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**2021 Environmental Questionnaire
for New York City Candidates**

Thank you for taking the time to fill out the New York League of Conservation Voters Questionnaire.

To ensure your responses address the issues NYLCV and its partners are most concerned about, please consult [NYLCV's 2021 New York City Policy Agenda](#) when answering the questions.

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 the 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, February 26, 2021.**
- The completed questionnaire is mandatory for endorsement consideration and must be submitted via e-mail as a Microsoft Word file to: politics@nylcv.org
- Questions or extension requests may be directed to Joshua Klainberg (jklainberg@nylcv.org)
- After receipt of the completed questionnaire, candidates will be invited to participate in a formal interview with a local Chapter Board.
- Candidate endorsements will be made by the NYLCV State Board on April 29, 2021.

CAMPAIGN CONTACT INFORMATION

Candidate name: Amit Singh Bagga

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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.

I have achieved a several notable policy achievements over my tenure in various levels of government, including but not limited to:

- Writing, passing, and implementing Local Law 92, aka the **Shut the Front Door Law**, a City climate protection law mandating businesses of all sizes close windows and doors to their establishment when air conditioners are running;
- Writing, passing, and implementing legislation further restricting the sale of **tobacco and cigarettes**

I have also been involved with significant local advocacy around issues of composting, bike lanes, Open Streets, and more. I've been a member of the Sunnyside-Woodside Open Streets Coalition for many months, and have been advocating to bring Open Streets to the "south side" of Sunnyside in addition to the north.

In addition:

- Establishing the **Office of Labor Policy & Standards**, the City's first-ever office dedicated to supporting and expanding the rights of low-income, people-of-color, immigrant, and women workers;



- The **Fair Workweek** laws, which created the city’s first-ever fair and transparent scheduling practices for fast food workers;
- **Paid Sick Leave, Used Car Sales Licensing, Car Wash Licensing, Fair Fares NYC**, and
- The “**Freelance Isn’t Free**” Act, the nation’s first-ever protections for freelancers.

In addition, I helped connect hundreds of thousands of NYC’s immigrants to financial access and stability by **successfully negotiating with more than half a dozen federal agencies to have IDNYC approved for banking.**

I also led several first-of-their-kind campaigns to educate and organize vulnerable workers around their rights, including **nail salon workers, domestic workers, and paid caregivers**, nearly all of whom are immigrant women or women of color working in dangerous, low-wage sectors.

Also, the overhaul to the secondhand auto city licensing scheme served immigrants in particular. As the specific class of consumers being harmed, immigrants were frequently exploited by their inability to speak English well.

Finally, I have also spearheaded and brokered multiple first-of-their-kind agreements between municipal and federal agencies, most notably facilitating the secure transfer of non-identifying data of homeless shelter populations from the Department of Social Services to the Federal Census Bureau for enumeration, the largest data transfer in the City’s history. This was later replicated with NYCHA resident data, another first-of-its-kind agreement.

ISSUES

Each year, NYLCV works closely with New York’s leading environmental, public health, conservation, energy, environmental justice, and transportation organizations to identify the most pressing priorities on fighting climate change, conserving land and water, and protecting public health. These issues drive NYLCV’s advocacy work throughout the legislative session, influence the bills we select for NYLCV’s Environmental Scorecards, and informs the decision on the candidates we choose to endorse. To ensure your responses are in alignment with the issues NYLCV and its partners are most concerned about, please review [NYLCV’s 2021 New York City Policy Agenda](#) when formulating your responses.

Please indicate your level of commitment to, and if applicable your recent personal and professional activity concerning, all the policy priorities of our partners per the following issues:

Top Priorities

Transportation isn’t only the number one source of greenhouse gas emissions in our state—it is also a major source of air pollution, causing respiratory and other public health issues. This is particularly the case near New York City’s many major highways where too often, these communities are low-income and communities of color.

