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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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Press Secretary’s name and email: Shachar Sharon  
Scheduler’s name and email:Niki Kokkinos

**PERSONAL INFORMATION**

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

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| This is my tenth year working with the NYC Environmental Protection Committee, first working with Jim Gennaro, the chair of the committee, and then becoming a member of the committee when I was elected in 2013, and assuming the chair position myself a year later.  I was the lead sponsor of the bill to set our city’s goal of reducing carbon emissions 80% by 2050, making NYC the largest city in the country to set such a goal. Following that victory, we passed legislation to require a geothermal map for NYC and setting a standard for city construction to consider the social cost of carbon where geothermal is considered as an alternative.  In 2016, the Council passed my bill that would require at least 25 EV chargers to be placed throughout the 5 boroughs in publicly accessible locations on city fields or muni-lots. As part of that bill, the EV working group must consider how to transition EV spaces onto city streets within the next 5 years.  Another trailblazing program is the recent Environmental Justice package, sponsored by myself and councilmember Inez Barron. The new laws call for the creation of an Interagency Working Group to create a comprehensive Environmental Justice plan, to redress the disproportionate burden of pollution and emissions on low-income communities and communities of color. This Working Group will conduct a city-wide survey of these communities and develop ways to ensure that our vulnerable areas are not subject to this burden. The law also calls for an online database so that EJ information is readily available to the public. This is the most comprehensive EJ program of any city in the country. |

**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 our natural resources and that provide access to basic needs.

Water Quality — Every New Yorker has the right to clean drinking water & waterways

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| 100%. New York City has well known clean drinking water. This is a distinction to take pride in, but it is one that we must protect. In this new political era, we cannot take even our victories for granted. As chair of the EP committee, I see myself as responsible for keeping our water clean and safe to drink. New Yorkers already face enough health problems from our dirty air, they should not have to fear from our water as well.  This year, I introduced Intros 1425 and 1468, both aimed and keeping our sewer system functioning, and avoiding backups. Moving water safely around our city, and preventing seepage and contamination, is a key element in keeping our water system clean and effective. Last year, I introduced Intro 1346, to oversee and enforce regulations to keep storm water from polluting our water supply and our local bodies of water. |

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

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| One of my personal missions is to clean up the air we breathe. In my neighborhood, in the residential areas around our numerous power plants, children have an increased rate of asthma. These children must take several medications, which are sometimes very expensive for poorer New Yorkers, and miss on average 15 more days of school from asthma related hospitalizations.  I am also currently working to phase out #4 and #6 oil at an accelerated pace in these power plants. These fuel oils are dirty and release excessive amounts of carbon monoxide, particulate matter, and other pollutants into the air that we must then breathe.  We must address all forms of fossil fuel use in our city. Some plants in the city burn natural gas, which is better than some of our alternatives, but still emits Carbon Dioxide, Nitrous Oxide, and dangerous particulate matter into the air. Some plants in the city even burn kerosine, which is even more dangerous. We must transition away from these dirty fuels and adopt sustainable and renewable energy sources as quickly as possible. I am very proud of our 80 by 50 initiative, but I would like to see the change come much quicker.  In addition to our power plants, the most significant source of air pollution in New York comes from our buildings. I am pushing hard to phase out heating oils and replace them with biofuel or geothermal heating systems. Intro 642, passed last year, will require ever increasing mixtures of biofuel in our oil heating. This biofuel is made from recently dead animal and plant matter that is already part of the carbon cycle, and contains less Carbon Monoxide and particulate matter than conventional fuels. We must address every avenue in the fight against climate change and in preventing respiratory diseases from plaguing our children. |

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

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| Absolutely. I have supported the creation of a youth produce market in the district, to bring local produce to the people. I am also bringing a grocery store to the Astoria Houses neighborhood, the first one in decades, to bring healthier food to this low income area. |

Homes that offer Protection and Savings – 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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| I am pushing to increase the availability of solar and wind power for local residents, and of geothermal heating systems. As chair of the Environmental Protection Committee, I have sponsored and passed bills to support each of these systems. Last year, the council passed my bill Intro 478 to install photovoltaic systems on city owned buildings.  We also passed Intro 609 to create a pilot program for geothermal heating systems. These systems could be used to reduce emissions in many of our buildings and drastically lessen our dependence on fossil fuels for heating. I hope that this pilot program will demonstrate the long and short term benefits of using this technology and I will push for a wide scale adoption once the data is in. |

