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2021 Environmental Questionnaire for Long Island 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 Long Island 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, April 30, 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.
- General election endorsements will be made by the NYLCV State Board on July 29, 2021.

CAMPAIGN CONTACT INFORMATION

Candidate name: Ellen Birnbaum

Office sought (& district number if applicable): Nassau County Legislator District 10

Campaign e-mail: Friendsofellenbirnbaum@gmail.com

Campaign phone: 516-528-3096

Website:

Facebook page: Legislator Ellen W. Birnbaum

Twitter handle:

Campaign manager's name and email: danieljsmall7@gmail.com

Press Secretary's name and email: danieljsmall7@gmail.com

Scheduler's name and email: danieljsmall7@gmail.com

PERSONAL INFORMATION

1. Please share your accomplishments or experiences that indicate your commitment to advancing pro-environment agenda. These experiences may be professional or personal.

As a Nassau County Legislator, I have voted in favor of preserving open space and providing access to the space whenever possible in the County. I believe in preserving our local parks, wooded areas and safeguarding our natural resources. I understand the importance of public transportation and have supported increased funding for NICE busses and actively worked to restore bus routes that had been cut. I have been monitoring the plume that is moving in my District and meet regularly with Lockheed Martin officials for updates about the clean-up. I care deeply about our drinking water and I have attended many Long Island water conferences. I am a member of the Western Nassau County Aquifer Committee and have signed on to letters for policy recommendations to the Town of North Hempstead and to New York State.

I am a proponent of electric vehicles and my family has purchased one which we are enjoy using. I strongly believe in recycling and composting and have been an advocate for both.

I applaud the New York League of Conservation Voters for being in the forefront with vital issues such as clean water, clean air, renewable energy and open space.

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 Long Island 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:

Combating Climate Change

The time to act on climate is now. We must make radical changes in short order to avoid catastrophic climate change. New York’s Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act will require action at all levels of government to achieve its ambitious goal of reducing economy wide emissions 85% by 2050 and achieving 70% renewable energy by 2030. By allocating resources wisely, local governments can have a significant impact on energy use and the environment. Localities must also adapt to a changing climate and include resiliency planning in all aspects of future governance.

2. Energy (p. 5)

I believe in investing in energy efficiency and renewable energy to reduce gas emissions and air pollution. I have attended local Village meetings to learn about green building standards for

new projects. I am always supportive of Nassau County legislation dealing with clean energy projects.

3. Transportation (p. 6)

I would like to see charging stations for EVs in all new buildings in the County. I have been exploring adding bike lanes to County roads. I believe that any new municipal busses or vehicles should be electric if possible. Public transportation to the new Hub in Nassau is vital.

4. Resiliency (p. 6 - 7)

In Nassau County, I support any project which includes resiliency retrofits to critical facilities, installation of shoreline defenses to reduce erosion, and construction of stormwater management systems especially by waterfronts. I have supported improvements to Bay Park which has been vulnerable to sea level rise and storm surge. I also have supported the Town of North Hempstead's efforts in encouraging residents to maintain rain gardens, and rain barrels.

5. Solid Waste (p. 7)

I am a strong proponent of recycling and composting and do both at my home. The local water pollution control district in Great Neck has been collecting restaurant oil and converting it to biofuel that can be used in their vehicles and generator. I have invited other elected officials to visit them and learn about this program.

Protecting People and Natural Resources

All New Yorkers deserve indoor and outdoor environments that are free of contamination and pollution.

6. Clean Water (p. 8 - 9)

Sustaining the quality of our water and protecting our aquifer are issues that are of vital importance to me. As a past director at the local water authority, I know how important it is to constantly monitor our water if any contaminants are found to locate the source and take remedial action. Recently, I have worked with the Port Washington Water District to obtain County approval to build a facility in a County Park where the 1,4 dioxane will be treated near their wells.

7. Sustainable Development (p. 9)

I have been working with a local Chamber of Commerce on revitalizing a walkable downtown areas in my district. I have also encouraged high school groups and boy scouts to do clean-ups of County sites for Earth Day. I have worked to slow down traffic near popular walkways to increase pedestrian safety and have been exploring the possibility of bike lanes.

8. Parks and Open Spaces (p.11)

Preserving parks and public open spaces is very important to me. I have a very good working relationship with local Parks Commissioners and have worked with them to create programming in parks. I have arranged meetings with Cornell Cooperative Extension and my colleagues to facilitate the sale of land from the County to be used for camp programs and agriculture. I have also been working with the County to preserve a local Grist Mill.

9. Farms and Local Food (p. 11)

I believe it is important to have access to healthy, locally grown food. During the summer, I am happy to promote weekly farmers markets at a local County park and in a Village park. My husband and I enjoy growing vegetables and herbs each summer, so we appreciate the “farm to table” produce and are very supportive of local grown crops. I have met with Cornell Cooperative Extension leaders who interact with community groups to promote healthy eating with locally grown foods.