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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](http://nylcv.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/LIChapterAgenda16-17.pdf)
* Questions or extension requests may be directed to Joshua Klainberg (jklainberg@nylcv.org)

**Campaign Contact Information**

Candidate Name: Edward P. Romaine
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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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| **As Town Supervisor, I have instituted a number of initiatives to help further my environmental agenda and address these goals and concerns, such as:*** **Established a fuel efficiency standard of 33MPG for Town vehicles and will replace aging cars with hybrid models;**
* **Deployed new hybrid Ford Fusions with six additional coming in the near future; this will not only reduce auto emissions and our dependency on fossil fuels, but also reduce our carbon footprint**
* **Planned to install electric vehicle charging stations at Town Hall;**
* **Reduced its vehicle emissions by more than 15% over 2005 levels;**
* **Upgraded to energy efficient, cost-saving lighting at many Town facilities with more upgrades to come in the future;**
* **Replaced thousands of inefficient street lights, parks and ballfield lights with energy efficient LED lights, lowering energy costs and reducing our carbon footprint;**
* **Instituted wind, solar, and geothermal codes; all new homes constructed in Brookhaven are solar ready;**
* **Revised our solar code to prevent the clear cutting of trees for so called “solar farms,” encouraging appropriate siting for solar energy production facilities and providing standards for solar energy facilities on previously cleared lands and/or disturbed properties; and**
* **Committed to planting 10,000 new trees by 2020. Last year the Town distributed and planted nearly 2,000 trees and repeated the effort this year. 2,000 trees will continue to be planted each year under my leadership .**

**In 2015, I implemented an Energy Efficiency & Sustainability Initiative to better prepare the Town for future challenges relating to climate change. This call to action consists of a 5-year Capital Plan for making smart and practical changes to help us address future challenges. The Town has already met its goal of achieving 50% reduction of Greenhouse Gas Emissions by 2020, a full three years early.** **In 2016, the Town Board adopted my legislation to create a Nitrogen Protection Zone, which begins an incremental rollback of the discharge of nitrogen from sanitary waste into the ground. More stringent standards have been implemented for sanitary systems installed with new construction located within 500 feet of a body of water, requiring sanitary systems that discharge no more than 8 milligrams of nitrogen per liter of effluent.****Earlier this year, I lobbied with members of our state delegation for legislation to expand the Long Island Central Pine Barrens Core Preservation Area, increasing the area by an additional 1,100 acres of forested property in Shoreham and Mastic. Expanding the core will assure that these forested areas that are critical to our ecosystem are preserved as open space and remain accessible to all residents; I am strongly opposed to the clear-cutting of trees and woodland, trading one green for another.** |

 **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](http://nylcv.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/LIChapterAgenda16-17.pdf))

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

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| **I strongly support and have instituted amendments to our zoning and building codes as part of an effort to reduce the Town’s emissions of greenhouse gases that contribute to climate change. We’ve adopted model solar, wind and geothermal codes to support this effort. All new homes must be solar ready. As Brookhaven Supervisor, I am proud to have initiated a number of policies to help fight climate change. In my 2015 State of the Town address, I identified an ambitious goal of cutting greenhouse gas emissions from Town operations in half by 2020. The Town Board and I have taken action based on the best available science on climate change. This year our goal of planting 10,000 trees by 2020 was attained a full two years early. As a result of our efforts, the Town of Brookhaven has been named a Tree City by the Arbor Foundation for the last three consecutive years.**  |

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

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| **In 2016, the Town Board adopted my legislation to create a Nitrogen Protection Zone, which begins an incremental rollback of the discharge of nitrogen from sanitary waste into the ground. More stringent standards have been implemented for sanitary systems installed with new construction located within 500 feet of a body of water, requiring sanitary systems that discharge no more than 8 milligrams of nitrogen per liter of effluent. In this same vein, I have advocated for a grant program for residential installation of AI sanitary systems and have been working closely with the County on grants to provide funding for this purpose, not only for residential systems, but also for systems at municipal parks and buildings.** **In order to promote sustainable development on Long Island, a plan should be developed to protect our natural water resources. I support the creation of a Long Island Water Resources Management Board to promote this effort, as well as the development of a regional energy strategy and energy conservation programs to promote an affordable, reliable low‐carbon energy supply. As part of a regional strategy, an Island-wide zero waste plan should be implemented to protect our beaches and marine industry.**  |

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

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| I have long supported and advocated for the Governor’s efforts to implement the Third Track Project between Floral Park and Hicksville stations. The Third Track project will alleviate severe congestion during peak periods, decrease frequency of delays and cancellations, and provide a more attractive and punctual service to those who frequent the LIRR. The LIRR is the busiest commuter railroad in North America, serving the highest populated densities in the country. Commuters should have the ability to rely on the LIRR to provide an efficient system that will guarantee on-time departures and arrivals. The Third Track is a worthwhile investment that will benefit the population of Long Island’s workforce that uses the railroad as their daily commute, and also addresses the concerns of many residents in the surrounding areas of the railroads by installing sound attenuation walls, and improve safety by removing areas where vehicles and pedestrians can collide with trains by eliminating all seven grade crossings. This project is long overdue and will help deal with the rising population of Long Island commuters. |

1. 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

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| **I support the increased use of plug-in electric vehicles on Long Island. This past fall the Town purchased our first all-electric vehicle. We plan to purchase additional all-electric vehicles this year, and to install several charging stations at Town Hall and other Town facilities. These electric vehicles will allow us to retire older gas-powered vehicles. In addition, we will be purchasing battery-powered landscape equipment to replace two-stroke gas-powered equipment that emits high levels of pollutants and noise.** |

