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## **2017 Environmental Candidate Questionnaire for Long Island 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.

After receipt of your completed questionnaire, you will be invited to participate in a formal interview with our Chapter Board. The interview will provide you with an opportunity to present your credentials, elaborate on your questionnaire responses, and respond to questions. Here are a few more guidelines:

- Questionnaires are due **Friday, June 2**
- 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)
- To ensure your responses address the issues NYLCV and its partners are most concerned about, please review [NYLCV's 2016-17 Long Island Policy Agenda](#)
- Questions or extension requests may be directed to Joshua Klainberg ([jklainberg@nylcv.org](mailto:jklainberg@nylcv.org))

### **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.

Over the course of my 4 years in office I have committed myself to ensuring that the Suffolk County Legislature focuses on improving our water quality; aiming to create policies that promote the purest air quality and highest standards of environmental sustainability. Though we



still have a long road ahead of us, I believe that we have made tremendous progress over the past four years by focusing our resources on environmental sustainability.

In addition, as the Economic Development Chairman I have made sure that my policies and those of my colleagues are focused on long-term, sustainable economic development, investments in our drinking water protection program, conservation of our open space, and are keenly focused on investments in not only our human capital but our infrastructure.

I have been fighting to increase sewer capacity throughout my district, where, in some cases, residents cannot shower and do laundry in the same day due to outdated sewage systems. Limited sewer access and capacity impacts our residents and tourists' quality of life and the time is upon us to finally sewer our entire county.

In my previous term, I have focused on a county-wide Go Green Initiative that limits paper consumption. When I came into office I quickly noticed the County's dependence of written correspondence and redundancies that occurred by not using email/online capabilities to get work done. Furthermore, I implemented a policy that ensures that all intra-county communication be sent electronically and that Legislators receive all legislative documents electronically as well.

This past year I have successfully cosponsored legislation to promote the installation of the advanced waste water treatment systems for homeowners; fought to create standards that limit nitrogen in our fertilizers and ultimately eliminate nitrogen in our waterways (though this was stricken, I plan to reintroduce this in the future); and I made every effort to support policies that promote environmental sustainability and promoted long term plans that limit our nitrogen and improve the health of our waterways, ecosystem, and residents.

## 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 2016-17 Long Island Policy Agenda](#))*

2. Expanding Renewable Power: Streamlining and standardizing regulations that will spur innovation and wide-spread adoption in the residential and commercial sectors

I stand fully behind efforts to expand renewable power from solar panels to wind farms and every opportunity to streamline the processes that prevent, limit, or hinder upon the installation of either solar or wind infrastructure. With that being said, I believe there needs to be comprehensive plans that study the exact location of each of these so that they do not negatively effect the quality of life our residents, however I do stand fully behind these projects and I will work with State and local representatives to fight for the advancement and further adoption of renewable power options.

3. Improving Water Quality: Identifying financing mechanisms to replace failing septic systems

I am 100 percent committed to further identifying funding for wastewater and septic improvements including green initiatives. I recently cosponsored legislation that allows homeowners to receive access to low interest loans and a grant program to install the advanced waste water treatment systems and though I believe sewers are the best next step for Long Islands' environmental quality, these systems offer immediate relief for residents and our ecosystem until we have the plans in place to build our sewer connections. Working collaboratively with CDC LI and the County we were able to put this program together and I hope that it serves as a framework for future programs that replace failing septic systems.

Oakdale, Sayville, and West Sayville all rely heavily on antiquated septic systems, which leaves some of our residents without the ability to shower and do their laundry in the same day. Clearly this has an impact on many resident's day to day lives. In addition, the lack of a 21st century sewer system has a huge economic impact. Our stores on Main Street on the South Shore are limited in how they grow and expand. This deters businesses from relocating to these prime retail locations and hinders on our economic sustainability and that is why I have been advocating to get our South Shore of Long Island sewered as quickly as possible

I previously worked with several layers of government to look at a plan to run a sewer line from the Ronkonkoma Hub down to Sayville, with hopes of connecting to West Sayville and Oakdale. Though this connection is not currently planned, we are in phase 1 of planning for a sewer connection from Great River down to Oakdale and Sayville. In addition I am working with our County Department of Public Works to sewer Holbrook's Main Street by running a sewer line from the Ronkonkoma Hub along Union Avenue and directly down Main Street, which has the potential to be an economic hub if it has the resources to build, grow, and succeed.

A further point is that I would also like to increase transportation from the Ronkonkoma Hub to Holbrook's Main Street so I have proposed that when we run the sewer line to Holbrook we also run a bike path on top of the sewer line or adjacent to it to allow for more access to Main Street and an increased focus on alternatives to driving a car. This plan is still being explored and debated but I hope to make a push to implement this as soon as construction begins.

