

Dear Candidate for Nassau County Executive:

Access to parks is critical to people who own dogs, but Nassau County policy currently denies on-leash access to much of its 6,000 acres of public parkland to the more than 175,000 Nassau County families with dogs. Walking your dog on-leash in parks is common in thousands of communities across America, including in Suffolk County and New York City. In fact, Suffolk County allows on-leash access to virtually all County parks and this policy has been successful. On-leash dog walking is a legitimate form of exercise like running, biking, and hiking. In fact, people who walk their dogs are 34% more likely to meet federal guidelines for adequate physical activity, according to a 2011 Michigan State University study. However, hundreds of thousands of Nassau County families are denied the benefits of walking in public parks with their canine family members because of an onerous and out-of-date County policy. This policy does not reflect current attitudes about responsible pet ownership in which people clean up after their dogs.

The Long Island Dog Owners Group has built a successful track record of working with elected officials for more than a decade to create dog parks and increase access to parkland for on-leash dog walking ; see <https://lidog.org/about-li-dog/who-we-are/> **It is important that our supporters know how candidates for major public office stand on this issue.**

1. Would you support allowing responsible dog owners to walk their dogs on-leash in more Nassau County parks?
2. Would you support creating additional dog parks and/or off-leash areas in Nassau County parks?
3. Would you be willing to work with the Nassau County Legislature to effect such a change in policy?

Please provide a statement on your position. LI-DOG will publish the responses we receive from candidates on our web site and Facebook Group. The LI-DOG website (lidog.org) experiences tens of thousands of page views each month and our Facebook Group has more than 4,000 members. These members are passionate about the health and well-being of their dogs and they are active members of the community. In fact, on-leash access to parks represents such a significant, daily quality of life improvement for people that it can transcend traditional party lines.

We are asking candidates to respond to this request by Monday Oct. 23rd at lidog_news@yahoo.com. Responses, including the absence of a response, will be noted on our website and in our communications with our supporters. If you have any questions, please feel free to call us. Thank you very much for your attention.

We look forward to hearing back from you.

Sincerely,

Christine Laubis,
Vice President/Nassau County Chair