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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](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

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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.

As a Suffolk County Legislator, I am proud of my record of supporting a pro-environment agenda. I have worked to advance many forms of environmental legislation that protect our sole source aquifer, improve our waterways, protect the Long Island Sound, and preserve environmentally sensitive properties as open space. I have supported Suffolk County's legislation to ban microbeads, sponsored a resolution to partner with the Town of Brookhaven for single stream recycling, and voted to approve Suffolk County's Septic Improvement Program which will provide grant and loan assistance to homeowners to upgrade to advanced wastewater treatment systems to reduce nitrogen. In addition, I have spearheaded several resolutions to preserve environmentally sensitive parcels in Suffolk County through the acquisition of over 2,000 acres of property. These acquisitions include the 24-acre Country View Estates property in Middle Island, the approximately 65-acre Little Portion Friary property in Mt. Sinai, and, most recently, a 5.4-acre parcel which had been slated for development and is now an addition to the 64.4-acre Cordwood Landing Park. I look forward to continuing to work with my colleagues on the Legislature to lead the way on these important environmental issues.

After joining the Mt. Sinai Civic Association 20 years ago, I became involved in preserving and protecting our environment by advocating against development on the Chandler Estate, which became a County park. I founded Community Health and Environment Coalition, 15 years ago to address the issue of the high incidence of cancer and diseases in my area. I feel our environment directly affects our health. I have advocated for protection of our ground water, air and reduction of chemical use, by speaking at public hearings on all government levels, holding informational meetings, working with environmental groups and galvanizing community support.

Prior to being a County Legislator, I helped initiate Brookhaven Town's Office of Energy and Sustainability. I was designated the Director of the Department and oversaw the implementation of the Green Homes and the Go Solar Programs, which were funded by the Federal Government's ECCBG - Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (\$4.5 million), created to encourage the use of green energy. In addition to running the programs, I supervised and moved forward conservation efforts at the Town of Brookhaven by coordinating energy efficiency efforts in town owned buildings to reduce energy consumption. As a County Legislator and member of Suffolk County's EPA Committee (Environment, Planning and Agriculture) and Soil and Water Conservation District Committee, I have supported land preservation and legislation to protect our environment, as well as legislation to protect our agricultural community. I have sponsored Resolution 29-2012 to exempt county sales tax on commercial installation, to support the solar industry and encourage the use of clean energy. An article regarding this piece of legislation was featured on the NYLCV website. I have also co-sponsored Resolution 747-2011 to ban the use of coal tar, and Resolution 1091-2012 to eliminate sales slip receipts with chemicals that are known carcinogens.

I support Smart Growth, centralizing development to allow increased open space. This will provide better over site of groundwater protection. I was awarded Person of the Year

## 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

While Suffolk County does not have jurisdiction over land use and zoning that would allow for the placement of renewable energy sources, the Suffolk County Planning Commission worked diligently to assist the local Towns in crafting and adopting appropriate codes for both solar and geothermal energy.

Prior to being a County Legislator, I led the Town of Brookhaven in implementing the Office of Energy and Sustainability. I was designated the Director of the Department and oversaw the Green Homes Go Solar Programs, which were funded by Federal Government's ECCBG - Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (\$4.5 million). The program was created to provide an incentive for the use of green energy in Brookhaven. In addition to running the programs, I supervised and moved forward conservation efforts at the Town of Brookhaven by coordinating energy efficiency efforts in town owned buildings to reduce energy consumption. I continue to do the same for Suffolk County by supporting initiatives and legislation that promote green energy projects including the installation of solar panels on county parking lots and approving funding for energy efficiency measures through the county.

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

The recently adopted Septic Improvement Program will help residents finance failing septic systems by providing up to \$11,000 in grant funds from the voter-approved ¼% sales tax. In addition, Suffolk County was able to partner with Community Development Corporation of Long Island's FundingCorp to also provide low interest loans to these homeowners to assist with the remaining costs of upgrading their septic systems to advanced treatment systems. In addition, it is my hope that Suffolk County will also be able to benefit from a portion of the recently approved \$2.5 billion water quality bond from New York State. I will continue to work with my colleagues on the Legislature to identify long-term funding sources to help replace outdated septic systems throughout Suffolk County.

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

I believe this project will significantly benefit the regional economy while simultaneously improving the environment by encouraging residents to utilize mass transit and removing cars from the roadway.

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 fully support the expansion of EV Infrastructure as I believe that the more charging stations there are, the more likely someone will be to switch to a cleaner vehicle. I would support coordinating with the local townships to work on a comprehensive plan to identify priority locations for installation of EV Infrastructure, such as train stations and major hubs, throughout Suffolk County.

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

I fully support creating these types of downtown destinations and Transit-Oriented Developments that have a live, work, play design. In addition, I support county legislation to provide reduced sewer connection fees to developers who create additional affordable units. This legislation will encourage developers to design smart growth-style developments and will allow for a greater density while providing much-needed affordable housing.

