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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**

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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.

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| From addressing the impacts of climate change on individual communities to advocating for clean energy, I have made protecting our environment a centerpiece of my work as Comptroller. If re-elected, I will continue fighting for the environment, pushing back against attempts from Washington to gut environmental regulations, as well as seeking new and innovative ways to green our streets, cut our carbon footprint, deliver clean water, and build a more livable city in all five boroughs.  Examples of my unwavering commitment to securing a greener future are outlined in further detail below but one project exemplifies my record of working towards more sustainable future.  As Comptroller I have sought to green our economy by promoting sustainable business policies at the over 3,500 U.S. companies owned by the New York City pension fund. Under my leadership, my office has launched a groundbreaking campaign giving shareowners the right to nominate directors at U.S. companies using the corporate ballot, known as “proxy access.”  Proxy access give long term investors the ability to instigate change and accelerate the transition to a low-carbon economy. In selecting companies for proxy access initiatives, my office targeted 75 of the nation’s most carbon intensive companies, as well as corporations with few or no minority and women directors.  To date, proxy access has been adopted by more than 300 U.S. companies, including nearly half of the S&P 500, and is already yielding results. Our efforts to exert pressure from pension fund and other shareholder allies led ExxonMobil to recently elect a respected climate scientist to a boardroom seat. Bringing climate-competence into the boardroom can help enlist corporate America in the fight against climate change and make more companies into partners in addressing climate change.  As a fiduciary of the City’s pension funds, I have also initiated the first-ever carbon footprint analysis of our investment portfolios and am seeking to transition as much as $56 billion dollars into sustainable or low carbon investment options. We have also used the clout of the pension system to urge G20 governments to ratify and abide by the terms of the Paris Agreement. |

**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 that provide access to basic needs.

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

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| Protecting the quality of New York City’s drinking water is critical to ensuring the health and well-being of City residents. I have been an active and committed proponent of the anti-hydrofracking movement and as Manhattan borough president initiated the “Kill the Drill” campaign to spotlight the threat fracking poses to our precious upstate watershed. Speaking out against the severe environmental and health risks posed by fracking, I appeared in the Oscar-nominated documentary “Gasland” to sound the warning about the irreparable harm fracking poses to NYC water and upstate communities. As Comptroller, I joined a group of elected officials across New York State in filing an amicus brief arguing that local governments should be empowered to prohibit hydrofracking within their borders. I am enormously proud that years of activism have culminated in a ban on hydraulic fracturing within New York State, which will help safeguard the quality of New York City drinking water for generations to come.  As Comptroller, I have also sought to protect City residents from harmful contaminants in their drinking water. A 2016 audit issued by my office revealed that the City Department of Health failed to ensure that childcare providers tested their water for lead, as required by the City Health Code, increasing the risk to thousands of children of possible lead exposure. My report flagged locations needing immediate remediation of lead water fixtures and pushed the Department of Health to conduct tests at all daycare centers overseen by the City. |

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

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| Air quality, both indoor and outdoor, has an enormous effect on the well-being of City residents. A 2013 estimate suggests that more than 3,000 premature deaths and 2,600 hospital admissions or emergency room visits in New York City are directly attributable to air pollution. As Manhattan Borough President, I proposed pathways to help rent-regulated buildings end their reliance on antiquated and polluting boilers which contribute to air pollution, particularly in low income communities. I continue to support efforts to reduce the use of No. 4 heating oil and to transition more buildings to cleaner, more efficient heating systems.  I was also instrumental in the creation of an East Harlem Asthma Center of Excellence, which provides coordinated services to help families reduce exposure to the pollutants which trigger asthma and to provide holistic treatment for children battling asthma.  As Comptroller I have also released an analysis showing that more than 12,600 NYCHA units reported mold infestations in 2014. I have called for greater investment in public housing to alleviate these unacceptable conditions and bring units into a state of good repair. |

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

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| I have been a consistent advocate for programs and policies designed to help increase access to healthy, locally grown food. My Go Green program, beginning in East Harlem and expanding to the Lower East Side and Washington Heights, sought to bring healthier food options to underserved neighborhoods. My office also developed Youthbucks, a program which provided over 11,000 school-aged students with vouchers that they could use to buy fresh, healthy snacks at city greenmarkets.  I have also released a series of reports designed to focus attention on the need for a strong and sustainable regional food system. These reports have resulted in increased state funding for farmer’s markets, as well as reduced fees for local purveyors of fresh food. Recognizing that it isn’t enough to just bring fresh food to New York City markets, I was also proud to help compile a bilingual cookbook of recipes from East Harlem residents that gets delicious and healthy food to the family table.  As Comptroller, I issued a report offering recommendations to cut through the red tape that binds mobile food vendors and keeps them from delivering more food options to our neighborhoods. I also laid out a series of recommendations designed to help new restaurant owners get the training and information they need, at little or no cost, to comply the City’s often complicated health code. While there will always be a place for fines and other punitive measures to help maintain safety, I believe there is much the City could do to communicate health code regulations more clearly (and in the native language of restaurant owners) and help small business owners comply with all existing regulations. |