2. Encouraging the Shift to High Efficiency, Low Emission Forms of Transportation (p. 3)

I am fully committed to shifting to high efficiency, low emissions forms of transportation. If elected, my transportation policy plans include vast overhauls including an expansion of Select Bus Service to provide better transit access in our district, expanding the model of 14th Street Busway pilot, and the expansion or creation of walkways and bikeways on Queens Boulevard and Queensboro Bridge. While expanding bus service, we must also ensure we expedite the shift to electric buses to mitigate greenhouse gases. Resultant of the pandemic, bus ridership surpassed subway ridership for the first time in its history in April of 2020 and has maintained a steady lead, creating an opportunity to vastly expand and improve our bus services and create a truly green, highly-utilized green bus fleet. Locally, we must implement a permanent, impermeable bike lane on Northern Boulevard, and must significantly expand bike lanes to ensure that they are fully integrated with our public transit system. I am supportive of the ideas behind the RPA’s 400+ mile expansion of bikeways, and think that this plan merits serious consideration. We must also once again revisit the expansion of car-sharing in an aggressive way, so as to provide a truly usable alternative to private car ownership in a city that isn’t fully designed for sole public transit use. We must also once again consider other forms of surface transit, including trams / trolleys - but not to connect wealthy waterfront areas, but rather transit deserts with subways.

The emissions of vehicular traffic has exploded during the pandemic and will only increase after the pandemic is over. The BQE and the LIE criss-cross the district I am seeking to represent, and if elected, I will fight for all proposals to reduce truck traffic and improve air quality. In

addition to fully investing in subways and busses and adding more bike lanes, I would also advocate to eliminate park minimums, state resident parking permits, and advocate for the proposal for a Cross-Harbor Rail Tunnel, which would allow commercial rail traffic to flow underneath NYC from NJ and into Long Island, significantly reducing the need for heavily polluting and traffic-creating trucks criss-crossing the region.

Further, if elected I will ensure universal access to transit by advocating fiercely for the enforcement of ADA compliance. ADA compliance is a climate justice issue too; if only 27% of MTA stations are ADA compliant, this creates yet another hurdle for someone with accessibility needs and they may simply drive or hail a rideshare for the sake of time and stress, adding to emissions and traffic congestion through no fault of their own.

More than ever, New Yorkers realized the value of our parks and open spaces in 2020 as our cultural institutions were closed and we had to practice social distancing. Open green space is one of the City's most valuable environmental assets but also contributes to the well-being of our residents and our economy.

3. Conserving New York City's Parks and Natural Areas (p. 3)

We must not only ensure the continuity of our parks and natural areas, but expand on them. Residents of NYC have been extremely reliant upon our green spaces during COVID-19 and, as with all things, access has disproportionately affected our most disenfranchised residents. We must invest in more open space; currently over 1.1 million New Yorkers live with no proximal park access. Parks not only provide greenspace for residents, but also improve air quality in the area, further impacting BIPOC communities already suffering from reduced air quality from proximity to high-traffic highways and worse health conditions.

If elected, I will not support any budget that does not include a budget expansion for our conservation workers. We witnessed the challenges of park upkeep with reduced staff over the summer while budgets were cut and parks fell into states of disrepair. This cannot be allowed to happen again. Our Parks workers must be fully resourced to be able to complete their jobs without the expectation of significant overtime for inadequate pay.

Reaching the City's Zero Waste goal by 2030 will require work from all New Yorkers—cooperation of city officials and private industry, and buy-in from the public. Stimulating behavioral change is critical to meeting this goal, as is ensuring the City has programs in place that promote waste reduction, diversion, and sustainable waste management.

4. Common Sense Waste Management (p. 3)

The significant expansion of green jobs my policies would aim to create will have a substantial impact on our emissions over my time in office. General buy-in from the public is critical, however, and everyone must do their part to ensure a truly green city. NYC already has substantial investment in common sense waste management with a robust recycling system. That said, we are still a society highly reliant on disposability as opposed to reusability. Recently, NYC instituted a tax on plastic bags and “eliminated” plastic straws - we must further divest from plastic and shift towards compostable containers.

This must be viewed as a mutual benefit for the individual required to change their behavior as well as, of course, a benefit for the planet. I would introduce legislation that, over the span of the year, requires restaurants to shift to fully compostable delivery containers, building upon startup models already in existence or in place by climate-conscious restaurants and caterers. This legislation will ensure compostable containers and other items are cheaper than their plastic counterparts, and provide a very modest municipal tax break of .15% for the business. This tax break will be deducted from the capital pool dedicated to the 2050 Green Plan.

