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2017 Environmental Candidate Questionnaire   
for New York City Candidates

Thank you for taking the time to fill out the New York League of Conservation Voters Questionnaire.

The New York League of Conservation Voters is the only non-partisan statewide environmental organization in New York that fights for clean water, clean air, renewable energy and open space through political action. This questionnaire is designed to elicit your views regarding what environmental, public health, clean energy and transit and environmental justice groups consider to be the most important issues of the day. Responses may inform NYLCV’s educational and legislative programs and actions NYLCV takes in the election cycle.

Responses should be considered public. Although NYLCV may choose not to publicize responses to every question, verbatim responses may be reproduced and distributed publicly. If so, your responses may be shortened, if necessary, but will not be edited in substantive ways. If you choose to refer us to a position paper or website, please indicate exactly what text you would like us to cite. For candidates choosing not to respond to the questionnaire, NYLCV will note as much in its public materials.

NYLCV and its partners in the environmental policy arena believe that New York’s voters are determined to make the environment a voting issue this year. Candidate positions on issues such as protecting public health, building a clean energy future, and mitigating climate change will help voters decide how to cast their ballots this election cycle. This questionnaire is one of the primary ways the public will get this information.

Here are a few guidelines:

* Questionnaires are due **Friday, May 19**
  + The completed questionnaire is mandatory for endorsement consideration and must be submitted via e-mail as a Microsoft Word file to: [politics@nylcv.org](mailto:politics@nylcv.org)
  + Questions or extension requests may be directed to Joshua Klainberg ([jklainberg@nylcv.org](mailto:jklainberg@nylcv.org))
* To ensure your responses address the issues NYLCV and its partners are most concerned about, please review [NYLCV’s 2014-18 NYC Policy Agenda](http://nylcv.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/NYC_Agenda_FINAL.pdf)
* After receipt of the completed questionnaire, candidates will be invited to participate in a formal interview with our Chapter Board
* All candidate endorsements will be made by the state board on July 26, 2017

**Campaign Contact Information**

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PERSONAL INFORMATION

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

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| I believe in climate change. I believe that this planet is not ours and that we must leave it better than we found it.  The amount of waste NYC produces is unsustainable. Early in my term I went on a fact-finding mission to San Francisco to discuss with legislators what policies they implemented. On my return I worked on legislation to codify into law Zero Waste by 2030 ([Int. 1573](http://legistar.council.nyc.gov/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=3029941&GUID=57BFD5A0-7D88-4710-9A9D-229BC76EF85F&Options=Advanced&Search=)), mandate labeled bins for trash, recycling, and compost for places of public accommodation ([Int. 1572](http://legistar.council.nyc.gov/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=3029940&GUID=19DE64DA-8DCB-401B-B403-9837EB1B1AA2&Options=Advanced&Search=)), and ban hydro-fracking in NYC ([Int. 594](http://legistar.council.nyc.gov/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=2103610&GUID=E910309F-F396-4A20-A4D2-5C19FD8D06CE&Options=Advanced&Search=)).  As Vice-Chair of the Progressive Caucus, I have co-sponsored and pushed towards passage legislation to divert plastic bags from the solid waste stream, distributing hundreds of reusable bags as we built public support. Despite Albany’s actions, I continue to distribute reusable bags and fight for a bag free city.  Each year, we’ve held an Earth Day event highlighting work we do with our partners that includes using more public transportation including CitiBike, reducing waste with the Department of Sanitation with onsite electronics recycling, composting at greenmarkets, joining local parks groups and so much more.  I also passed [Local Law 96 of 2016](http://legistar.council.nyc.gov/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=1946641&GUID=967FA4A0-C583-4CCD-8DFF-B61678CC5F6F) to reconstitute the Waterfront Management Advisory Board (WMAB). The WMAB will aid the City's efforts toward climate resiliency as well as find ways to utilize NYC's 520 miles of waterfront for recreation and commercial uses.  I have an average score of 98 in the NYLCV Environmental Scorecard, earning my first perfect score in 2016. |

**ISSUES**

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 2014-18 NYC Policy Agenda*](http://nylcv.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/NYC_Agenda_FINAL.pdf) *when formulating your responses.*)

Healthy New Yorkers: Policies that improve the well-being of all New Yorkers through the protection of the environment and that provide access to basic needs.

