

● GENERAL INFORMATION

- **Name ***

Jessica Scarcella-Spanton

- **Office Sought (New York State) ***

Senate

- **District Number ***

23

- **In which primary ***

Democratic

- **What party line/s are you running under? ***

Democratic

- **If elected, which legislative conference will you join (e.g., Democrat, Republican, other)? ***

Democratic

- **Age**

32

- **Education**

Undergraduate Degree

- **Previous Offices, Campaigns and Community/Civic Involvement**

-Assistant Director of Government & Community Relations at the MTA

-Director of Operations at the New York State Senate

-Legislative Director at the New York State Assembly

● Campaign Contact Information

- **Email ***

jess.scarcella@gmail.com

- **Campaign Manager Name ***

Rebecca DelVecchio

- **Campaign Manager Email ***
rdelvecchio354@gmail.com
- **Scheduler contact info (If relevant)**
- **Phone Number ***
718 887-5779
- **Website**
jessicafornewyork.com
- **Twitter**
twitter.com/jess_scarcella
- **Facebook**
<https://www.facebook.com/jessicafornewyork>

- **Affirmations**

- **Have you completed the required campaign finance filings? ***
Yes
- **Are you willing to be interviewed by Citizens Union's Local Candidates Committee? ***
Yes
- (Please note: interviews are prerequisites for Citizens Union preferences and endorsements)
- **Signature ***

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'J. Scarcella', is centered within a rectangular box.

• ETHICS

Citizens Union believes New York needs a sweeping overhaul of our ethics system to restore the public's faith in government. JCOPE, the agency charged with enforcing state laws regarding ethics, has been structurally burdened since its inception a decade ago. The major flaw of the JCOPE framework is the lack of independence from the Governor and political parties in the Legislature. Citizens Union supports a constitutionally established, independent ethics agency that would deter corruption in the legislative and executive branches.

- **Do you support replacing Joint Commission on Public Ethics with an effective and independent enforcement body, whose members are not appointed directly by elected officials?**

Yes

- **Do you support the new independent ethics oversight agency to also replace the Legislative Ethics Commission (LEC)?**

Yes

- **Do you support allowing the new ethics body to investigate misconduct more effectively by simplifying its voting rules to allow for majority vote in making decisions, giving it the authority to subpoena testimony and documents, empowering it to suspend or terminate public officials (not elected officials), and increasing its transparency?**

Yes

- **Do you support significantly limiting outside compensation earned by state legislators and eliminate stipends, while increasing their pay?**

Yes

- **Do you hold financial interest or serve as an officer on an entity that receives funding from the state? If you do, how will you manage this conflict of interest?**

No.

- **If needed, you may elaborate below on your positions on the previous questions. You may also provide additional information on any actions that you have taken or plan to take to advance your positions on ethics issues.**

- **ELECTIONS AND VOTING**

- **Election Administration**

In the last few years, this legislature has made immense strides in making New York's election laws more open and fair. But in one fundamental way, our state has remained in the 1800s – the party-based control of elections through Boards of Elections. This broken system has resulted in the continued use of patronage instead of merit in hiring, gridlock in decision-making, a complete lack of accountability, exclusion of representation of minor parties, and impediments to primary challengers. Most importantly, it has damaged New Yorkers' trust in their election system. Voters experience the impact of New York's broken election administration system every year. Citizens Union supports removing the control of county political parties over election administration, professionalizing election offices and staff, and standardizing election administration across the state.

- **How would you use your power as a legislator to improve election administration in New York? Feel free to add any policy proposals you support in regards to reforming the BOE.**

I would support measures that maintain the integrity of our elections and support policies that would make the BOE more efficient.

- **Do you support removing the constitutional requirement in election administration that empowers the two major political parties to nominate and effectively control election boards?**

Yes

- **Do you support reducing the party-based hiring in boards of elections to the minimum currently required by the constitution?**

Yes

- **Do you support implementing an open, competitive, merit-based hiring process for all election administration staff and certain functions at polls?**

Yes

- **If needed, you may elaborate below on your positions on the previous questions.**

- **Voting Rights**

- **Do you support re-passing the constitutional amendment to enact same-day voter registration, and putting it on the ballot in 2024?**

Yes

- **Do you support re-passing the constitutional amendment to enact no-excuse absentee voting, and putting it on the ballot in 2024?**

Yes

- **If needed, you may elaborate below on your positions on the previous questions. You may also provide additional information on any actions that you have taken or plan to take to advance your positions on these issues.**

- **Open and Competitive Elections**

- **Do you support easing access to the ballot for parties and independent candidates, by returning to the pre-2020 voting and signature thresholds? That includes reducing the voting threshold to become a registered party back to 50,000 votes in a gubernatorial election, and the petition requirement for independent candidates back to 15,000 signatures.**

Yes

- **Do you support reforming the process of filling vacancies in the state legislature by implementing nonpartisan special elections or holding a primary election at least thirty days in advance of the special election?**

Yes

- **Who do you think should draw new district maps every decade in New York? (e.g., the current Independent Redistricting Commission, the Legislature/LATFOR, a new body)**

I support a new body drawing the new district maps.

