



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Citizens Union and Community and Ethnic Organizations Remind New Yorkers to Vote this Thursday, September 13 in the Primary Elections

-Due to Rosh Hashanah and the anniversary of September 11th this year's primary elections will be held on a Thursday-

-Voter participation in New York's primary elections has historically been low, and holding this year's primary on a Thursday could reduce turnout even further-

(New York, NY)—Today a coalition of good government and community and ethnic organizations urged New Yorkers to vote in the New York State Primary Day elections this Thursday, noting the switch from the usual Tuesday date.

"Voter participation in New York's primary elections is historically low," said **Citizens Union Executive Director Betsy Gotbaum**. "This year's turnout will likely be even lower, due to the date change. We need to make sure all New Yorkers who are registered to vote, show up to vote. These primary elections will likely decide the leaders of the state for the next four years." While State primaries are typically held on the second Tuesday of September, due to Rosh Hashanah and the anniversary of the September 11th attacks, this year's Primary Day elections were moved to this Thursday.

Voter participation in New York State consistently ranks poorly when it comes to turnout, particularly in underrepresented communities. In the November 2016 election, New York had the eighth-worst turnout among states, when 57.2 percent of voting-age citizens went to the polls, according to U.S. Census Bureau figures. Only about 10 percent of registered voters turned out for the state primaries in 2014.

Citizens Union organized a coalition of community and ethnic organizations to raise awareness and voter turnout. The coalition includes the New York Immigration Coalition, New York City Campaign Finance Board, Women's City Club of New York, Generation Citizen, NAACP, and MinKwon Center.

"With Trump's constant attacks against our communities, it is more important now than ever that new Americans and first-generation voters make our voices heard in New York's democracy.

Our community must hold our local legislators accountable so that they represent the needs and values of those most vulnerable. Our Immigrants Vote! Campaign empowers voters from Buffalo to Bridgehampton to elect candidates who will make bold moves in the face of injustice," said **Steven Choi, Executive Director of the New York Immigration Coalition.**

"Take your souls the polls! Don't sleep on primary day, which is very important. Voting always has consequences. Remember that primary day is on Thursday, September 13. We must turn out in record numbers," said **Dr. Hazel N. Dukes, President of the NAACP New York State Conference.**

"On Thursday, September 13, all New Yorkers will have a very important job to do. We must go to the polls, cast a ballot in the primary elections, and make a stand for our democracy," said **Amy Loprest, Executive Director of the New York City Campaign Finance Board.** "The decisions we make as voters can affect every part of our daily lives, from our schools to the subways to our voting rights. New Yorkers should not miss this opportunity to speak up. Go vote for the city you want on Thursday, September 13!"

"Asian Americans make up 15 percent of the City's population and is the fastest growing ethnic and racial group in the state," said **John Park, Executive Director of the Minkwon Center.** "Far too often, our voices are dismissed and our community is not given the priority it deserves. Our voices are our future, and it is essential that Asian Americans, immigrants, and other marginalized communities exercise their power and vote this Thursday, September 13, in the primary election."

"In our current political climate, the rights of women, people of color, and immigrants are more vulnerable than ever," said **Women's City Club of New York President & CEO Carole J. Wacey.** "Voting is the cornerstone of our democracy, and critical to keeping our leaders accountable. We must ensure that our elected officials are representing New Yorkers' concerns and values, especially of those who have been historically underrepresented."

"Young New Yorkers are the present and future of our City's democracy," said **DeNora Getachew, New York City Executive Director of Generation Citizen.** "Yet, they are the least likely to make their voices heard because they don't believe we are listening. A change of date should never be a hurdle, especially at this critical moment in our democracy. We encourage all New Yorkers, including especially our growing youth population, to make their voices heard at the September 13th primary."

Polls are open in New York City from 6:00 AM to 9:00 PM. Voters unsure of where to vote should visit the New York City Campaign Finance Board's NYC Votes website at www.voting.nyc. The website also provides access to voter registration forms, in multiple languages.

About Citizens Union

Citizens Union (CU) is committed to reforming New York City and State government to foster accountability, accessibility, transparency, honesty, and the highest ethical standards. For the past 120 years, we at Citizens Union have devoted ourselves to holding our local governments accountable to do better in all of these areas, and we remain committed to enfranchising all New Yorkers. The many initiatives that we are currently advancing include ethics reform, increased voter participation and civic engagement, greater policy accountability, and a truly accurate 2020 census. In all of these efforts, we have been—and will remain—nonpartisan. Learn more at www.citizensunion.org.