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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
- ☒ 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)

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.

I have been and always will be a pro-environment progressive. During my tenure as Supervisor of the Town of North Hempstead, I have proven to be a committed and effective leader in the campaign for improving water quality, protecting local green and open spaces, and supporting energy saving initiatives. I was proud to announce in 2015 that the Town of North Hempstead was awarded \$450,000 from New York State to help fund a project to replace the aging septic system at North Hempstead Beach Park. Reducing the nitrogen content in our harbors and waterways is critical for the health of our water and our residents, and this project will play a significant role in this reduction process. I have been a vocal opponent of New York City's plan to reopen nearly two dozen Jamaica wells in Queens, as this would lead to 40 million gallons of water per day being drawn from Long Island aquifers. Just last month, I and my fellow North Hempstead Board Members unanimously passed legislation banning ATV's, dirt bikes, and snowmobiles from Town property. My goal is to preserve wooded land for nature trails and educational purposes. Under my leadership, the Town has been constantly looking for natural methods we can use to control disease-causing pests that do not involve using toxic chemicals. Last year we placed several dozen bat houses around our parks to attract bats, which eat thousands of mosquitoes. This year, I am introducing a new Northern Bobwhite Quail project in defense against Lyme disease-spreading ticks. We are raising a small number of quail in our TV studio currently, and in August they will be released in a few select areas of the Town. One place will be a wooded 200-acre tract, as well as along the Hempstead Harbor Trail. These are both wonderful alternatives to spraying pesticides. Later this month I will be launching an "Only Rain in the Drain" campaign, an educational initiative to help people understand that what goes into the storm drains also goes into our waterways. Rain-activated sidewalk



art will appear with the phrase "Only Rain in the Drain." Under my leadership, The Town of North Hempstead supports the progressive "Be Smart and Green, Save 15" campaign, a plan to reduce districtwide water consumption by 15 percent. The Town is using a wide variety of water conservation methods to cut down on water use at the Harbor Links Golf Course in by using digital moisture meters and other watering techniques to reduce usage. The Town of North Hempstead's Yes We Can center is among the most energy efficient buildings in New York State. The platinum LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certified structure, features roof-top solar panels, grade-level solar trees, electric vehicle recharging stations and geothermal heating and cooling.

Please indicate your level of commitment to, and if applicable your recent personal and professional activity with respect to, the following issues:

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

I am absolutely in support of expanding renewable power. In order to encourage residents to consider energy efficiency upgrades in their homes, I along with my fellow Town Board Members approved updating the building code to include closed geothermal systems, which do not harm our underground aquifers. I was proud to launch the Solarize North Hempstead campaign in 2016. The Town of North Hempstead partnered with New York State to find solar companies that would provide free site assessments and special incentives and discounts to Town property owners. We had selected SUNation Solar Systems based out of Ronkonkoma and SunPower of Island Park for residential installation, and SUNation Solar Systems and GreenLogic of Roslyn Heights for commercial installations. We know that many property owners have a tough time figuring out how to start the process of installing solar panels, and this Solarize initiative allowed local businesses and residents to have easy access to reputable local companies. The Town of North Hempstead is a proud partner of the Long Island Green Homes Initiative, a non-profit that offers a free home energy assessment that helps make affordable improvements to their homes. I will continue to be a vocal advocate for any New York State initiatives that aim to spread the use of renewable energy sources in both the residential and commercial sectors. As mentioned above, the Town of North Hempstead's Yes We Can Center is a platinum LEED certified structure, with solar panels on its roof, grade-level solar trees, electric vehicle recharging stations, and geothermal heating and cooling systems.

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

I am deeply committed to improving water quality. I have been a vocal and steadfast advocate for the removal of 1,4-Dioxane from North Hempstead's drinking water. Upon learning that this contaminant had made its way into Long Island's drinking water, I immediately reached out to our New York State representatives from both the Assembly and Senate, the Commissioner of New York State's Department of Environmental Conservation, and the Commissioner of New York State's Department of Health. I encouraged them to take immediate steps to legislate a ban of this contaminant in consumer goods and to ensure that there is funding available for treatment of contaminated water. I will continue this effort, and will continue to press New York State to fund and maintain any initiatives aiming to improve the water quality of Hempstead Harbor, Manhasset Bay, and the Long Island Sound. Furthermore, I am advocating for both State and Federal grants to encourage homeowners to upgrade to more environmentally efficient septic systems.

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

Under my direction, the Town has provided detailed comments to the EIS and worked directly with Governor Cuomo's representatives. Our primary goal is to minimize harm from construction on those schools and businesses that will be directly impacted. More broadly, the Town has not taken an advocacy position for or against the Third Track, but we have made every effort to engage positively with the MTA on the assumption that this project will go forward and it should be structured to minimize the negative impacts on traffic or residents, especially from the various construction sites. The Town's official comments on the EIS spoke to a range of practical issues including

staging construction on the overpasses so that the impact on traffic is less troublesome, protecting pedestrian and bicycle travel during construction, replacing trees and other vegetation after construction, and minimizing the noise impact on residents from the construction and the additional trains. The Governor's office has been extremely cooperative in working with our elected representatives, my office and the local businesses that will have property taken or access affected by the project.

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 am in support of expanding Electric Vehicle infrastructure. The Town of North Hempstead currently offers a charging station at our Yes We Can Center, and I am exploring the option of expanding these stations to more of our Town facilities. The Town of North Hempstead also has a fleet of hybrid and electric cars for employees that travel throughout the Town as needed to perform their duties. I will certainly be a vocal supporter of State and Federal initiatives with the expressed goal of expanding this infrastructure.

