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## 2016 Environmental Candidate Questionnaire

### CAMPAIGN CONTACT INFORMATION

Candidate Name: James Skoufis

Office Sought (district if applicable): 99<sup>th</sup> Assembly 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.

While serving on the Woodbury Town Board, I co-founded our annual cleanup that continues to this day and also moved to make Woodbury a “Climate Smart Community.”

Since my election to the Assembly in 2012, I have remained a committed pro-environment legislator. I consistently supported a moratorium on fracking; support smart growth efforts; advocate for legislation that would make our state healthier and safer; and have pushed for increased funding in the state budget for the EPF, climate change mitigation, and other important programs.

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

The DEC, like most state agencies, is getting nowhere near an appropriate level of funding for adequate staffing needs. Without adequate staffing, the DEC often cannot implement and enforce its mission in a timely manner.

That said, I am proud of the 2016-2017 budget's commitment to the Environmental Protection Fund. The \$300 million appropriated this year will ensure many worthwhile environmental projects are able to move forward.

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

As a member of the Assembly's Climate Change Workgroup, I am committed to accelerating New York's move to a renewable state, including the full and immediate elimination of coal power plants.

I will also continue to strongly oppose further raids to the RGGI fund and will continue to press for substantially greater investments in solar, wind, geothermal, and hydropower.

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

It is imperative that New Yorkers are provided a healthy environment to live and work in. That's why I am a strong proponent of the Child Safe Products Act (A5612) and limiting pesticide use in children's camps (A129). I also consistently voted in favor of a fracking moratorium prior to the administration's prohibition and will be supporting legislation to ensure clean water in our state's schools.

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

In addition to the significant investments to come from the EPF appropriation in this year's budget, I have been an advocate for smart growth, including walkable communities such as transit-orient development. I also work with the local communities I represent to expand conservation services; I am working with the Town of Woodbury, for example, to expand their organic recycling pickup from once to twice per week.

Last year, I introduced and passed legislation (A7639) that would ensure county planners are given an opportunity to formally respond to consequential annexation petitions that often result in major development. Unfortunately, this bill was vetoed.

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

Following the MTA's first draft of a capital program in late 2014, I successfully lobbied for the inclusion of two, major west-of-Hudson projects that were not initially included: (1) a midway train yard between the existing Suffern and Port Jervis yards and (2) passing sidings between the new yard and Suffern; right now, only a single rail exists in Orange County. These two projects will significantly increase train capacity and ridership in Orange County.

I've also been an advocate for stronger oversight of crude oil transportation, including calling on the US Department of Transportation to ban unsafe DOT-111 cars.