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## **2019 Environmental Candidate Questionnaire for New York City Public Advocate Candidates**

Candidate name: Melissa Mark-Viverito

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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 Speaker of the New York City Council, I passed several significant pro-environment legislation which included:

The Environmental Justice Task Force

Carryout Bag Fee, although the state reversed it.

Asthma Free Housing Act.

Phasing Out Dirty Home Heating Oil.

Energy Efficiency Grades on Buildings.

I chaired the Park's committee and made it a priority to preserve our green spaces throughout the City for the benefit of the public.

I have always maintained a 100% score from the League when in the Council.

## 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

As a member of the City Council, I supported efforts to reduce our consumption of energy by supporting benchmarking bills and working to promote green energy technology.

On March 28, 2016, I sponsored legislation that required new city-owned buildings costing \$2 million or more to comply with a higher Gold standard on the rating system used by the city- Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED). To comply with the Gold standard, city buildings are required to cut energy use by 50 percent.

As Public Advocate, I will remain committed toward promoting green technology and infrastructure.

### 3. Resilience

One of my first decisions that I made as Speaker, was to establish a Recovery and Resiliency Committee. We need to continue to champion Resilience given the fact that we are increasingly seeing the effects of Climate Change.

As Public Advocate, I will continue to champion for the City to take the proper steps to establish Resilience practices that protect our City.

### 4. Solid Waste

As speaker, I fought to ban Styrofoam, as well as fees on plastic bags, and supported legislation that would limit the amount of waste transfer stations in one area. As Public Advocate I will



continue advocate for fair distribution of waste, as well as environmentally sustainable waste removal plans.

#### 5. Clean Air

As Speaker, I sponsored a package of legislation that called for the reduction of the City's Greenhouse Gas emissions by 80 percent by 2050, the promotion of low-carbon transportation (especially in the City-owned fleet of vehicles), and strengthening of the NYC Clean Air Act. I will continue this work as Public Advocate, as I firmly believe that humans are the cause of climate change and we therefore must change our ways in order to keep safe the air we breathe.

#### 6. Clean Water

As Speaker I supported the DDC working with the DEP to enhance the City's water and sewer systems in every borough on a \$19 million investment to build new drinking water connection to Randall's and Wards Islands. I led the way in setting standards nationally for cooling tower inspections, in response to the outbreak of Legionnaire's disease in New York in 2015. I have been consistent in my support of bioswales to keep our water safe. Clean water is essential for life on earth to prosper, and we must maintain standards to ensure all people have access.

#### 7. Sustainable Food Systems

In 2017 I announced plans to build new Urban Farms at NYCHA, with \$500,000 of city funding. I fully support sustainable food systems, and believe as a society we need to refocus our eating habits on fresh foods and produce, while ensuring that fresh food is available to people of all income levels. As Public Advocate I will support food sustainability initiatives.

#### 8. Mobility

As part of my Public Advocate campaign, I have unveiled my plan to legalize and tax marijuana in NYS for adult use, and to use 50% of the revenue to fund the repairs for our crumbling MTA. I believe reliable public transportation is essential for getting cars off the road and lowering carbon emissions; have been very supportive of bike share programs in my district and across the city. I have also been consistent in my support for a commuter tax. In order to combat climate change, we need to rethink how we move around our city, and as Public Advocate I will continue to fight for green solutions.

9. Parks, Waterfronts and Natural Areas

As stated above I was Chair of Parks and Recreation Committee in my second term in the Council, and was responsible expanding access to green spaces all over the city. I believe that all people, regardless of neighborhood or income, deserve access to green space, and I fought to ensure that parks were built and maintained in underserved communities, such as Thomas Jefferson Park on 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue. I bookmarked over \$3 million to this park alone and sought community input in determining what amenities to include. In 2016, as Speaker, I committed \$3 million in funding towards the reconstruction of the East River Esplanade seawall. As Public Advocate I will continue to call for the expansion of green spaces, and access to them.

