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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](mailto:politics@nylcv.org)
- Questions or extension requests may be directed to Joshua Klainberg ([jklainberg@nylcv.org](mailto: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: Tom Donnelly

Office sought (& district number if applicable): Suffolk County Legislature District 17

Campaign e-mail: donnellyforlegislature@gmail.com

Campaign phone: (631)439-0400

Website:

Facebook page:

Twitter handle:

Campaign manager's name and email: Keith Davies – keithdavies5@gmail.com

Press Secretary's name and email:

Scheduler's name and email: Amanda Manella – amanda@suffolkdems.com

## 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.

**Being a lifelong resident on the largely-unsewered environmentally-sensitive Carll's River Watershed, I have personally witnessed and experienced the negative environmental long-term impacts of cesspools and am a strong advocate for expansion of sewers. This has included advocating for community support that led to the passage of the sewer expansion program, hosting forums within my district for residents to learn about the Suffolk County Reclaim Our Water initiative, backing and seeking continued and increased funding sources for sewers and regularly meeting with our County leadership to seek ways to further expand the programs for residents and business owners alike.**

**I have advocated for open space preservation and when properties became available in western Suffolk – a rarity – I sponsored, sought and gain support from my fellow colleagues on the legislature to approve the funding for appraisals and acquisitions.**



**Within my district, there is a near-decade long project under way for a much-needed pump to maintain water levels on Guggenheim Lake. In cyclical drought periods – which seem to be happening more frequently, the lake dries up, killing wildlife and releasing unpleasant fumes into the air. This impacts both the environment and quality of life for residents who live on the lake and the neighboring streets, The project has met many roadblocks along the way, from design to funding to community resistance but I have led the effort to keep it moving forward. Our public works department will finally break ground on the pump next spring and this concerns over the lake will finally be a thing of the past.**

## 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 have co-sponsored legislation to increase hybrid buses in our fleet, met with our budget review specialist to discuss adding more electrical cars and supported off -shore solar energy projects.

#### 3. Transportation (p. 6)

I have been highly critical of, and resistant to, any cuts in bus services. This mode of transportation is a critical to so many of our residents as well as the environment and it just make sense not to worry about the dollars and cents when it comes to providing this service. I am opposed to any cuts in our SCAT (Suffolk County Accessible Transit) bus system and personally advocated for my constituents who rely on SCAT to get them to their jobs, their medical appointments or the supermarket. I heard from some who felt stranded at home due to changes in SCAT operations during the pandemic and worked to ensure their problems were addressed and rectified. I am an avid cyclist who rides for both exercise and transportation and participated in Car-Free Day.

4. Resiliency (p. 6 - 7)

I have supported all projects and funding for projects to manage our resources and react to any disturbances to them, both in my own district and throughout the county. Public works project must be aware of their impact on the environment and I will continue to speak up regarding this where needed.

5. Solid Waste (p. 7)

I have been very vocal in my support for increased sewerage, whether through large public works projects like the Save Our Water program or encouragement of individual home systems through the enhanced septic program. I am keeping a close eye on the sewer expansion program for the revitalization of Huntington Station business which requires the State, Town and County to work together.

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)

There is a direct correlation between increased sewerage and cleaner water, when it comes to both drinking and recreational purposes. Residents in my district frequent both the Long Island Sound and the Great South Bay, and count on us to keep them clean. I support and keep apprised of all dredging projects.

7. Sustainable Development (p. 9)

Proper planning that includes listening to community input and environmentalists is critical to finding the proper balance to ensure both economic growth and long-term protection of the environment.

8. Parks and Open Spaces (p.11)

I continue to advocate for open space preservation, not just in my district but in support of anywhere in the County. I am proud that we were able to establish a new park in my district in conjunction with the Guggenheim Lake Pump Station Project in North Babylon.

9. Farms and Local Food (p. 11)

I have secured funding and am a strong supporter of Elija CSA in South Huntington, a not-for-profit farm that is affiliated with The Elija School for Autism. I supported and co-sponsored farmland designation legislation for this wonderful farm that is committed to using environmentally-responsible practices for their sustainably grown, local vegetables.