2016 Environmental Candidate Questionnaire

<u>CAMPAIGN CONTACT INFORMATION</u>

Candidate Name: Assemblywoman Latrice Monique Walker

Office Sought (district if applicable): New York State Assembly, 55th AD

Website: https://walkerforny.nationbuilder.com/

Facebook Page: Latrice Walker For Assembly

Twitter handle: @AssemblyLWalker

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 am proud to serve as Chair of the New York State Assembly's Renewable Energy Subcommittee. Under my leadership, the Subcommittee fights in Albany for clean-energy legislation, tax breaks for those using renewable energy, and good jobs in green industries for New Yorkers.
>
> In my hometown and Assembly district of Brownsville, Brooklyn, low-income and minority families are forced to walk up as many as 20 flights of stairs when Con Edison turns down the power and shuts off the elevators. I walked up the dark and dangerous staircases while I was growing up in Oceanhill without knowing that the power was being turned down because of the exhausted Brownsville substation and struggling families' inability to pay their energy bills. This isn't fair to our neighborhoods. That's why I studied environmental law in Brazil while at Pace Law School and after taking office completed the Legislative Energy Horizon Institute program offered by the U.S. Department of Energy, the University of Idaho, and the National Conference of State Legislatures. My drive to address state energy challenges and ensure a stable, secure, and affordable energy supply grew sharper

through this program as I analyzed infrastructure supply and delivery systems across the country.

This is why I fight for Brownsville families and get the results they need. Because of my efforts Con Edison went from disproportionately hurting our families to agreeing to spend about $250 million in Brownsville as part of the Brooklyn Queens Demand Management project (BQDM). The BQDM will fund a major power grid to conserve the neighborhood's energy load, micro-grid (solar panel) installations for 300 homes, and even LED bulb replacements for street lights (cutting costs up to one-third). This initiative eliminates the need for a new substation in Brownsville that would cost around $1.2 billion. We are all impacted every day by the current effects of climate change. I pride myself on educating my community on these issues so as to help us all make better and more sustainable decisions.

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

I am a strong supporter of providing funding to the Environmental Protection Fund as well as the Department of Environmental Conservation and the Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation.

My Assembly district is within the scope of Con Edison's Brooklyn Queens Demand Management project (BQDM), so I work very closely with both the company and the local community. We reach out to inform residents and clergy members as well as local business owners and employees about the project so that they can develop various ways to conserve energy and cut costs. This consumer-first approach puts energy back into the community's hands and allows the BQDM program to run smoothly and cost effectively, without a new costly and toxic substation.

Through this effort, my Assembly district leads the region in implementing Governor Cuomo's Reforming the Energy Vision initiative (REV) and maintaining compliance with the United States Environmental Protection Agency's Clean Power Plan.

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

I fight for renewable energy initiatives' funding to directly address the adverse effects of climate change. Under CCAP my Assembly district works to reduce its carbon footprint and foster economic empowerment for low income and minority families. I work with NYCHA, Brookdale Hospital, BLOCPower, NYC Environment Justice Center, Con Edison, and many others to ensure funding for the Brooklyn Queens Demand Management program and other clean energy initiatives to build toward the REV 2030 state energy consumption reduction targets.

Having control over where energy comes from and how it is managed reminds us that we each have a significant role to play in reversing the effects of climate change and protecting our money, our communities, and our futures. My office is focused on finding the most effective ways to achieve these goals and shifting dependence on fossil fuels to renewable energy sources as strategically as possible.

New York City's increased housing development projects requires environmentally conscious citizens to have easy access to the economic benefits offered by investments in renewables. This is something I promote within the Hew York State Assembly's Renewable Energy Subcommittee and fight for in my Assembly district. My district leads the region with its ambitious Solarize Brownsville initiative which works to make solar energy accessible to our communities through engagement, education, and tax incentives.

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

I provided a progressive and innovative voice to Mayor Bill de Blasio's OneNYC plan, finding unique solutions to severe New York City communal health problems. A key provision of the plan is the citywide commitment to have the best air quality among all large U.S. cities by 2030. Compliance with this initiative and OneNYC, in part possibly through the increased use of biofuel blends in heating equipment, would directly benefit my Assembly district where cases of asthma and other respiratory issues are rapidly becoming more numerous.

The most important goal of water infrastructure management is to provide clean and safe drinking water to residents. Irresponsible government in Flint, Michigan provided a long overdue wake-up call to elected officials and regulatory entities all over the country with the disgusting proof of what can happen when our children's health gets pushed to the back burner. I strongly support legislation that addresses water infrastructure evaluation and studies, especially those conducted in areas where people of color are disproportionately and unknowingly put at risk. I worked with the River Keeper in urban Brazilian areas to protect water quality fed to communities of color and know how challenging these issues can be to resolve. I will fight for common sense solutions to these problems.

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

> The Hudson River is a vital part of New York life in all aspects from recreation to having clean water to drink. To keep the River and the nine million New York City and Hudson Valley residents who get their drinking water from it safe, I conducted water quality tests as a step counselor. My dedication to clean water and safe habitats drives my environmental work.

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

> Smarter energy infrastructure is built with renewable resource technology. Con Edison's Brooklyn Queens Demand Management program that includes my district's energy management is building a solar paneled micro-grid in the existing Brownsville substation to slash costs and start the transition to renewables. Small energy companies, clergy members, and building and homeowners meet regularly in my district office to discuss the role they will play in this process pursuant to the Regional Sustainability Planning Projects' 2030 goals.