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

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| **I support smart growth zoning and land use policies, steering new residential and commercial development to existing communities within close proximity to transit facilities. Walkable and transit-oriented communities have been initiated in the Town of Brookhaven at Wincoram, a win not only for Coram but for the region as a whole. Wincoram, the Arboretum and the Meadows are all sustainable, mixed-use, walkable projects in Brookhaven providing housing options for our young people as well as empty nesters.   These are the types of projects we should be building more of on Long Island. We are also encouraging adaptive reuse of near empty/abandoned strip shopping malls for mixed use housing and retail development.** |

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

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| **For years, I have stressed the need for better transportation. I strongly support an expansion of the bus system that would tie into our train system, placed near our downtowns. People take cars because they have no other choice, however, if transportation options were available to them that were affordable, we could have a “less vehicle” society, creating a network of transportation.** |

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

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| I believe in preserving open space, particularly in our stream and river corridors, and this has always been among my highest priorities. We have a standard practice in the Town of Brookhaven for multi-family development to be clustered and developers are required to dedicate a portion of open space to the Town as part of the project.  |

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

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| **Two years ago I set a goal within the Town of Brookhaven to cut the Town’s greenhouse gas emission by 50% by the year 2020. Some of our efforts towards achieving that goal include the following investments that will make a positive impact on energy use and ultimately the environment:****We have completed energy audits of Town facilities that have resulted in energy upgrades, including LED interior lighting throughout Town Hall, at the Mastic Pool and at Calabro Airport. Brookhaven Town is also working to procure green power for Town facilities.** **In addition, the Town is beginning the replacement of interior lighting with exterior LEDs at our ballfields and at Town Hall. We have initiated a major capital project to replace all of our older streetlights, over 30,000 of them, with more efficient LED fixtures over the next two years.**  |

1. 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

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| **Brookhaven instituted changes to our building codes that make it easier than ever for residents to install solar panels on their homes and businesses. We have upgraded our land use and building codes to protect our forests, and to ensure that new homes and businesses are energy efficient.** **We are engaged with New York State’s energy efficiency efforts, and completed a “Solarize Brookhaven” program with the State that resulted in the installation of solar panels on over 70 households.** **We have also adopted a policy of not increasing assessments on homes that have installed solar, wind or geothermal improvements on their property.** |

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

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| **As Brookhaven Town Supervisor and in my previous experience serving as a County Legislator, protecting the environment has always been my top priority, from preserving open space and farmland as a means of protecting our precious drinking and surface waters, to implementing code changes and renewable energy legislation including codes for wind, solar and geothermal. I’ve developed and implemented land use plans, storm water and runoff management plans, infrastructure standards and building codes so the Town can adapt to future climate change risks, rising surface waters and other weather events that impact our environment.** **Superstorm Sandy underscored the fragility of the region’s water supply and wetlands and the negative impact of nitrogen contamination and the threat it poses to our waterways, including a decline in clam harvest in our Great South Bay, recurring brown tides fed by nitrogen seepage from septic systems and cesspools; a collapse in our scallop industry as a result of algal blooms and overharvested hard clams failing to recover, just to name a few.** **In 2016, the Town Board adopted my legislation to create a Nitrogen Protection Zone, which begins an incremental rollback of the discharge of nitrogen from sanitary waste into the ground. More stringent standards have been implemented for sanitary systems installed with new construction located within 500 feet of a body of water, requiring sanitary systems that discharge no more than 8 milligrams of nitrogen per liter of effluent.****More recently, I lobbied with members of our state delegation for legislation to expand the Long Island Central Pine Barrens Core Preservation Area, increasing the area by an additional 1,100 acres of forested property in Shoreham and Mastic. Expanding the core will assure that these forested areas that are critical to our ecosystem are preserved as open space and remain accessible to all residents; I am strongly opposed to the clear-cutting of trees and woodland, trading one green for another** |

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

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| **In order to promote sustainable development on Long Island, a plan should be developed to protect our natural water resources. I support the creation of a Long Island Water Resources Management Board to promote this effort, as well as the development of a regional energy strategy and energy conservation programs to promote an affordable, reliable low‐carbon energy supply. As part of a regional strategy, an Island-wide zero waste plan should be implemented to protect our beaches and marine industry.** |

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

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| As a County Legislator and now as Town Supervisor, I have always been an advocate for the farming industry and viewed farming as economic development, particularly on the North Fork of Long Island as well as the eastern part of Brookhaven town, which is home to most of the Town’s farmland. As Legislator, my district consisted of more farmland than all 18 districts combined, with Long Island leading as #1 in Agriculture for all of New York State. **When I was elected Town Supervisor in 2012, one of my first initiatives was to re-institute the Town’s Agriculture Advisory Board. Under my leadership, this board has been meeting monthly since early 2013 to discuss the farming needs within the Town. The Ag Board provides insight and recommendations to the Town Board on a host of Ag-related issues, such as the PDR program, farming sustainability, creation of a mariculture program in the Town, all from a farmer’s perspective.** **I support local Farmers Markets and, with the assistance of the Ag Advisory Board, we are working on bringing “Farmers Markets” to Town Hall and other Town facilities, Markets similar to that which was held at the Dennison Building and the County Center many years ago, which I supported as a County Legislator.** **I also strongly support and am interested in creating a young farmer program. With aging farmers retiring, we need to teach and mentor new farmers who can succeed them. The average age of a U.S. farmer is now approaching 60, but business analysts consider 35 years of age to be the median age of the practitioners in any vibrant economic sector. Unless and until the people who want to preserve farmland can sit around a table and figure out how to preserve farmers, we’re not solving the need of the hour: land stewardship.**Local food production-distribution networks often start on smaller, sustainable “family” farms. Evidence indicates that local food systems support local economies; farmers' markets positively affect the business surrounding them, while also providing significant sources of income for local farmers, thus maintaining the viability of many small, local farms.   |