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

· I support both forms of development. The Town has entertained discussions with developers who are interested in creating new communities near train stations. There is always a tension between the existing community and developers who want to build as big and profitably as possible. We can't ignore either side in this discussion but in my mind there is no question that new multi-family housing options are ideally placed near train stations to entice young people who want access to the City for work or retirees who want access to the City for cultural opportunities. Sustainable development is of great interest to the Town. Our Building Department will work closely with any developer who wants to use sustainable methods or create a sustainable building.

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

· Mass transportation is a subject that is very important to me. I am in discussions with NICE Bus to add routes to under served communities here in the Town of North Hempstead. NICE Bus has been steadfast in eliminating routes throughout Nassau County, including within the Town of North Hempstead. This is alarming, which is why I have sat down with the CEO of NICE Bus to get these routes restored. Many North Hempstead residents rely on these crucial routes to either get to the train station or directly to work and I will continue to fight for such an invaluable resource. Furthermore, I am currently exploring the option of a shuttle in Port Washington for commuters, which would eliminate the need for more parking at the LIRR.

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

· Maintaining open, green spaces in North Hempstead has been a priority during my tenure as Supervisor. I am currently in the process of planning the redevelopment of North Hempstead Beach Park, and a key aspect of this is leaving the woodland surrounding the Park untouched. This is imperative, as the over 200 acres of woodland provide a safe and clean environment for local flora and fauna, as well as an educational and peaceful space for residents to walk its nature trails. Under my leadership, the Town of North Hempstead also constructed Alvan Petrus Park, an open and green space in residential Port Washington that is both environmentally friendly and communally supportive. I will continue to be a vocal supporter of developing parkland in both open and densely populated communities.

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

- *A clean and sustainable environment has always been one of my top priorities, and I am proud of all we have accomplished. This past August, a brand new rain garden was introduced at Clark Botanic Garden in Albertson. The rain garden is designed to take advantage of rainfall and storm water runoff. The Town offers classes at Clark Gardens that teach our residents how to properly use rain barrels that collect rainwater from roofs to be used for irrigation. They help to keep waterways free of stormwater runoff, which can be polluted. The Town of North Hempstead's Office of Sustainability is a phenomenal public resource for residents to learn about key energy saving initiatives. The Town of North Hempstead also offers public programming that aims to educate residents about their local environment, and how to protect it. Our "Off the Trail" series with Ranger Eric Powers is one such example. This public broadcast explores the ecology of North Hempstead, and simultaneously offers sound advice as to how and why it needs to be protected. As mentioned above, The Town also supports the progressive "Be Smart and Green, Save 15" campaign, a plan to reduce district-wide water consumption by 15 percent.*

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

- *Throughout my tenure as Supervisor of the Town of North Hempstead, I have made it a top priority to educate residents of the importance of achieving energy efficiency. The Town's partnership with New York State on the Solarize campaign in 2016 was a major accomplishment in this regard. We were able to find solar companies that would provide free site assessments and special incentives and discounts to Town property owners (SUNation Solar Systems based out of Ronkonkoma and SunPower of Island Park for residential installation, and SUNation Solar Systems and GreenLogic of Roslyn Heights for commercial installations). The Town of North Hempstead is also a proud partner of the Long Island Green Homes Initiative, a non-profit that offers a free home energy assessment that helps to make affordable improvements to their homes. In both of these cases, it is clear that education is key. Through initiatives like these I will continue to empower residents with the knowledge that achieving energy efficiency is both attainable and sustainable.*

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

- *I have been a vocal and steadfast advocate for improving the water quality here in North Hempstead and on Long Island. I have been a vocal opponent of New York City's plan to reopen nearly two dozen Jamaica wells in Queens, as this would lead to 40 million gallons of water per day being drawn from Long Island aquifers. I was very pleased to hear that New York City had halted its plan to immediately reopen the wells. This decision will have an immediate and positive impact on our aquifer systems and the drinking water for our residents. I will continue to advocate for the proper groundwater analysis, to make sure that New York City and our water suppliers are working with the best information. As mentioned above, I have been unwavering in vocalizing the importance of removing 1,4-Dioxane from North Hempstead's drinking water. I have encouraged New York State officials to take immediate steps to legislate a ban of this contaminant in consumer goods and to ensure that there is funding available for treatment of contaminated water. The Town of North Hempstead also annually participates in Operation Clean Sweep, an initiative that rids North Hempstead streets of contaminants that might otherwise find their way into our storm drains and then subsequently our waterways. North Hempstead continues to partner with Water Pollution Control Districts throughout the Town, utilizing intermunicipal cooperation as a means of saving resources and maintaining safe and clean water for our residents.*

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

- *I have been a staunch fighter for environmental protection here in the Town of North Hempstead. As mentioned above, I have made sure that 200 acres of woodland will remain untouched and safe for local flora and fauna to live and grow safely. Furthermore, under my leadership, the Town of North Hempstead recently passed a law banning ATVs from our open parkland – an initiative that will certainly help preserve local ecosystems. This will allow residents to feel more secure while touring our nature trails, ultimately creating an educational space for residents to learn about preserving the environment around them.*

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

- *I am so proud to have recently entered the Town of North Hempstead into a partnership with the EAC network to kick off the new Fresh from the Garden campaign at Magnolia Gardens in New Cassel. Fresh from the Garden is a truly unique program, which will give our seniors at Magnolia Gardens and throughout New Cassel access to local*

fresh produce. The Town of North Hempstead's Project Independence is an amazing resource that allows our senior residents the opportunity to have access to healthy and fresh foods. It provides senior residents free rides to local markets, ultimately encouraging healthy lifestyles. I am a vocal advocate for healthy food options for our students in schools here in the Town of North Hempstead. The Town of North Hempstead is also a hotbed for local farmers markets, and I am always encouraged to see so many of our residents participating in them.