

**Questionnaire for New York State Senate and Assembly Candidates  
Introduction to the League of Humane Voters of New York City**

The League of Humane Voters of New York City (LOHV-NYC) was founded in 2001 with the goal of electing humane-minded candidates to the City Council and the State Legislature. With more than 6,000 active members as of 2005, we have grown to become the political voice of the New York City animal protection community; our endorsement matters.

**Previous Endorsements**

Some of our previous endorsements include: Council Members Alan Gerson, Annabel Palma, Tony Avella, Rosie Mendez, Dan Garodnick; State Senators Liz Krueger, Jose M. Serrano and Frank Padavan; as well as Assembly Member Jonathon Bing.

We encourage you to ask around; ours is an endorsement you can count on. In addition to a paper endorsement, we get out there for the candidates we endorse. In the past, we have provided much needed volunteer support by mobilizing humane voters.

**Introduction to Questionnaire**

Please answer in as much detail as necessary. Please note that the completed questionnaire may be posted on our website and/or distributed to our membership. This questionnaire is due, by mail or email, two weeks from receipt. If you have questions on any of the issues or you need an extension, please contact the Executive Director, John Phillips, at (212) 889-0303 or by email at [john@humanenyc.org](mailto:john@humanenyc.org).

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**Personal Initiatives**

1. Do you feel that promoting the humane treatment of animals should be a priority for the New York State Legislature? Why or why not?

*Yes, humane treatment of animals is a reflection of our humanity toward one another and the environment as a whole.*

2. What have been your most significant achievements to date on humane issues?

As Manhattan Director for Congressman Jerrold Nadler, I arranged with the ASPCA for a van to be stationed in the neighborhood for free spay and neuter services. I have also spoken out in support of better treatment of horses working in the carriage trade.

3. What are your animal protection goals for the next term, should you be elected?

*I would like to pick up where now-Borough President Scott Stringer left off by working to advance proposals to bring an end to canned shoots in New York State, end fur farm animal electrocution, and ensure the 2000 Pet Dealer Act is fully funded so inspections can be carried out. I also wish to take up initiatives to end tail docking and make the restrictions on fallen animals permanent at the state level.*

4. Did you grow up with any animal companions?

*Yes, I grew up with a fish, a turtle and a parakeet named Debbie.*

5. Do you currently live with any animal companions?

*Yes, I live with my cat Olivia whom I adopted from the ASPCA.*

6. Do you have any fond memories of animals which you would like to share?

*Playing with my next-door-neighbor's dog Bijoux was always a special time for me.*

7. Do you financially or philosophically support any national or local animal protection groups? Which ones?

*Local cat and dog rescue groups.*

### **Campaign**

8. Have you been endorsed by any elected officials or groups? If so, which endorsements are you most proud of?

*I have been endorsed by Borough President Scott Stringer, Senator David Paterson, former City Councilmember Phil Reed, and the Stonewall Democrats.*

9. How much money has your campaign raised to date?

*I have raised \$10,000 for the county committee procedure, and am continuing to fundraise as I become the Democratic nominee for the seat.*

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### **Government Issues**

10. Members of the City Council are jockeying to extend their terms or do away with term limits entirely. What is your position on this issue? i.e., should the City Council legislate an extension or the abolition of term limits or should it go back to the voters for a third time?

*To extend or do any tinkering with the term-limits law I believe the NYC Council must go back to the voters.*

### **Hunting and Trapping**

Canned hunts are fixed hunts which guarantee the "hunter" a trophy. The animals used are docile animals who are often drugged to make it even easier for the killer. The animals are also placed into a fenced area which prevents them from escaping.

11. Do you support legislation (such as NYS Senate bill S. 2993 of 2005 and Assembly bill A.5877 of 2005) to ban canned hunts in New York State?

*As I mentioned previously, I would like to continue Scott Stringer's work on this issue he championed. Ending canned shoots in NYS is essential to moving toward more humane treatment of animals.*

The steel-jaw leghold trap is so notoriously cruel that it has been banned in over 70 countries as well as many states. The steel jaws of these traps clamp down on an animal's body when triggered. She or he sometimes suffers for days before the trapper arrives to stomp, suffocate or beat her or him to death. To escape the pain, some escape by biting off their own legs.

12. Do you support legislation (such as NYS Senate bill S. 2142 of 2005 and Assembly bill A. 1835 of 2005, the "home rule trapping bill") to allow local counties and municipalities to ban the use of steel-jaw leghold traps on fur-bearing animals?

13. Do you support a ban on steel-jaw leghold traps?

*I wholeheartedly support a ban on steel-jaw leghold traps, including a full statewide ban.*

### **Fur**

Confined in small wire cages where natural activities are denied them, animals on fur farms suffer tremendously. Disease and unnatural behaviors such as self-mutilation, cannibalism, and incessant pacing are common. Common methods used to kill these animals include anal electrocution, gassing, and neck-breaking.

14. Do you support legislation (such as NYS Assembly bill A. 19 of 2005) to ban the anal and genital electrocution of animals?

*Yes, this legislation is essential to ending the cruel manner in which fur farm animals are treated.*

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### **Animals & Entertainment**

Animals used in circuses are beaten into submission; trainers use bullhooks, whips, electrical shock, and other devices to turn wild animals into unwilling performers. During the winter off season, animals such as lions and elephants are cramped into cages, stalls, and even trucks. In addition, elephants spend 90 percent of their day chained and restrained in small areas.

