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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**

Candidate Name: Donovan Richards  
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Scheduler’s name and email: N/A

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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| As a member of the committee on environmental protection, I am always looking for ways to serve the people of my district in a way that help protect and preserve the unique environment that exists in the Rockaway region. I have been the primary sponsor for many pieces of environmental legislation like working to amend the city charter to create an office of solar energy, passing legislation to push Governor Cuomo to veto a natural gas terminal off the coast of New York, and introduced legislation to reduce city government greenhouse gas emissions by 40% by 2030. My commitment to environmental has been and will continue to be very strong. |

**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.

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

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| Strong commitment. I have worked to push Governor Cuomo to veto a natural gas terminal off the coast of New York through legislation I introduced. Also, we’ve passed multiple pieces of legislation regarding sewage backups that can have an affect on our water quality. |

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

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| Strong commitment. I have introduced and supported numerous pieces of legislation aimed at cutting the city government’s emissions drastically in the next 20-30 years. In addition, I was the primary sponsor of legislation regarding the creation of an air quality task force. |

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

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| Strong commitment. In my district, there are often challenges to providing the same level of affordable, local produce as there is in places like Brooklyn and Manhattan because of our geographic location. I believe that continued economic development and increased transit options in the Rockaway area will help increase the options that our local communities have available. |

1. 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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| Strong commitment. Over the last 4 years, I’ve fought to alleviate the unique challenges that my district faces when it comes to storms and the infrastructure to combat them. I helped secure $18 million for increased sewage capacity for my district so that our communities don’t have to continuously face the issue of flooding streets. Also, as the zoning chair, we are continuing to push for all buildings to have energy efficient portions in projects that come before the committee. |

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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| Strong commitment. Having access to clean, safe, and well-maintained public spaces is a great way to encourage community involvement and a way to keep kids off the streets. We need to do more across the city to ensure this type of access for all NYC families. |

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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| In my district, we are blessed with beautiful beaches and other waterways. It is one of our most important resources. I believe it is important for all New Yorkers to have access to these resources across the city. We’re continuing to work on increasing the ability for the people of my district to more easily access the different waterways we have. |

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

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| This is one of the biggest challenges facing the people of my district. We need more options for people that are realistically going to make getting to work, the grocery store, and other places in the community easier. Just this year, we were finally able to open the NYC Ferry, which will allow Rockaway residents to travel to Manhattan faster than ever before. Since the ferry is in an adjacent district, we lobbied the Mayor to provide a free shuttle bus for our residents and continue to push for an additional stop further east. Also, We also successfully gained a “freedom ticket” pilot program for 31st district at the Laurelton and Rosedale LIRR stations. We need to look to continue to increase innovation so that all New Yorkers can get to where they need to go safely and affordably. |

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 important issue that is crucial to my district. Being right on the ocean has its perks, but it also have its dangers. We need to continue to work to better our building standards so that when severe weather strikes, we’re more than ready. I have also been an advocate for the creation of a database to help track funds meant for recovery efforts from Hurricane Sandy. |

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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| Infrastructure is important. We need increased public transit options to increase our borough’s economic development prospects but we also must do a better job at maintaining and building roads and bridges that can withstand the weather our district faces. Creating safe, strong, and efficient infrastructure will allow our borough to continue to grow along with the rest of NYC. This is why I fought for $1.7 billion from the Mayor’s infrastructure fund for Southeast Queens due to a lack of storm sewer mains. |

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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| This is another area where we need more innovation so that we can reduce the amount of solid waste being added to landfills, which often ends up in the outer boroughs in places like District 13. I hope to expand our initiatives to help communities across NYC alleviate this issue. |

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

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| New York has the ability to lead the US in green workforce development. We have made strides to do so but we can and must do more. By continuing to find innovative solutions to our environmental problems, we are putting our communities in the best possible position to help alleviate the environmental issues we face while also keeping an eye toward building the next century of New York City. |