4. LIRR Third Track: Ensuring the Long Island Rail Road completes a planned third main line track from Floral Park to Hicksville

To build a world class innovation economy we must invest in our transportation infrastructure. The 3<sup>rd</sup> track is vital to our efforts in recruiting and retaining top talent in both Nassau & Suffolk. I submitted a support letter on behalf of this project in hopes that it would encourage other elected officials to stand behind the project. Investing in our railways and public transit is essential if we want to promote opportunities for residents to give up their single occupancy drives to work and get onto a train with hundreds of other people to limit the effects cars have on our air quality.

5. Expanding Electric Vehicle (EV) Infrastructure: Facilitating the development of a larger network of charging stations that will encourage more municipalities, businesses and individuals to switch to EVs in the coming years

I drive a hybrid and really enjoy it but I would like to see EVs become the way of the future for all drivers and that starts with expanding our network of charging stations. Once we have the infrastructure in place and it becomes more convenient to charge your car; more residents will opt for this option. I stand fully behind this proposal.

6. Sustainable & Transit-Oriented Development: Creating livable and sustainable communities that permit increased density and diversity in our downtowns and neighborhoods

As the Economic Development Chairman, I have stood firmly behind our TODs and I want to see more of them shovel ready and built so that we can get our residents living and working within these communities. Creating livable and sustainable communities will allow for us to further attract and retain our young people; get cars off the roads; promote shared transportation options; and provide a more exciting and fun standard of living across Long Island.

I previously passed legislation that created regional planning alliances (RPA) to further support TODs planning and completion. These RPAs allow for the developer and any municipality (town, county, village, state) that is involved to meet quarterly to discuss possible impediments to the project and offer services to help meet the goals of completion.

7. Transportation: Maximizing environmentally friendly mobility options in and around residential and commercial centers

We need to invest in County Executive Bellone's Connect Long Island proposal – running bus rapid transit lanes, North-South from our vibrant downtowns to our world class research facilities. We also need to invest in the 3<sup>rd</sup> track project in Nassau County and expand rail access out east on Long Island and create connections from MacArthur Airport to the Ronkonkoma Hub so that we can further promote the fact that if you fly into MacArthur you can be in NYC in just over 60 minutes by train and out on the East End in the Hamptons or the wine country in 45 minutes.

8. Open Space Preservation: Planning strategies such as clustering, creating pocket parks in developed areas, and encouraging biotic corridors in less densely populated areas

As the Vice-Chair of the Parks Committee I have worked with various community leaders to enhance, protect, and create parks and recreation initiatives. I have been fully in support of creating and restoring parks, investing in land preservation, and enhancing our more densely populated areas by way of open space preservation and park implementation.

9. Sustainable Public Access Management: Making significant impacts on energy use and the environment simply by deciding to spend money and deploy resources wisely

I think we need to do a better job at collaborating in a bipartisan manner to spend money and deploy resources wisely in order to reduce energy consumption, overuse and abuse of our natural resources, and develop further management plans to promote renewables.

10. Energy: Achieving energy efficiency in residential and commercial settings, in existing and new buildings, and with cutting-edge technology and the smarter use of older technology

I support this proposal and would be willing to explore further options to make certain that all new commercial and residential buildings meet energy efficiency standards. Furthermore, we must examine all county facilities to find ways to improve antiquated technology so that we can decrease energy consumption countywide.

11. Water Quality and Aquifer Protection: Ensuring clean water not only for drinking but for recreation and agriculture

Ensuring clean water not only for drinking but for recreation and agriculture starts with investments in our sewage systems and comprehensive plans from all levels of government to rehabilitate our bays and estuaries while limiting the nitrogen in our storm water runoff. I will continue to fight to enact legislation that supports our water quality and aquifer protection.

12. Natural Resource Protection – Comprehensively managing and protecting regional natural resources (i.e., air, water and land)

I will continue to fight for comprehensive protections for regional natural resources such as our air, water, and land. Investing in open space preservation, renewable energy resources, and programs that improve our water quality and revive our bays and estuaries will continue to be a top priority for me.

13. Farms and Local Food: Managing development and providing access to healthy, fresh foods

I am in full support of managing development and providing access to healthy, fresh foods. I am currently working on a Wellness Plan for Suffolk County employees that will promote a farm to table diet and healthy food options throughout the workday. We have one of the top farming industries in the country, right in our backyards and we need to promote plans and strategies that support our farmers, and enhance healthy food options.