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

I believe it is of the utmost importance as a Legislator to provide accessible, environmentally-friendly mobility options such as the proposed Bus Rapid Transit project, Connect Long Island, which will be developed along Nicols Road and Route 110. The project proposes to create a north-south connection which will connect several major destinations across Suffolk County and will help to reduce the reliance on motor vehicles.

I am moving forward with the Rails to Trails project started 15 years ago. Due to community hesitation, government red tape and de-obligation of funding, the Rails to Trails project was almost lost in my district. After getting all of the stakeholders on board, I am moving the project forward. The 10 mile, ten million dollar trail that has been approved by the NYS DOT and the Federal Highway Administration has jumped many challenging hurdles and we're now in the community input stage. I look forward to the completion of this historic trail that will not only add to the character of the communities, but will be a prominent addition to the eco-tourism hub I envision in my district. The hub, located in the Rocky Point, Shoreham and Wading River area, will be the gateway to the north fork and will attract tourists with many proposed projects including the Tesla Science Museum, Science Park by BNL, Rails to Trails, RCA State Parkland and the revitalization of Rocky Point.

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 support the development of clustering codes or codes which create “nodes” or “hubs”. I will work with my partners at the Town to support any land use projects which encourage a tighter design to preserve green space.

As a member of Suffolk County’s Environment, Planning, and Agriculture Committee, I fully support Suffolk’s initiative to preserve open space and have worked to acquire several parcels in my district personally. These acquisitions include the 24-acre Country View Estates property in Middle Island, the approximately 65-acre Little Portion Friary property in Mt. Sinai, and, most recently, a 5.4-acre parcel which had been slated for development and is now an addition to the 64.4- acre Cordwood Landing Park.

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

As the first Energy Director for the Town of Brookhaven, I worked to create incentives for residents and contractors building new homes to invest in Energy Star-rated appliances and I also ran the Green Homes and Go Solar programs which provided grant funding through NYSERDA to homeowners to upgrade their homes to be more energy efficient and install solar panels.

As a Suffolk County Legislator, I have supported energy saving programs throughout the county including the installation of solar carports and LED lighting in county buildings. These upgrades are provided for each year in our capital budget. In addition, we have invested in hybrid vehicles for our Department of Public Works fleets and are currently working on mapping a blue ways trail utilizing grant funding.

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 support legislation adopted in 2006 creating LEED standards which requires the Department of Public Works to adhere to LEED Building Rating System 2.2 principles for new construction projects or renovation projects with a cost of \$1,000,000 or more, and for the planning of new construction and renovation projects "built to suit" for long term lease by the County. In addition, in 2015 Suffolk County adopted legislation authorizing the county to be added as a municipal member to a New York State sustainable energy loan program. This program allows Suffolk County to provide loans to commercial and non-profit property owners for the installation of renewable energy systems and energy efficient measures.

As County Legislator, I have sponsored Resolution 29-2012 to exempt county sales tax for commercial solar installation projects, which compliments the New York State sales tax exemption. As a member of the County's EPA and an environmental advocate, I will continue to move forward with green energy policies. I will continue to support residential renewable energy initiatives. I'm working with the Real Estate Industry to promote the advantage of buying or selling a home that is energy efficient and has renewable energy features.

I have also been working very closely with PSEG and LIPA to educate homeowners, particularly senior citizens, who live in the all-electric communities of Leisure Village and Leisure Knoll, about energy saving measures and available rebate programs.

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

I believe that protecting our sole source aquifer is Suffolk County's top priority. That is why I voted to approve the Septic Improvement Program as part of the Reclaim Our Water Initiative, and why I have joined my colleagues on the Legislature in working to preserve open space and farmland development rights. I have also been working with local communities in my district to invest in several wastewater treatment plant upgrades within Suffolk County Sewer Districts.

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



In collaboration with the Long Island Native Plant Initiative (LINPI) I sponsored legislation to initiate the Educational Agriculture Support Initiative (EASI) which involved creating a pilot native pollinator garden at Heritage Park in Mt Sinai. This initiative aims to educate residents on the importance of native plants, providing for local pollinators, and reducing the influence of invasive species. With the decimation of the Monarch butterfly and the low population of bees which help our farm pollinate crops and sustain our farm community, I will continue to advocate to protect our local pollinators.

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

Suffolk County has made significant investments in purchasing farmland development rights to ensure that Long Island's historic farming communities are preserved. I am a strong support of this program and I am proud to also be a supporter of the Rocky Point Farmers Market. The farmers market provides access to healthy, fresh, and nutritious food and also generates much-needed economic revenue for local farmers. As a former member of Suffolk County's Soil and Water Conservation District Committee, I worked with Local framers to bring produce to our local schools and supported programs to educate our school children about the importance of locally grown produce.