combat invasive species, protect natural resources and connect people with the outdoors. However, I also believe that Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) funds should not be raided for purposes other than combating climate change. Unfortunately, the recent state budget did both things, and I hope to be able to support budgets that are unqualified wins for the environment.  It has been my great pleasure over the last two years to have helped fund $400 million for Clean Water grants that help municipalities both provide cleaning drinking water and improve sewer infrastructure. My neighboring colleague, Assemblyman Steve Otis, deserves great credit for being one of the leaders of this initiative. |

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

|  |
| --- |
| I believe the science is clear – there is a man-made contribution to global climate change. Burning fossil fuels adds to the build-up of greenhouse gases which furthers a rise in annual temperature. I am pleased that the Assembly passed the Global Warming Pollution Control Act (A.6327 in 2013-2014, A6072 today), requiring the Department of Environmental Conservation to establish enforceable limits on greenhouse gases. It also wisely includes a plan addressing adaptation needs regarding flood control issues and drinking water supply in relation to climate change effects. I am disappointed, however, that a the companion bill has not made it to the floor of the State Senate.  In both 2013 and 2014, I co-sponsored and voted a bill A.6558 (now Chapter 355 of the Laws of 2014), which requires certain New York State environmental funds, including drinking water and wastewater revolving loan funds, to incorporate analysis of the effects of climate change including sea level rise, storm surges and flooding.  I have also been a proponent of the NY Sun imitative, and have co-sponsored and voted for bill A.5060-D, which establishes a solar energy incentive and financing program. |

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

|  |
| --- |
| During a child’s formative years, even low levels of toxic chemicals, including mercury and lead, can be debilitating. That is why I support the Child-Safe Products Act, A.5612-A, which recently passed the Assembly, because it sets comprehensive standards that provide information to parents and assist in banning dangerous products. I voted for the bill in all four years from 2013 to 2016.  As we’ve unfortunately all learned tragically over the past year, too many of our schools have unsafe, lead-contaminated drinking water. That is why I signed on as an early support of bill A.9660-A, which promotes water testing in school buildings, child day care centers and day care homes.  I am also a co-sponsor of A. 9230-A, the Triclosan Awareness Act.  I am the prime sponsor of legislation (A.130), modeled off of a Westchester County law, to prohibit the acceptance of wastewater from oil or natural gas extraction activities at wastewater treatment facilities and landfills |

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

|  |
| --- |
| I refer you to the Clean Water grant program I referenced in response to Question 2.  Of local import to my district and Westchester County, in 2015 I sponsored and help get enacted into law four bills that designate a series of rivers and lakes in and around Westchester as inland waterways, making them eligible for state cleanup and revitalization funds. These bodies of water are the Bronx, Pocantico and Saw Mill Rivers, along with Campfire, Echo and Peach Lakes. |

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

|  |
| --- |
| I have a history of supporting green forms of transportation and transit oriented development.  One of my most noted successes as a State Assemblyman was stopping a bill, A.7844-A of 2014, which would have effectively ended the direct sale of Tesla’s clean energy cars in New York State. I have 3 Tesla facilities in my Assembly District supporting 35 jobs in Mount Kisco and White Plains, and I've always felt that we need to be encouraging – not discouraging – innovative ideas to improve our economy and environment. I hosted a press conference at the Tesla showroom in White Plains, standing alongside environmental and business advocates, including the NYLCV, to oppose this legislation that would have stifled environmental innovation, limited consumer choice, and elimindated jobs. Following the press conference, New Yorkers started reaching out online and contacting their state representatives, including through the efforts of the NYLCV. And just one week later a compromise was reached to allow Tesla to continue selling its clean-energy cars here in New York State. The jobs at Tesla's facilities in White Plains and Mount Kisco are now safe; the workers can go back to selling and maintaining cars.  I have been pleased to support two economic development projects in my Assembly District that embrace collaborative, environmentally-friendly approaches. One of these projects involves the City of White Plains receiving $1 million in regional economic development funds to plan the future of its downtown TransCenter, the site of both its Metro-North and Bee-Line Bus activity. This is an especially important project for the region given the plan to encourage mass transportation coming into White Plains with the building of the New Tappan Zee Bridge. As the former Chairman of both the White Plains Traffic Commission and the Metro-North Railroad Commuter Council, I know how important it is to the Lower Hudson Valley to properly think through all of the facets of this essential land use decision, and I believe these funds will go a long way towards producing a viable vision.  A second state (and federally) supported project I contributed to involved integrating complete-street concepts into a state road in the Town of Pound Ridge. I was pleased to write a letter of support for the Scotts Corner Bike/Pedestrian Safety Streetscape Project. This project, which eventually received $1,480,000 in funding, seeks to enhance the Scotts Corners business district in Pound Ridge and promote healthier forms of transportation. It is projects like this one, and the TransCenter in White Plains, that I believe achieve numerous goals in keeping with NYCLV’s philosophy. |