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2019 Environmental Candidate Questionnaire for New York City Public Advocate Candidates

Candidate name: Jumaane D. Williams

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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 NYC Council Member, I cosponsored Local Laws 60 & 64 creating an interagency working group to establish an Environmental Justice plan to incorporate EJ concerns into City decision making, define EJ areas of the City and their concerns, propose legislative/policy/budget/other recommendations to advance EJ in these areas, and publicize all EJ information through a City web portal.

I believe pursuing environmental justice offers us an opportunity to achieve a “just transition” to a new economy, where communities of more color and other disadvantaged groups who have been exploited and negatively affected by the environmental consequences of the old economy can not only be made whole but made better. I am a strong supporter of [Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez](#)’s Green New Deal.

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 2018 NYC Policy Agenda](#) when formulating your responses.)

2. Energy and Infrastructure

I've been glad to support Council Member Constantinides and the Climate Works For All campaign in the Council Member's bill to increase the energy efficiency of buildings here in New York City. In my lieutenant governor race, I was disturbed to learn that while a great deal of attention was given to banning fracking in New York, power plants operating on fracked gas imported from other states were still under construction and operation. These plants expel harmful particulate matter, damaging the communities nearby, and it is why I was proud to co-sponsor my colleague Council Member Levin's bill to ban use of fracked products in NYC. Rather than linger on with inefficient technology and infrastructure, we need to turn attention to the Green New Deal.

3. Resilience

One of the first bills I passed in Council was to improve resiliency, requiring the City to triple their inspection and maintenance rates of storm drains and catch basins, but more is needed. To ignore opportunities to invest in green infrastructure like bioswales and incorporating climate change into our overall infrastructure planning is the definition of penny wise and pound foolish.

4. Solid Waste

I was proud to co-sponsor and vote for my colleague Council Member Reynoso's bill to impose a zoning system for private waste carters and to bring equity to the City's system of waste transfer stations, which overwhelmingly burden disadvantaged communities and communities of more color. With the burden evenly shared among the City, the charge now is to reduce that burden overall by aggressively pursuing a system where zero waste is sent to landfills, and I would deploy the powers of the Public Advocate's office to that goal. I supported Reynoso's bill even though it meant potential for increased trash in my own district.

5. Clean Air

I was proud to co-sponsor efforts to accelerate the phasing out of Number 6 and Number 4 fuel oil in NYC power plants and will continue to push for this evolution to cleaner sources of energy wherever possible. I will strongly advocate for clean air so that our food grown organically by farmers will be its best.

6. Clean Water

The clearest message we can send as a city is to deploy our dollars in support of our values. I would advocate for increased adoption of green materials and practices by all City agencies and would regularly use the Public Advocate's charter cop powers to compel agencies to produce internal documents demonstrating their commitment to both.

7. Sustainable Food Systems

As more people move into our cities, I believe we must learn and develop ways to maximize the use of the food we have as well as produce what food here that we can. I was glad to co-sponsor efforts to promote urban agriculture and support our own growing farmers. I also believe we should use the City's purchasing power to increase the supply of locally-sourced fruits, vegetables, and other nutritious food in public buildings. In my first term in City Council, I introduced legislation to reuse food waste from public schools to feed the growing population of food insecure residents.

8. Mobility

I support advancing a congestion pricing plan to fund mass transit, even if it means unilaterally developing a plan on our own authority. In the event we go forward independently, I would support using the funds generated to support mass transit that is similarly 100% within the City's control, like the NYC Ferry system.

9. Parks, Waterfronts and Natural Areas

As we invest in infrastructure to resist climate change, we must recognize the opportunity to do so in a way that transforms our surroundings into something that cooperates with our environment rather than suppress it; to protect our watersheds and green spaces, rather than exploit them. Any such development must be done in close cooperation with the local communities to yield a result that is supported by the neighborhood rather than imposed upon it.