1. Water Quality — Every New Yorker has the right to clean drinking water and waterways

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| I have swam in the East River, the Hudson River and our city’s beaches giving me a more intimate than most account of how clean our waterways are.  I also love New York City tap water and am working on legislation that would model the National Parks with a ban single-use water bottles in city-owned spaces or venues and expands the network of public drinking fountains. I have questioned the Department of Education and forced them to improve water quality in schools in my district and city-wide.  I am proud to support NYC Crew in my district and to participate in City of Water Day each year, but because it brings attention to the indispensability of our waterways and how integral they are to transportation, recreation, and climate resiliency. I also passed [Local Law 96 of 2016](http://legistar.council.nyc.gov/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=1946641&GUID=967FA4A0-C583-4CCD-8DFF-B61678CC5F6F) to reconstitute the Waterfront Management Advisory Board (WMAB). The WMAB will aid the City's efforts toward climate resiliency as well as find ways to utilize NYC's 520 miles of waterfront for recreation and commercial uses. I advocated for and won three ferry stops in my district to reinvigorate our waterways and improve commutes. |

1. Air Quality – Every New Yorker has the right to breathe clean air

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| The Upper East Side, the densest residential neighborhood in the country, has some of the poorest air quality in the City. I authored [Introduction 989](http://legistar.council.nyc.gov/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=2513762&GUID=BE01B3E4-8EA0-46E8-8F56-521F22FE04BB&Options=Advanced&Search=) to require air quality monitoring around marine transfer stations because my community and others have for too long been exposed to poor air quality from vehicles, construction debris, and other particulate matter. I have joined Environmental Chair Costa Constantinides in questioning ConEdison which operates two plants in my district where one of them burns dirty number 6 heating oil and asking them to convert to less polluting energy sources sooner than mandated under state law. As Chair of the Committee on Governmental Operations, I also helped lead hearings pushing the Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS) to expand its solar on city buildings program faster in order to limit our city’s dependence on fossil fuels that pollute our air. |

1. Healthy & Local Food – Every New Yorker has the right to access healthy, local, affordable produce

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| No one should go hungry in one of the wealthiest cities in the world.  We can provide all 1.1 million public school students with three meals a day so no child goes hungry. I have led the campaign for Breakfast After the Bell, Universal School Lunch (Lunch 4 Learning), and have advocated for school snacks and supper, with legislation I authored Int. 773 to report on offerings and participation.  Seniors in my district are the least likely in the city to receive nutrition assistance for which they are entitled. More than half a million New Yorkers who qualify for nutrition assistance don’t get it, which is why I’ve authored Automatic Benefits legislation, Int. 855, that would provide benefits like SNAP, or 40 other benefits anytime a New Yorker applied for any city services.  I have a strong partnership with four greenmarkets in my district, funding many of them, joining them for “Cooking with Kallos” to raise awareness, and am most proud of launching a GrowNYC Fresh Food Box in my office. I and my staff take advantage of this great program and last year we had over 50 residents drop by the office each week to pick up affordable groceries. |

1. Green Buildings – Every New Yorker deserves the protection of a home that is energy efficient and is resilient to impacts of storms heat waves and extended utility outages

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| We can't be a sustainable city without using our energy efficiently. I've supported legislation in the Council to shut doors when air conditioning is running and to turn out lights when the building is not in use. I have also championed energy retrofits in my role as Chair of the Committee on Governmental Operations and Vice Chair of the Progressive Caucus. |

Strong Neighborhoods: Promote policies that improve the quality of life for communities in all five boroughs.

