



30 Broad Street – 30th Floor
New York, NY 10004
212-361-6350

politics@nylcv.org / www.nylcv.org

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
 - Questions or extension requests may be directed to Joshua Klainberg (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](#)
- 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: Letitia James

Office Sought (district if applicable): NYC Public Advocate

E-mail: tishjames2017@gmail.com

Mailing Address: c/o MirRam Group-5030 Broadway, Suite 807- New York, NY 10034

Phone: 917- 270-4987

Website:

Facebook Page: Letitia “Tish” James

Twitter handle: @tishjames

Campaign Manager’s name and email: Laura Acosta-mslauraacosta@gmail.com

Press Secretary’s name and email: Laura Acosta-mslauraacosta@gmail.com

Scheduler’s name and email: Laura Acosta-mslauraacosta@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.

As a city councilmember I chaired the sanitation committee, where I was lead sponsor on a bill (LL 146 of 2013) that required food establishments to separate and compost organic waste. I was also lead sponsor on a bill (LL 36 of 2010) that required city agencies to create a recycling plan and submit that plan to the Commissioner. As Public Advocate I’ve continued to push the city to divert solid waste from landfills, and I was lead sponsor on a bill that creates a recycling incentive program at NYCHA developments (LL 49 of 2017).

I have also led an effort to get the city’s pension funds to divest from fossil fuels and reinvest in green infrastructure and clean technologies.



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](#) when formulating your responses.)

Healthy New Yorkers: Policies that improve the well-being of all New Yorkers through the protection of the environment and that provide access to basic needs.

2. Water Quality — Every New Yorker has the right to clean drinking water and waterways

I am very concerned about the city's ongoing Combined Sewer Overflow problem. In November of 2015 I patrolled Flushing Creek with advocates from Riverkeeper to monitor conditions along the shore. I intend to keep a close eye on the Long Term Control Plans developed by the city and state, and to pursue litigation if necessary to ensure that the waterways are fit for human recreation and wildlife.

Given the issues with drinking water pollution in areas upstate and across the country, I know that New York City must remain vigilant about keeping the west-of-Hudson sources of drinking water pure and free of contaminants for city residents.

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

I am also very concerned about indoor air quality at NYCHA developments and the presence of mold. I intend to hold NYCHA accountable to address for gaps in the Baez v. NYCHA agreement and compliance with the Special Master.

The city must also do more about asthma, especially in low-income communities. The city must find a way to reduce truck congestion, including the encouragement of nighttime deliveries. Eventually, the city should encourage the conversion from polluting heating oil to natural gas in large residential and commercial buildings.

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

I have long been pushing for the city to offer universal free lunch to school children. The city should incorporate fresh, local vegetables in school meals whenever possible.

I've fought the closure of grocery stores around the city, including in Washington Heights, Chelsea, and Clinton Hill.

I'm encouraged that more greenmarkets are accepting SNAP and WIC benefits, but the city should expand this capability to more farmer's markets and green carts. I support the expansion of the Health Bucks program to more retailers and the Food Retail Expansion to Support Health (FRESH) initiative to smaller grocery stores to promote and establish neighborhood grocery stores in underserved communities.

5. Green Buildings – 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

The city should look at the appropriate way to mandate that owners of large private buildings undergo mandatory energy retrofits. We must work with the state to ensure that these improvements do not lead to large scale rent deregulation by excluding them from Major Capital Improvements.

For small homeowners, I would like to explore how the city can spur the financing of energy efficiency improvements.

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

6. Parks & Recreation – Every New Yorker should live within a 10-minute walk of a park that is clean, safe and well-maintained

I support the inclusion of green space as a part of every neighborhood rezoning. I also support funding for parks and to ensure that parks in lower-income neighborhoods get their fair share of parks funding.

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

Again, I will continue to monitor the city's CSO situation. The launch of NYC Ferry will bring more New Yorkers to the waterfront.

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

I am a supporter of Vision Zero and I passed a bill that redefines the pedestrian right of way so that pedestrians have the right of way during the countdown phase.

I support the expansion of the city's bike program, including CitiBike. I'd like to see the bike share system expanded to more neighborhoods. I am excited to see the launch of NYC Ferry and look forward to the addition of new routes in Queens, the Bronx, and eventually Staten Island.

The city needs to move faster on building out new Select Bus Service routes.

9. Resiliency & Recovery – All communities should be better able to handle extreme weather events: rainfall, snow, storm surges, heavy wind, heat and utility failures

NYCHA must do more to ready their buildings for more extreme weather events like superstorm Sandy. The city must aggressively pursue federal funds for resiliency measures.

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

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

The city must accelerate its schedule of replacing water mains and sewer mains. The city, state, and federal government must identify new sources of funds to bring the subway system into a state of good repair and to modernize signals, switches, tracks, cars, and stations. The city and MTA must come up with a plan to address the closure of the L train Canarsie tube and 14th street line. The reconstruction of the BQE triple-cantilever will be a challenging time for the city.

11. 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

As the sanitation committee chair while on the City Council, I introduced and passed two bills to increase recycling, and continue this work as Public Advocate where I passed a bill to incentivize recycling at NYCHA developments.

A new proposal has emerged from City Hall that would allow the city to reduce many of the negative impacts of the commercial waste industry by exchanging the right to collect commercial waste from a particular district for better and more responsible practices by the carting businesses. This would mean fewer trucks on the roads, improved truck emissions and recycling rates; and better pay and labor standards for the workers on those trucks. Having served as the chair of the City Council's Sanitation Committee, I recognize how valuable those changes would be for our city and applaud the bold thinking behind the franchising proposal.

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

I support the mayor’s recent announcement and agreement with the building trades for the

training of 3,000 New Yorkers for jobs in the green building trades. I truly believe this is just the tip of the ice berg and that the green economy will continue to grow. The city must put in place workforce development and training programs to ready New Yorkers for these opportunities.