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

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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| One of my campaign promises was to renovate every park in the district. So far, we have completed about half of this promise, and I'm looking forward to completing the other half if I am elected to a second term. Every year, I add some new improvement to Astoria Park, and to other parks in the neighborhood, via the Participatory Budgeting program. I put a million dollars in capital funds up to a public vote, and park projects always do well. Recent winners include a dog run, gaming tables, and fitness equipment in the parks.  To return briefly to the subject of health, not only do we need to ensure that we breathe clean air and drink clean water and eat healthy foods, people need a place to exercise as well. This is why I'm especially pleased to install fitness equipment in our parks, so that New Yorkers of all ages can work out their bodies and stay healthier. I have worked to ensure that our pool areas are accessible to senior citizens. Park fitness equipment will be available for adults. And lastly, I have been working this past year to secure funding for a soccer field in Astoria Park. Kids will be able to go to the park and play soccer, and leave their video games and Youtube behind for a while to exercise and stay fit. |

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

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| We enjoy having the Astoria Park waterfront in our neighborhood. I am working not only to restore and protect the waterfront, including making use of a $30 million grant form the city last year, but also to build an eco-dock to allow school children to learn about the aquatic environment. |

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

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| I am bringing the ferry to Astoria in order to improve transportation for residents, especially those who live farther from busses and trains. Last year, I passed Intro 1124, creating a pilot program to install publicly accessible electric vehicle chargers. With ready access to charging stations, more New Yorkers will be able to transition to electric vehicles, further reducing emissions.  As a member of the Transportation Committee, I have supported numerous bills to promote public transit and reduce emissions from cars on the road. This year, I introduced Intro 1412, to implement a pilot program for solar powered street lamps. In 2015, I co-sponsored Intro 873, to support car sharing services, to reduce the number of cars on the road. In 2014, I supported Intro 140, to create slow zones around schools.  Lastly, I have fought to return ferry access to the Astoria waterfront. Not only will this bring accessible transportation to residents not near trains or buses, but the ferry is a cleaner alternative to putting more vehicles on the road. |

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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| Astoria is one of the neighborhoods most prone to damage from climate change. This is one of my guiding principles in trying to reduce emissions and bring sustainable energy to the neighborhood. Adding protections against flooding is one of my goals for Astoria Park.  Last year, my committee passed Intro 1198 to create flood mitigation plans for southeast Queens, which was passed by the council and signed into law earlier this year. If climate change continues to worsen, and water levels rise, Queens is facing a great deal of risk of flooding. Preparing ourselves for that eventuality, if we are unable to stop it, is something we must do. |

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

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

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| Bringing green jobs to New York City is one of my highest priorities. Fossil fuels are the way of the past. The technology exists today to move towards a completely green energy system, and there are already many more jobs in solar and other green power than in technologies that are going obsolete, like coal. I have continually fought to bring those jobs to our city and to Astoria.  In addition, I am working to ensure that students in my community learn up-to-date science in their classrooms. We have built STEM labs in schools, and the council passed my resolution calling for the most current climate science to be taught in relevant classes. |

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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| As a member of the Committee on Sanitation, I have sponsored many bills to keep our streets clean and to dispose of our waste, including improving access to public trash bins, and our controversial 5 cent fee on plastic bags. The fee would serve to encourage people to reuse plastic bags, and to use longer lasting bags. Additionally, I engaged the administration to cap sewage tanks at the Bowery Bay Facility, to keep the area from smelling constantly of refuse.  Another recent achievement has been engaging a program called ACE to clean up trash in Astoria. This company employs homeless members of the community and keeps our streets cleaner than ever. In the second half of 2016, ACE picked up 150,000 pounds of trash from the Astoria streets. |

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

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| As above, promoting green energy and the jobs that come with it is one of my top priorities. I expanded the GreenerNYC initiative by $2 million to support organizations that encourage advocacy, education, community service, and green job training. |