15. Would you support legislation to ban the use of animals in circuses and other traveling shows?

*Yes.*

Rodeo promoters say that the animals are wild and rough, but without the use of spurs, tail-twisting, and bucking straps cinched tightly around their abdomens, these frightened and often docile animals wouldn't even buck. They are terrorized into action when men shove them with electric prods, twist their necks, yank them by their tails or legs, slam them to the ground, or otherwise batter them. The fact that most of these innocent animals are eventually destined for the slaughterhouse in no way justifies compounding their agony along the way.

16. Would you support legislation (such as City Council Intro. No. 472 of 2004) to ban rodeos?

*Yes, I would support a ban on rodeos which treat animals inhumanely.*

Horses used by the carriage industry are often denied water to prevent them from urinating; forced to breathe in exhaust from automobiles; denied sufficient veterinary

care; forced to pull carriages which are overloaded with passengers; kept in substandard shelter; subject to weather extremes; and sent to slaughter when their profitability wanes.

17. Would you support a ban on horse-drawn carriages in New York City?

*This is an industry that needs great reform. After the recent spate of terrible accidents involving horse-drawn carriages, cars and pedestrians, it is time to seriously consider banning the practice.*

Pressure from the carriage horse industry resulted in a bill, Intro. No. 740 of 2005, to ban pedicabs from operating in Midtown. This is an insult to free enterprise and would deny residents and visitors of Midtown a humane alternative to horse-drawn carriages.

18. Do you support legislation to ban pedicabs from operating in Midtown?

*No.*

### **Farmed Animals**

Foie gras, which is French for fatty liver, is the grotesquely enlarged livers of ducks and geese. Ducks have up to four pounds of food per day pumped into their stomachs through long metal pipes that are shoved down their throats. Their diseased liver swells up to twelve times its regular size, and is then sold as foie gras. Force fed birds suffer from neck tearing, caused by the feeding pipe; chronic heart disorders; bone fractures; spleen and gall bladder damage; liver hemorrhage; ruptured organs; asphyxiation; as well as pneumonia.

19. Do you support legislation (such as NYS Senate Bill S. 2083) to ban the force feeding of ducks for foie gras?

*Yes, I believe NYS should catch up to other states that have already banned this unnecessary cruelty to animals.*

### **Companion Animals**

Existing state law prevents municipalities from enacting breed-specific legislation banning "dangerous dogs." Council Member Michael McMahon introduced a Resolution in 2004 calling on the state legislature to repeal this law.

20. Do you support existing law preventing municipalities from enacting breed-specific bans?

*Yes, specific breeds are not dangerous when responsible owners care for the dog and should not be banned for the actions of irresponsible owners.*

21. Would you support increased funding for no-kill shelters and facilities which trap, neuter and release animals?

*Yes, we must address the overpopulation of animals in a humane manner such as this.*

22. In 2004, Council Member Melinda Katz introduced the pets in housing bill, Intro. No. 189, which clarifies existing law regarding pets in multiple dwellings. It says that the no-pet clause, once waived, is waived for the duration of a tenant's occupancy, not the life of an individual pet. Do you support this legislation?

*Yes, a tenant cannot be barred from owning a companion pet when they were a responsible owner of one in the past.*

23. The City Council is considering Intro. 0217-2004, which requires the installation of fire sprinklers in all facilities which provide services to animals and shelter them for more

than 24 hours. Would you support this legislation? If not, please explain your position and cite any specific problems you have with the bill as written.

*Yes, fire sprinklers can assist in preventing needless animal loss.*

### **Crimes Involving Animals**

Under existing law cruelty to companion animals is a felony. Similar abuse to wild animals is just a misdemeanor.

24. Would you support legislation to make cruelty to wildlife a felony?

*Yes.*

Even though some laws exist to protect animals from cruelty, they are unfortunately not always aggressively prosecuted.

25. Would you support the allocation of funds for a special prosecutor to handle animal cruelty cases?

*Yes, unfortunately animal cruelty is often the beginning of progressively violent behavior and must be dealt with immediately and aggressively.*

### **Humane Education**

In 1947, the New York legislature enacted §809 of the Education Law mandating that “instruction...be given in every elementary school under state control...in the humane treatment and protection of animals.” It further states: “A school district shall not be entitled to participate in the public school money on account of any school...subject to the provisions of this section, if the instruction required hereby is not given.”

Nevertheless, in practice §809 of the State Education Law has never been fully implemented, and it is largely ignored. Humane education strives to foster kindness, respect and empathy for both human and nonhuman animals as well as the environment. It has a philosophical component that strives to establish a sense of responsibility and make the world a better a more humane place. Humane educators believe that children who learn to care about animals and develop a sense of respect for all life will be more respectful of each other and grow up to be more compassionate adults.

Humane education lessons build empathy and engage student interest. The interest motivates students to learn more about the topic being studied. This motivation can lead to focused and enthusiastic writing, reading or applied learning activities. The lessons adhere to New York State learning standards.

26. Would you support increased funding for humane education?

*I support increased funding for New York City and other high needs districts across the board. In order to address the needs of a sound, basic education for all children of New York we need a restructured school formula. We need to expand humane animal lessons, as well as strengthen other programs to give children a well-balanced education.*

### **Healthy School Lunches**

The American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Cancer Society, the American Dietetic Association, the American Diabetes Association, the American Heart Association, the United States Department of Agriculture and the National Institutes of Health all recommend a greater emphasis in the American diet on fruits, vegetables, whole grains and legumes with a reduction in the consumption of animal foods (which are the primary source of saturated fat and the only source of cholesterol.)

27. Assembly Resolution K1888 of 2004 (Ortiz) and Senate Resolution J3971 of 2004 (LaValle) calls on local school districts to provide optional vegetarian entrees, as well as nutrition education materials and instruction. Do you support this resolution?

*Yes.*