1. 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

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| Whether it’s retrofitting the boiler in the basement or installing solar panels on the roof, we must rebuild New York to cut the 73% of carbon emissions that source from our mostly aging building stock. As Manhattan Borough President, I released a report that identified that approximately two-thirds of boilers burning polluting #4 and #6 heating oil reside in rent-regulated buildings.  I have also sought to help more New Yorkers outfit their homes with rooftop solar systems. I have taken aim at stifling regulations and red tape that inhibits the growth of solar, costing green jobs and limiting our City’s progress towards a more sustainable future. Installing solar arrays on the rooftops of small residential buildings involves navigating a complex thicket of regulations, permits, and requirements, and I have worked with the City and solar installers to propose ways of cutting these impediments to green energy.  Implementing resiliency measures in New York City homes is an essential component of adapting to changes already apparent in our local climate. I am supportive of community projects like micro-grids which foster resiliency and have pushed NYCHA to better outfit developments to better respond to the next storm.  My office has also proposed policies which would green and modernize government buildings and public infrastructure, like New York City’s two airports. For instance, my office has proposed applying a sales tax to the sale of jet fuel within New York City to generate a revenue stream which can be used to transform our airports into models of sustainability and help to mitigate the enormous carbon footprint of air travel. |

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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| Our City is home to over 30,000 acres of park land. Parks are a vital component of thriving communities and I believe New York City must continue to invest in our shared public parkland.  My office has issued a first-of-its-kind analysis monitoring how agencies meet their planned capital commitments – a report that singled out the Parks Department as one of the worst performing agencies in the city in fulfilling those commitments on time. The Parks Department has since improved its performance, but my office will continue to press City agencies to improve their rates of capital commitment, transforming budget lines into real infrastructure.  My office has also examined the growth of lawsuits emanating from certain park facilities and has sought to ensure all New Yorkers can safely enjoy their parks. A 2015 report documented a 53 percent rise in playground injury claims over the past ten fiscal years and offered strategies for improving park design to enhance safety and save taxpayer dollars.  Last year I called on the City to explore innovative partnerships to provide free sunscreen dispensers at all public parks, beaches, pools and playgrounds as a way of helping New Yorkers safely enjoy New York City’s many great public spaces. My proposal offered two models to provide sunscreen at virtually no cost to the City while safeguarding New Yorkers against rising rates of skin cancer. I am pleased that free sunscreen is now available on Randall’s Island, with plans for further expansion this year. |

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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| New York City is ringed by more than 500 miles of coastline. By connecting more New Yorkers to their shoreline we can improve transit options, create new public spaces, and provide access to some of the most beautiful portions of the City’s landscape. Rather than retreating from our coasts as seas begin the rise, we must build resilient shorelines that balance community spaces with flood resistant fortifications. My proposal for an East River Blueway served as a blueprint for how community engagement and innovative design can create a vibrant and secure waterfront. Portions of the Blueway have been incorporated into ongoing lower Manhattan resiliency plans and I have pushed the City to develop similar plans for each of New York’s waterfront neighborhoods. As Comptroller, I have also supported voluntary property acquisition and buyout programs in the wake of Superstorm Sandy that can expand coastal park areas while also providing natural defenses against storms. |

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

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| New York City’s public transportation networks is the chief reason why New Yorkers boasts some of the smallest per capita carbon footprints within the county. Public transit is the low-emissions engine of our regional economy.  My office has sought to connect New Yorkers with functional, affordable, and efficient public transportation options. I have been a strong proponent of the MTA and have pushed to secure additional capital investment by New York State and the Federal government. I have also scrutinized the operations of the MTA to ensure that New Yorkers get the service they deserve. A 2015 audit by my office revealed that nearly one third of MTA express buses do not operate on time and offered concrete recommendations to improve bus service within the City. Similarly, an investigation issued by my audit showing poor maintenance of the CitiBike program helped to provide a road map to improving and scaling up service.  I have also sought to make City streets safer for pedestrians, starting with preventing accidents caused by the City’s own fleet of 28,000 vehicles. I have issued an analysis of pedestrian personal injury claims filed against the City, pinpointing areas of concern and opportunities for safety improvements.  As Manhattan Borough President, I compiled a series of reports showing how the lax enforcement of traffic rules, particularly in bus and bike lanes, compromises safety and impedes public transit options. |