This is just one example of the many ways to generate and effect small-scale, local buy-in in favor of a green city.

Of course, we must also return to and aggressively expand NYC’s composting system. New parks means a need for a large amount of mulch, and this city generates more than enough compostable waste to support that need. I will push for the launch or expansion of neighborhood-based composting services under the Department of Sanitation and supported by local community-based organizations.

We also must pursue legislation to create stronger centralization of waste pickup. If all garbage were picked up by Sanitation at the corners of blocks instead of outside of each individual dwelling, this would significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions. When you consider that every day throughout the city, thousands of heavy-duty trucks spend hours on an accelerate/brake cycle down entire avenues, you begin to see a facet of the immense scope of the City’s carbon footprint.

We also must conduct a study of the 2020 Commercial Waste Zones Bill, which overhauled community waste regulations. In this, we must analyze the City’s zoning to see if centralization is being followed, and we also must commit to ensuring that a small number of contractors do not dominate a region while making sure the bill is meeting its targeted environmental goals.

Combating Climate Change

The time to act on climate is now. The recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report makes it clear that we must make radical changes in short order to avoid catastrophic climate change. We will work to advance policies that decrease emissions from all sectors, prepare us to meet the unavoidable impacts of climate change, reduce waste, and foster a strong green economy. We must also ensure the changes we make to tackle climate change benefit disadvantaged communities and provide for a just transition.

5. Energy and Infrastructure (p. 5)

The climate crisis is here, and we will either proactively invest in equitable and sustainable solutions now -- which will cost less and save lives -- or pay the economic and human price for inaction later.

If we have learned anything from the COVID pandemic, it is that an ounce of prevention is far more preferable than a pound of cure. The Green New Deal framework provides a roadmap not only for slowing climate change, but doing so seizing on an opportunity of investment to shape our Western Queens, the city of New York, and our nation for a more just future.

What that means for us locally is that we must ensure that our public dollars are truly working for us. We must invest in significant training and retraining of our workforce so that it retrofit our building stock; we must devise and implement a resiliency plan that treats Coney Island and Long Island City the same way it treats Wall Street; and we must close Rikers Island and repurpose that land to creating a renewable energy source that will allow us close heavily polluting plants that sicken Black and Brown communities and guarantee clean energy for NYC into the future.

The ultimate goal here is to reclaim the energy sector from private ownership for public and community control in order that energy resources be harnessed to support justice, inclusion and an environmentally sustainable future. Decentralization is a key component to dismantling the current energy regime in which historically marginalized communities become sacrifice zones of health-harming pollution and community degradation for regional power grids.

The theory here seems to involve reducing energy demand, for instance through energy efficiency programs and retrofitting buildings, and a shift toward distributive energy systems (aka small-scale generation of electricity) that right-size energy resources for individuals and communities. Current distributive systems include technologies such as solar, wind, load fluctuation controls (smart metering) and on-site energy storage.

Net metering seems essential here, at least at the beginning, since the technology enables a locally owned grid to finance itself/find savings by selling energy back to the centralized grid.

We also need to democratize the process of energy planning and regulation. Increasing participatory community engagement in decisions about energy resources and projects can go a long way to inform your constituents with the know-how to take the next steps toward energy democracy.

Also the use of Community Benefit Agreements in conjunction with community education and planning can also help develop the resources necessary to meet larger goals.

On Emissions

In NYC, buildings account for 60-70% of our emissions, compared to 12% of emissions nationwide. That's a critical failure that we must work to immediately address. As part of my policy proposals, I will advocate for the transition of buildings to be retrofitted to utilize solar and other green energies, creating well-paying green union jobs in the process - approximately 75,000 - 100,000 jobs in the first five years. I support ALIGN-NY's proposal on reimagining the city as a green city and attaining zero emissions, including replacing energy-sapping boilers with more efficient heating systems, replacing decades-old windows with double-paned energy saving windows, and so on. Much of the legislation already exists around a number of these mandates; what the City Council needs is bold leadership from the next Mayor and significant pressure from the public and City Council to bring us into the future. To accomplish this, I will propose the creation of an Emissions Czar that would bring the Departments of City Administrative Services, Buildings, the Fire Department, and the Mayor's Office of Sustainability together to ensure that the city is aligned towards the effort of ensuring compliance with emissions reduction for public buildings as well as private actors.