1. Parks & Recreation – Every New Yorker should live within a 10-minute walk of a park that is clean, safe and well-maintained

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| Most are surprised to learn that my council district for the Upper East Side ranks fourth from last with some of the lowest green and open space in the City per person. As co-chair of the East River Esplanade Task Force with Congress Member Maloney, I've secured over $150 million to repair and expand the Esplanade, help found and funded “Friends of” associations for almost all of the parks in my district, negotiated two public/private agreements which required a university and medical facility to care for parts of the Esplanade in perpetuity, opened 2,000 square feet of new park land.  I am also leading the fight to open a Queensboro Oval, 1 ¼ acres of land under the Queenboro Bridge that once a public park, which has been privatized for more than 40 years. I would welcome NYLCV as partner in winning this important fight. |

1. Waterfront Access – Every New Yorker should have safe and public access to clean rivers, creeks, bays, harbors and other waterways

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| I represent a waterfront district, including all of Roosevelt Island. My Local Law 96 will mandate the City consult with experts from multiple fields when crafting and implementing waterfront strategies. I won't allow a City where we close of our waterways from the people.  I have also advocated for and won three ferry stops in my district, secured over $150 million for the East River Esplanade as Co-Chair of its taskforce, and continue to work with East River Crew to support boating from East 96th Street.  All in an effort to improve access to our waterways. |

1. Transportation – Every New Yorker should have safe, affordable, reliable and efficient transportation options in their daily life

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| The Upper East Side was widely regarded as a transportation desert when I was elected. Since then I have:   * worked with Congress Member Maloney and Governor Cuomo to open the Second Avenue Subway on-time, * advocated for and won three ferry stops in my district, * advocated for and won CitiBike for my district, * doubled bike infrastructure with protected a bike lane on Second Avenue and two new crosstown pairs, * advocated for and won off board payment on crosstown routes for the launch of M79 and M86 Select Bus Service, * used BusTime data to demonstrate service issues and won 79 new buses to improve M15, M101, M102, and M103 bus service on the Upper East Side, * authorized a 50 year license to continue operating the tram to Roosevelt Island, * identified dangerous intersections in order to protect and promote pedestrian safety,   I recently joined Department of Transportation Commissioner Polly Trottenberg in announcing that we had turned this “transportation desert” into a “transportation garden.” |

1. Resiliency & Recovery – All communities should be better able to handle extreme weather events: rainfall, snow, storm surges, heavy wind, heat and utility failures

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| This is another example where my Local Law 96 will better ensure each community, and diverse opinions, are taken into account when the City plans for climate change. Each community has unique qualities that must be addressed as we build a sustainable city. |

Vibrant Economy: Promote policies that foster green job creation while protecting New Yorkers from the effects of climate change

1. Infrastructure – Make critical investments to maintain New York City’s competitive edge in the global economy while creating local jobs

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| As chair of the Committee on Governmental Operations I have oversight over the Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS) and I have been pushing the agency to make responsible retrofits to city-owned buildings to improve energy efficiency. |

1. Solid Waste – Effective solid waste management will reduce environmental burdens in overburdened communities, save the city millions of dollars in exporting waste and generate quality green jobs

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| In order to call ourselves a sustainable city, we must push for Zero Waste, which is why I’ve authored Int. 1573 to require the city to achieve zero waste by 2030. In order to get there I’ve authored Int. 1572 to mandate recycling and composting in places of public accommodation in order to improve the dismal commercial recycling rates and help us towards our goal. In hearings over the past 4 years, I have forced the Sanitation Commissioner to continue the city’s longstanding commitment of not sending any residential waste from Manhattan to be tipped in any other borough. |

1. Green Workforce Development – Provide training for New Yorkers to help green the city and support its resiliency

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| As a union-side labor lawyer I have been proud to fight for our city’s working families and have re-introduced legislation, Int. 1432, that would mandate transparency and training for any new construction that receives any government assistance. As Chair of the Committee on Governmental Operations I have advocated for retrofitting city-owned buildings and as Vice-Chair of the Progressive Caucus I have advocated for retrofitting of all large private buildings in the city which produce most of our city’s greenhouse gas emissions. |