- **If needed, you may elaborate below on your positions on the previous questions. You may also provide additional information on any actions that you have taken or plan to take to advance your positions on these issues.**

Yes and this should be implemented along with a matching funds system in New York State elections.

● **CAMPAIGN FINANCE**

- **Do you support further reducing campaign contribution limits?**

Yes

- **Do you support setting even lower contribution limits for registered lobbyists and those who do business with the state?**

Yes

- **Starting from the next election cycle, New York will have a public campaign finance program, offering matching funds on small donations for candidates who opt in. If you decide to run again in the next election, do you intend to participate in the program?**

Yes

- **Do you support moving the campaign finance matching program to be administered by an independent, nonpartisan body outside of the State Board of Election?**

Yes

- **If needed, you may elaborate below on your positions on the previous questions. You may also provide additional information on any actions that you have taken or plan to take to advance your positions on these issues.**

● **COURT REFORM**

- **Do you support simplifying and consolidating New York State's court system - which includes 11 trial courts - by passing the Chief Judge's proposed constitutional amendment to modernize the courts?**

Yes

- **If needed, you may elaborate below on your positions on the previous questions. You may also provide additional information on any actions that you have taken or plan to take to advance your positions on these issues.**

● **GOALS, PLANS, AND REPRESENTATION**

In addition to evaluating stances on the issues above, Citizens Union

considers the campaign goals articulated to voters, issues specific to the district, and the ability propose thoughtful solutions to represent constituents' interests.

- **What are the top three campaign promises or goals, and what action will you take to achieve them if elected? Feel free to reference an answer above rather than restate it.**

First: Universal childcare and after school for all-My children are 8 and 5. COVID exposed the cracks in our system and countless women left the workforce during this time. It is crucial for parents to have the care they need for their children and as Senator, I will fight to reach universal childcare and after school for all. This will give our kids the head start they need, help them recover from the learning loss of the pandemic, and allow parents to get back to work.

Second: Public safety, criminal justice, & investing in social services- We need to prioritize safety, but in a way that ensures justice and accountability. New York State made history with landmark criminal justice reforms that were long overdue and necessary, however it was done without proper funding for social services. We need to redirect people suffering from mental health issues toward treatment instead of the criminal justice system. We must do more to invest in social services, while keeping the peace and making sure that people feel safe in their communities, while getting the guns off our streets and addressing the rise in violent crime.

Third: Housing-We must improve the living conditions for our NYCHA residents and make much needed investments to expedite repairs and improve the infrastructure in these homes. Beyond public housing, we must make it easier for people to buy a home. As Senator, I will work to increase affordable housing, particularly for families and expand incentives for first-time homebuyers to prevent people from leaving New York City.

- **If elected, what is the first piece of legislation you would want to introduce? If you are an incumbent, what is the first piece of legislation you would want to pass?**

My brother has a chronic disability which requires both physical and occupational therapy. Insurance companies often treat therapy similarly to if someone was using it as rehab post some kind of surgery, only covering a certain amount of sessions. Chronic disabilities require lifelong PT/OT, which should be covered and recognized by insurance companies. I would introduce legislation which would require insurance companies to cover these services for people with chronic disabilities.

- **In providing constituent service, what are the major needs of your district's constituents and how will you meet them?**

The needs of the district range from assistance with day-to-day needs like access to food and housing to the long term recovery of homes and neighborhood infrastructure systems from Hurricane Ida. I will meet people where they're at to address any and all issues because what matters to my constituents, matters to me.

- **What experience have you had, if any, with good government and reform issues? (e.g. voting and elections, campaign finance, ethics, government transparency and oversight, police accountability). If you've worked to advance these goals, we'd love to hear about it.**

If elected, I will work tirelessly to make it easier for people to vote and increase accountability and transparency at all levels of government.

- **How long have you lived in the district in which you are running?**

Two years and I am a lifelong Staten Islander.

- **Have you lived in this district before this year's redistricting?**

Two years and I am a lifelong Staten Islander.

- **For incumbents: If your district has changed significantly following this year's redistricting, how do you intend to run your office to serve the needs of the new constituents you now represent?**

● **PATH TO VICTORY**

- **What is your win number (the number of votes needed to win this race), and what is your plan to achieve that number?**

My win number is 10,000. To reach this we will continue to organize a broad and diverse coalition to have a ground game that earns the trust of each voter.

- **What are your current fundraising numbers, if different than the last campaign finance filing?**

60,000

- **How many individual donors do you have?**

171

- **Please indicate any endorsements that your campaign has received, if applicable (you can also share a link to a list of endorsements)**

I'm a mom of two children, Emily 8 and Jack 5. My husband is a disabled army combat veteran. I am the daughter of two retired school teachers, my father was a labor activist and chapter leader in the UFT. I am passionate about issues that affect women, children, families, and workers. I will always have an ear to the ground and any issues that matter to my constituents, matter to me.

- **ADDITIONAL INFO**

- **Please feel free to attach any additional information such as resume, campaign brochures, or issues statements.**

- **What else would you like us to know about yourself?**

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