In addition, we must explore:

- 1. Banning New Fossil Fuel Infrastructure and Phasing Out Existing Polluting Infrastructure.** This means continuing to fight against projects such as the Williams Pipeline that would supposedly bring additional fuel capacity to the city. We must take inventory of all of the city's large fossil fuel infrastructure, including existing oil and gas pipelines, power plants, and other infrastructure so we can begin to implement ways to phase them out and replace them with renewable energy. Such a phasing out will of course need to prioritize workers and our communities.
- 2. Advocating with our State legislature to Create a Public Takeover of our Utilities.** Private industry will not on its own bring us to the green future that we need. A publicly owned energy utility that will deliver reliable, sustainable, safe, and affordable energy to the five boroughs will have to be a top priority. National Grid and Con Edison are not

our partners in meeting our reduced emissions goals. Under the current model, taxpayer dollars fund fossil fuel expansion, generating high returns for these corporations, and undermining our progress towards our emissions goals. Instead, a public utility would redirect profits into programs that support renewables, provide bill relief, or encourage energy efficiency. Public utilities are also cheaper and more reliable than for-profit utilities, and if San Antonio and Austin can do it in oil-rich Texas, so can we right here in New York.

3. **Closing our 11 “Peaker Plants”** by repurposing Rikers Island to house a massive renewable energy source. In considering our approach towards a greener future, we must prioritize the issues most severely impacting BIPOC New Yorkers, such as asthma and similar illnesses. This means establishing renewable energy sources (including Rikers) and closing "peaker plants," a major issue in Western Queens. When the energy grid gets overwhelmed, such as on a very hot day, these peaker plants kick in and provide the city with the energy it needs. These plants are notoriously polluting that harm the health of our communities and set us back on our climate goals. Fortunately, the city can replace them with renewable and battery-powered solutions that generate both sustainable power and good jobs. I support the agreement reached between the New York Power Authority (NYPA) and the PEAK Coalition to close over 6 plants by 2028 and the rest by 2035 or sooner. These will be replaced by a resilient, green electrical grid that will lower peak demand.
4. **Making it easier to go solar.** Solar panel installations have stagnated over the past few years despite the important role they play in realizing our climate goals. The City can do more to encourage solar power installations by passing a law that doubles the property tax abatement from 20% to 40%, and by streamlining the application, permitting, and eliminating permit fees at the Department of Buildings. We must also expand community-shared solar projects such as Sunset Park Solar, which use the shared solar model to lower the energy bills of low- and moderate-income residents of affordable housing. This type of initiative also creates a great opportunity to build worker power and encourage MWBE solar and cooperative installers so that BIPOC communities are included in the clean energy transition and workforce.
5. **Using Union Labor to Install Solar on City-Owned Buildings and Land.** We must get the City back on track to meet its goal of installing 100 megawatts of solar by 2025. Sadly, we have only added 1.6 megawatts over the last four years. In order to meet this goal, the city must lead by adding additional solar capacity wherever possible, and in creative ways. For example, by building out canopies over City-owned parking lots and leasing roof space on private buildings (especially affordable housing and buildings owned by non-profits) for the installation of City-owned solar. Again, as mentioned above, these vast infrastructure projects present an opportunity to create good, union jobs.
6. **Being bold and electrifying all that we can.** Working with the State and Federal government, we must encourage a movement towards electrifying buildings and vehicles to cut greenhouse gas emissions. To make this possible, we can mandate that all

buildings must transition to electric (electric water heaters, heat pumps, etc.) when a building is sold. The cost could be split between the buyer and seller, and lower and working class homeowners would have the support of the state to find a way for the government to cover the cost. For large residential rental buildings, the law would ensure that tenants are not unduly burdened with this cost. City Council can pass a law that requires this to happen.