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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| Superstorm Sandy brought unparalleled devastation to New York City and exposed the risk posed by extreme weather to people and property in all five boroughs. In the days, months, and years following Superstorm Sandy, I have toured our coastal communities on the frontlines of climate change and have worked with residents to prepare against the inevitable next storm.  As Comptroller, I issued a report quantifying the economic case for investment in coastal resiliency. According to my analysis, over $129 billion in property now lies within New York City’s 100-year floodplain. Given what is at stake, I have urged the City to accelerate the construction of large scale resiliency projects to safeguard homes, businesses, and communities before the next hurricane hits. By fortifying and enhancing the City’s shoreline, we can both protect against more frequent and intense storms and transform the waterfront of local communities. My East River Blueway Plan was a blueprint for how to develop resiliency projects in consultation with our waterfront communities, and I am pressing the City to develop comprehensive plans that will protect every neighborhood in New York. |

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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| In New York City, our coastline, growing population and aging infrastructure put us on the front lines of the climate battle, which poses challenges to our future prosperity and quality of life. In response to the urgent need for investment in our City’s infrastructure I have proposed launching a New York City Green Bonds Program — providing what could be the largest municipal vehicle in the nation to fund environmentally-friendly projects throughout the five boroughs.  Green bonds would bring many benefits to New York. By issuing these environmentally conscious bonds, New York City could grow our investment market to attract a new generation of investors who want to see a social return on their investments as well as financial gain. By broadening our investor base and growing demand, green bonds can potentially save tax payer dollars.  Green bonds would promote further investment in sustainable and resilient infrastructure by shining a spotlight on existing work being done by City agencies. Green Bonds will help City residents and investors understand which projects the City is already undertaking and provide funding for important infrastructure improvements that still needs be done.  Finally, building a largescale and high-quality green bonds program will work to catalyze the green investment market, opening up a new type of capital investment with environmental benefits for big cities and small towns across the country and around the world.  My office has also been an ardent proponent of green infrastructure and is working with the Department of Environmental Protection to use data sourcing from sewer overflow claims lodged against the City to help the agency design future sewer systems with additional capacity to meet the expected effects of climate change. |

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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| New York City generates more than six million tons of waste and recyclables each year. The volume of waste produced by residents and businesses presents serious environmental, health, and financial challenges to our City.  I remain a staunch advocate of the 2006 Solid Waste Management Plan, which created a more equitable and sustainable system for waste disposal. My office continues to review contracts relating to the plan’s implementation and I will work with the City to ensure that the burdens of waste collection and are fairly distributed.  I also support an overhaul of our commercial waste collection system. By implementing a zoned pickup system, I believe we can drastically reduce the more than 23 million miles private commercial haulers travel each year and reduce the noxious emissions which choke our must vulnerable communities.  I also believe we must reduce our waste output, starting with raising our recycling diversion rates which are some of the worst in the nation. My office has released audits investigating recycling practices among several City agencies to ensure the City sets a positive model as a conscientious recycler. |

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

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| Not only is addressing climate change a moral imperative – it is an economic opportunity for workers within our City. By equipping our workforce with the necessary skills to install solar, retrofit buildings, or manage new green technologies, we can boost both the economy and the environment.  I support training programs that help New Yorkers, particularly students and youth, to develop the expertise necessary to create lasting change. In collaboration with organized labor, educational institutions, and community organizations, we can help New Yorkers gain new skills and can lift the fortunes of neighborhoods across the City.  I have been a strong proponent of equipping the City’s more than 1,000 school buildings with rooftop solar arrays. My 2012 report, Rooftop Revolution, provided a blueprint for installing solar systems with the capacity to generate as much as 169 megawatts of clean, renewable energy. These solar projects can drive down energy use, reduce the City expenditures on electricity, and will offer an educational opportunity for students.  As Comptroller, I have taken action to encourage the burgeoning green economy in our City and support the development of green jobs. I have proposed the creation of a fast-track green permitting system at the City Department of Buildings designed to help incentivize green construction and efficiency retrofits. Outdated regulations and bureaucracy should not be an impediment to small businesses trying to creating a greener future. |