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

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| My passion for protecting the environment was catalyzed during my time at Cornell University- one of the most progressive and green institutions in the nation. I was proud to work towards the university's pledge to achieve carbon neutrality by 2035. In Syosset, I have worked to match Cornell's initiative towards fighting for a cleaner world. We continue to have universal recycling in all of our 10 school buildings. Most importantly, I have been vocal in my position as an elected official that our district, and our county, should live up to the ideals and statures of the Paris Climate Accord. |

**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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| Too often, government regulation is antithetical to forward progress. Long Island is plagued by a lack of cohesiveness and communication between municipalities. I have seen this first-hand when trying to work together with my colleagues from neighboring school districts. I am committed to streamlining and standardizing regulations that will spur innovation and wide-spread adoption of renewable power expansion in the residential and commercial sectors.  I also want to install geothermal heat and air conditioning plants wherever possible, which satisfy our energy demands at low costs and effect a large reduction in our carbon footprint. |

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

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| It was alarming to read in Newsday just how many school districts had elevated lead levels in their drinking water. I am proud to work in Syosset, where we installed filtration systems in all ten of our school buildings. I hope every school district follows our lead.  The most effective step, and the only real solution on Long Island is to expand our sewer systems to incorporate all areas that currently use septic systems.  The more homes that stop leaking poison into our ground by being connected to sewers is the only true solution long term.  We should also explore the possibility of tapping into the NYC water supply.  Even at a higher cost than our own water districts currently supply, the expense will not seem so exorbitant as water costs rise over the years and health concerns add to our current water costs. |

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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| The third track is imperative for all those that use the LIRR, and therefore is imperative to the future of Long Island.  “NIMBYism” must be ignored in this case– the greater good for the many far outweighs the negative for the very few. If we want to keep the next generation of Long Islanders here instead of moving to New York City or down south, then we need to offer them a viable, affordable, and most importantly, reliable public transportation system. The Third Track improves our chances of having success in all these areas. I will be a strong vocal supporter of this project. |

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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| Having just graduated from Harvard's Graduate School of Education, it was fantastic to see myriad charging stations for Electric Vehicles all across Cambridge, Mass. Just as we require a fixed number of parking spots for all new building approvals, we should establish a minimum number of charging stations as a new code for all new construction approvals. Whether it is in the parking lots of malls, government buildings, or school districts, charging stations should be considered and encouraged when doing repairs and re-paving, allowing the installation of charging stations at a minimal price point since other work will be completed at the same time. |

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 believe the development of communities around traffic hubs has been a focus for both Nassau & Suffolk governments for a good number of years now.  I want to add supporting housing for recent college graduates to this focus, concentrating on areas around LIRR train stations in order to keep millennials here on Long Island (<https://www.joshlafazan.com/keeping-the-youth-on-long-island>). By redesigning our downtowns as having "complete streets," young people will not need cars, and since they will live near the LIRR, they will be able to take mass transportation to work. This is a home run for the environment, for our economy, and for the next generation of Long Islanders.  Millennials, the most diverse generation in American history, are comfortable living in a diverse community.  Growing urban areas evolve into more diverse communities organically. |

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

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| Connecting our communities via mass transit is the lynchpin for Nassau County's future.  Young people are opting to buy fewer cars, and instead are demanding affordable and reliable mass transit. We need to terminate our current private bus contract, and instead develop a new system that connects the Long Island hub and our universities with affordable housing complexes (which we need to build!).  In areas of high traffic at busy times, we should implement small bus shuttles to help support small downtowns and encourage the growth of ride sharing and bike usage here on Long Island. |

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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| As a Nassau County Legislator, I will be a fierce advocate for the preservation of existing open spaces, and for the continued designation of public space. Community gardens and urban farms have proven efficacy when it comes to community health, and our government should work with local municipalities for the further development of both. Protecting public space from development should be a priority in Nassau County.  I support preservation land trusts and community preservation funds– the North Shore Land Alliance is a perfect example of individuals working together to preserve open space. |

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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| I have worked to reduce our energy expenditures in Syosset, and have proposed an ambitious plan to improve our energy efficiency without spending millions on an energy performance contract like many school districts do, which only enriches the large corporations. I believe we should spend the money more wisely on all improvements that have short return on investment periods, and then improve our energy efficiency over time with the new savings.  As a Nassau County Legislator, I will encourage the development of solar arrays in our county owned parking lots.  We should implement all green energy initiatives with a return on investment of three years or less immediately! An amalgamation of tactics is needed to make Nassau County as green as it can be, and I will be proud to be one its architects. |

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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| Nassau County should upgrade the laws on the books when it comes to energy efficiency, so that every new building that is constructed meets not a bare minimum, but a high level of energy efficiency. Furthermore, the process for residential homeowners to make their own homes more energy efficient should be readily available on the county website. Moreover, just as the county offers lessons and workshops for property tax assessment grievances, we should offer trainings at public libraries in lower-income populations so that all homeowners have equal access to education about the benefits of installing energy saving devices. |

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

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| As previously mentioned, the only true protection for our water aquifers are to connect more people to sewers, and then to have an ocean outfall pipe with de-nitrification technology for the Bay Park Sewage Treatment Facility.  Long before water becomes a precious commodity, and it one day will be treated as such, we should make a deal with NYC before they begin to tap into our western most wells, which they have the legal right to do. |

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

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| When it comes to protecting our natural resources, I believe schools are on the front lines. We need to partner with local school districts to teach our students about the importance of conservation.  They will be the stewards of the next generation, and their commitment to the ecology is essential. By partnering with local districts, we can reach youths early on in their lives, and set them up to be green citizens for their entire lives. |

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

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| I will work with groups such as the North Shore Land Alliance to ensure the continuation of productive farmland through the acquisition and donation of development rights, such as Meyer's Farm in Woodbury. It is important that all communities, regardless of income level, have access to fresh and healthy foods.  That is why I will be a strong advocate in expanding the FreshConnect program and eradicating "Food Deserts" in our urban communities. Moreover, as a county legislator, I will be proud to partner with school districts to increase education awareness for both students and parents on the importance of a healthy diet. Education will be the catalyst for the protection of our environment by the next generation. |