6. Transportation (p. 5)

As mentioned earlier, I support the vast overhaul of our public transportation including significant expansion of our bus routes, shifting buses to all green energy, and connecting and expanding all bike lanes throughout the city. I also would advocate for municipal control of the MTA, allowing the City Council and Mayor to flesh out subway and bus routes to more accurately and better serve New Yorkers. Many of our most disenfranchised residents live in travel deserts, further reducing their capacities for socioeconomic mobility.

I am a cyclist, a pedestrian, and I am a driver, and as all three, I am a very staunch believer in protected bicycle lanes, which work for everyone who might be using a road. The recent win by Transportation Alternatives to create bicycle lanes across the Queensboro Bridge is a big step in the right direction to create a citywide network of protected bike lanes, and bike access now possible across the Kosciuszko Bridge is an enormous victory for advocates and communities, as well.

Protected bike lanes send extremely clear signals to all those using the roads exactly where bikes should (and shouldn't) be, which significantly increases safety for everyone. It is significantly harder for cyclists, pedestrians, and drivers to negotiate undemarcated or undesignated spaces, and the protected bike lanes are the only solution that allows all actors to be able to do so.

They increase safety for everybody, and they play an enormous role in encouraging bike usage, which over time, we must all migrate much more towards, given the climate, health, and economic crises we are facing.

In order to ultimately be truly effective, bike lanes must form a usable and efficient network not just with each other, but also with public transit, and must also help bridge neighborhoods that as a result of antiquated planning practices are now cut off from each other. This means thinking of bike lanes as fully interconnected arms of our subway and bus networks, and aggressively expanding Citibike across the district to ensure that New Yorkers are always choosing a bike-public transit option over a vehicular option.

Within District 26 and Western Queens, I would advocate for permanent, protected bike lanes along Northern Boulevard and sections of Broadway, and would advocate for jersey barriers

over plastic delineators -- far safer for all involved. This would allow for true Queensboro Bridge bike access from Woodside and would encourage slower traffic on Northern Boulevard, which is undoubtedly a dangerous thoroughfare. We must also adopt Transportation Alternatives' proposal for pedestrian-exclusive signaling.

The wide LIE service roads, which are accessible to several bike paths but do not feature bike lanes, should also see protected bike lanes installed. Doing this would likely significantly expand usage of the connector bike paths (43rd and 48th Streets in Sunnyside, for example, though they are not protected), and would expand safe access to Maspeth and Bushwick.

7. Resiliency (p. 6)

If elected, I will work to fully protect the City's coastlines from rising sea levels. As part of our Parks expansion, we must develop waterfront parks as a community resource and coastal resiliency piece simultaneously. This reflects what I believe to be the best of government -- installing critical infrastructure but doing so in a way that benefits the community by guising it as an art installation, an adjacent playground, or just a green space near the waterfront.

To increase resiliency as quickly as possible, we must focus on decarbonizing and reducing greenhouse gas emissions immediately and substantially. I support and have multiple policy plans built out to move the City away from its dependency on fossil fuel infrastructure, eliminate peaker plants, and shift to green, renewable energy, as outlined in this questionnaire. By mitigating these emissions and working towards carbon neutrality as soon as possible - especially as one of the world's largest cities - we will increase not only our coastal resiliency, but play an important role in the country and globe's resiliency.

While resiliency is indeed a global issue, it's often most tangible on the local level; the easiest locality to observe the immediate adverse impacts of climate change. Be it high temperatures or coastal flooding, the impacts are seen and felt most at our front door. We must address the short-vs long-term ramifications of climate change; the impact of intense storms continue to devastate our City in each iteration, but the solutions -which provide preventative measures and improve quality of life - are significantly more expensive than blanket, real-time fixes.

We must call on the federal government to provide fiscal support for the initiatives the City is already executing or working towards. The City smartly utilized the federal relief funding received following Hurricane Sandy; with the total \$20 billion, the City has been updating its wastewater treatment plants, investing in street trees and heat mitigation, increasing porousness with structures such as streets, and worked to paint roofs white to provide additional heat mitigation. Now, we must lobby the federal and state governments for additional funding to

continue these efforts and build on them, while ensuring these measures are executed in line with a demand for equity.

