



30 Broad Street – 30<sup>th</sup> Floor  
New York, NY 10004  
212-361-6350  
[politics@nylcv.org](mailto:politics@nylcv.org)  
[www.nylcv.org](http://www.nylcv.org)

## 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

Candidate Name: Ellen Birnbaum

Office Sought (district if applicable): Nassau County Legislator District 10

E-mail: ellenwbirnbaum@gmail.com

Mailing Address: 28 West Terrace Road Great Neck, NY 11021

Phone: 516-528-3096

Website: being revised

Facebook Page: Legislator Ellen W. Birnbaum

Twitter handle:

Campaign Manager's name and email: Dan Small [danieljsmall7@gmail.com](mailto:danieljsmall7@gmail.com)

Press Secretary's name and email: [danieljsmall7@gmail.com](mailto:danieljsmall7@gmail.com)

Scheduler's name and email: [danieljsmall7@gmail.com](mailto:danieljsmall7@gmail.com)

## 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.

I have been very concerned about our drinking water on Long Island. As a past board member of the Water Authority of Great Neck North and as a County Legislator, I have participated in many meetings concerning the environmental clean-up of the plume emanating from the former Unisys site which was bought by Lockheed Martin who is now responsible for the cleanup. As a past Director of Intermunicipal Coordination for the Town of North Hempstead, I had convened meetings with various water districts to discuss topics such as water conservation and as a Legislator I attend many island wide meetings regarding our water. At a local level, I have sponsored clean-up activities with Boy Scouts to celebrate Earth Day. I am concerned with preserving our local parks, wooded areas, and maintaining our wildlife. As a member of the Finance committee at Nassau County, I monitor spending and make sure our environment is protected and is not damaged due to overdevelopment. I have been working on a traffic calming project which will create a safer County street in a busy downtown area.

## 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 would love to see solar, wind power, and energy storage progress on Long Island. I am interested in standardizing regulations to promote rooftop solar installations. I support legislation dealing with expanding renewable power that comes to the Nassau County Legislature.

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

In my Legislative district, the majority of the homes are part of sewer districts. There are some Villages, where homeowners have septic tanks. I recently spoke with the Great Neck Water Pollution Control District who a few years ago built a state of the art facility and has the capacity to add more homes. I am trying to help them obtain County funding or to add them to an existing grant the County obtained to do a feasibility study. I will work to help find funding in order to come up with a plan to add these homes to the District. It is important to replace failing septic systems which lead to nitrogen overload.

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

I have heard Governor Cuomo speak about the plan to build the third track which should result in shorter waits and less delays for commuters. This would help increase ridership and also booster the economy by creating construction jobs and additional staffing. By having a better rail system, there would be less cars on the road and less greenhouse gas emissions.

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

As more and more car manufacturers produce hybrid and battery operated cars at a more affordable price, there is a need for additional charging stations. At the County level, I would be a proponent for creating a network of charging stations. Because there are roads belonging to many different jurisdictions- Village, Town, County and State, I would like to work inter-municipally to create a network for charging stations. By having more stations, more people would be interested in switching to EVs and our air quality will improve with less gas emissions and zero particulate matter from these cars.

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

I am in favor of creating more vibrant downtown areas in communities. These can be comprised of retail stores with apartments located above. In my district, the Village of Great Neck Plaza, where the LIRR is located, has been promoting building more apartment buildings all around the station. Launchpad- a shared office space concept recently opened there with the help of Nassau County. Residences and businesses near trains and busses are the key to a vibrant downtown neighborhood. I am working with the Village on a traffic calming project on a County road within it.

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

I am in favor of public transportation to cut back on the use of cars. I have spoken up about maintaining funding for the NICE bus system in Nassau- especially when a route in my district was threatened to be cut (but was saved!). I would like to see trolleys or trams be considered in commercial areas such as the Hub that is being developed around the new Nassau Coliseum. Also, I am a proponent of creating bicycle lanes and have tried to work with the County to consider various locations for them.

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

I am working with a homeowners association to safeguard their common pond and open space and make sure it is being taxed correctly by the County. It is extremely important to maintain our natural habitats and conserve the wildlife found there. As a former inter-municipal director of a Town, I know how important it is to work together over borders to protect our existing green space.

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 am in favor of government spending which favorably impacts our energy use and the environment. I have worked with various municipalities in my district to obtain Community Revitalization Program grants from Nassau County for projects such as redoing playgrounds, planting new trees, and flowers, creating new pathways to parks, etc.

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 obtained a County grant for a Village to switch all their street lights to energy efficient LED bulbs. I am supportive of all efforts to create energy efficiencies for residential and commercial properties. I have met with groups who audits of people's homes to save energy and I have spoken with builders and commercial property owners about their plans to use newer technologies.

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

Our water quality and aquifer protection are issues that have been core to my work in the public sector. As a past director at the local water Authority, I know how important it is to constantly test our water and if any contaminants are found, to route out the source and treat it. I know where our wells are located and realize the importance of protecting our aquifers on Long Island. I also live close to a bay where water from the local Sewer plant enters after being treated. This plant has removes nitrogen very effectively as compared to many older facilities. I am also concerned with the County Bay Park sewer system on the South Shore and the nitrogen removal system. I am a proponent for maintaining clean water for recreational use as well as for agricultural use.

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

As a Nassau County Legislator, I have been concerned about the management of a County park in my district. I have been in constant communication with the Parks Commissioner to monitor the spending of funds for the upkeep of the fields, walking trails, dog runs, etc. I am also involved with the Commissioners of my local park district about management of their various facilities.

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

Although there are not many farms left in Nassau County, I am a proponent of healthy, fresh farm to table cooking. During the summer months, there are some farmers from the east end who sell produce in various neighborhoods by me. There is also a farmers market weekly in a local County park. I have met with a consortium of people from a local hospital and the community who teach good healthy eating habits and promote freshly grown Long Island foods. I participate in awareness campaigns to promote these activities.