One easy form of federal support is requesting the Army corps conduct a 2 year harbor study to identify problems with our resiliency infrastructure. In this, scientists will look for risks of storms, discuss sea level projected rises, and compile packages of projects and socialize these projects for implementation and buy-in. The former Presidential administration ended the practice of this study; we must push the current administration to re-implement the study and ensure it is well-funded.

We also must ensure localized federal government shore projects addressing the East River/Queens, Rockaway, Staten Island, and Lower Manhattan are meeting deliverables and are on track with specific resiliency projects the City is executing. To support this, we must engage our congressional delegation and ensure they keep the federal government on track with these projects.

Council District 26 does not currently have an existing resiliency project in its borders. I would propose legislation to incorporate all water-bordered districts in the planning and executing process, adding capacity to ensure project lines remain sharp and focused.

8. Solid Waste (p. 7)

Organic waste in landfills generates methane, a potent greenhouse energy. We must keep this waste out of landfills through composting to significantly reduce these emissions. Part of my Parks plan incorporates parks-based composting partnerships to encourage residents to bring their compostable waste to their local park or community garden.

Additionally, we must revitalize the City's organics collection, which was the largest in the country before the pandemic. We must bring this back immediately and make it mandatory when service is available citywide.

Further, we must also strengthen City procurement rules to ensure all City construction and purchasing fully requires the use of recycled and post-consumer materials. On top of all of this, my aforementioned plan to transition all restaurants towards compostable packaging must become the blueprint for all partnerships and businesses in the City.

Protecting People and Natural Resources



All New Yorkers deserve indoor and outdoor environments that are free of contamination and pollution. We will promote policies that provide access to healthy air and water, protect our open spaces, and improve the well-being of all New Yorkers.

9. Parks, Natural Areas, and Active Waterfronts (p. 9)

Much of my recent local work has been focused on issues of open space / green space. I am currently actively involved in proactive advocacy around the maintenance of 39th Avenue as an Open Street, and am a member of the 39th Avenue (Sunnyside-Woodside) Open Streets Coalition. COVID-19 has laid bare that in many parts of our city, including Sunnyside and Woodside, we must reimagine the use of our public streets, and it is critical that we build community efforts in sustaining our Open Streets programs. I am also involved in efforts to ensure that Noonan Park on the South Side of Sunnyside is a consistently welcoming and accessible place for all, and in efforts to bring Open Streets back to the south side of Sunnyside.

More generally, I will not vote yes on any budget that takes resources away from Parks budget.

Parks is one of the many departments that should receive additional funds beyond what it received in FY20 and it should be done at the expense of the police budget. I will support an expanded budget to increase staff as well as significantly increase greenspace. Parks should be an extension of our community centers and should provide resources, such as the neighborhood's composting location and community garden. As we expand coastal resiliency, we have an opportunity to incorporate more waterfront parks as methodologies for enforcing our coast simultaneously.

Natural areas, parkland, and playgrounds must be protected from privatization. I will not support the sale or leasing of these public spaces and will introduce legislation to prevent the proposal of sales of our green spaces.

10. Lead Poisoning Prevention (p. 9)

A major component of my policy plan -and one of my highest priorities- is complete lead and mold remediation in all DOE and NYCHA buildings. A significant portion of funding is available for this particularly in the DOE budget. We must create a joint commission with the DOE, NYCHA, Buildings, Health, and the Mayor's Office to do this systematically and expeditiously and we must establish systems to quickly rectify emergent lead and mold

development. This is a particular issue with “slumlords” and tenants who do not know their rights. We must promote an aggressive marketing strategy to ensure tenants are aware of their rights, address the fears of illegal housing tenants, and levy strict fines against landlords failing to comply.

Local Laws 60 and 74 from 2017 mandate an environmental justice study that we must ensure is executed to ensure City compliance with equity and climate justice. We also must ensure compliance with the Laws’ state goals, which is to inject Environmental Justice into all City legislation.

Lastly, we must pursue the federal government as the Department of Environmental Protection is currently avoiding paying for the assistance of homeowners to replace water lines. We must ensure we receive this federal funding, as well as lobby for additional federal funding to assist in our overhaul of City buildings and other green initiatives.

11. Reduce and Mitigate Heat Vulnerability (p. 9 – 10)

The City has thus far failed to rise to the occasion in mitigating heat vulnerability. As we all know, over the summer extreme heat waves caused blackouts throughout the city in a historic period in time wherein New Yorkers was asked to remain indoors. These heat waves hit our vulnerable seniors particularly hard, and the City’s Cooling Centers were not up to par to cover the gap left by blackouts and industrial failings. Currently, the way we run Cooling Centers isn’t working; they must be inspected and brought up to standard, an inspection mandate that can be incorporated into the building-by-building retrofitting under my proposed energy and infrastructure policies and green job expansions.

Additionally, NYCHA must similarly be addressed in mitigating heat vulnerability. NYCHA houses often act as Official Cooling Centers in the City already, but these buildings are designed and maintained in such a way that they lock in heat and create unbearable heat vacuums. We must increase airflow and ventilation in all NYCHA buildings, which will also mitigate the return of mold after remediation.

We also know that green space deserts have higher temperatures because of the additional concrete surface area. My parks expansion, which aims to place a park in every neighborhood and within a 10-minute walk of every dwelling, will mitigate heat

vulnerability by reducing the presence of concrete inherently, creating yet another benefit to expanding our City's greenspace.

Lastly, the two most under-utilized spaces for greenspace and heat vulnerability mitigation is above us -our rooftops - and curbside space. Something as simple as painting all rooftops white in the summer can mitigate heat vulnerability by reflecting a portion of sunlight instead of absorbing it into harsh darker tones. We can also use rooftops to expand greenspace by vastly building out rooftop gardens, which will expand greenspace, improve air quality, and absorb heat.

12. Clean Air for All (p. 10)

As mentioned, I support re-visiting legislation to create a tunnel to move rail traffic underground between NYC and New Jersey. Amongst other benefits, this will significantly increase air quality for those caught in between these commercial zones by greatly reducing the commercial trucks above their heads. Additionally, significant park expansion will bring with it improved air quality as greenery expands. The full electrification of NYC's public transportation and buildings will also reduce emissions and staunchly improve air quality, as will the expansion of the Select Bus Service, bus pilot programs, general bus expansion and increased dedicated busways and lanes, and biker expansion will all work together to improve air quality.

13. Clean Water for All (p.11)

Everyone should have access to clean, healthy water. In closing Rikers and building a massive renewable energy hub on the husk of the carceral state, we have the opportunity to include wastewater cleaning plants in municipal control. Additionally, Renewable Rikers will permit us to remove waste processing and peak plants from the five boroughs, reducing ground sewage and other contamination from seeping into our water supply.

14. Sustainable Food Systems (p. 11)

Food deserts cannot be allowed to continue; every family should have access to resources they need including SNAP and GrowNYC without having to trek miles out of their way. Community gardens must become a boon to our expansion of parks as well, allowing

community engagement and the growing of organic foods in residents' own communities, but it cannot become the solution.

We know by now that efforts to curb greenhouse gas emissions will not be met without drastic changes in human diets and curbing the consumption of meat. Meat and dairy, for example, account for 14.5% of the world's greenhouse gas emissions. If the world is to meet its target of limiting global warming, some degree of diet shift will be necessary. In other words, a significantly expanded plant based diet is necessary to reduce greenhouse gasses and achieve climate and social justice.

The City, with the \$20+ billion it spends on contracts, has enormous buying power. As a City Council member, I would support a law prohibiting the Department of Education and NYC Health + Hospitals from purchasing meat from factory farms. Diverting money from purchasing meat could also mean that school and hospital meals become increasingly plant-based and, ultimately, healthier and better for the environment. In situations where meat is purchased, it can be done so from small farms that treat animals humanely.

It is also not outlandish to incorporate a "Meatless Monday" into contracts with the Department of Education and Health and Hospitals; studies show that going a single day without consuming meat can reduce your carbon footprint by up to [7.5 pounds](#). With over 1.1 million students in the DOE, a meatless breakfast and lunch one day a week for 1.1 million students is a potential carbon footprint reduction of 4.12 million pounds in just one day, or 8.25 million pounds if students are encouraged to continue on and have a meatless dinner at home.