



# 2022 Voters Directory

A NONPARTISAN GUIDE  
TO INFORMED VOTING

Vote on Tuesday, Aug. 23 or Vote Early Aug. 13 — 21



Primary Election



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# Citizens Union Preferred Candidates

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## AUGUST PRIMARY

### Bronx

#### Senate District 33

Gustavo Rivera (D)

#### Senate District 34

Nathalia Fernandez (D)

### Brooklyn

#### Senate District 21

Kevin Parker (D)

#### Senate District 26

Andrew Gounardes (D)

### Manhattan

#### Senate District 27

Brian Kavanaugh (D)

#### Senate District 30

Cordell Cleare (D)

### Queens/Brooklyn /Manhattan

#### Senate District 59

Elizabeth Crowley (D)

### Staten Island/Brooklyn

#### Senate District 23

Jessica Scarcella-Spanton (D)

## JUNE PRIMARY

#### Governor (Democratic)

Kathy Hochul (D)

#### Governor (Republican)

Harry Wilson (R)

### Manhattan

#### Assembly District 65

Grace Lee (D)

#### Assembly District 73

No preference

#### Assembly District 75

Christopher LeBron (D)

### Queens

#### Assembly District 37

Brent O'Leary (D)



# Uncontested Incumbents

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Following this year’s redistricting, two new Senate districts were created in New York City. The City is now represented by 28 State Senate and 65 State Assembly seats. Of the 93 seats in the New York State Legislature representing New York City residents:

- 44 incumbents are running uncontested in the primaries. That means that 46% of all of NYC’s seats in the state legislature are held by incumbents who do not face any competition in their parties.
- In the state Senate, 15 of NYC’s 28 seats – or 50% – are held by incumbents who are running for re-election without primary challengers. One other candidate is running uncontested for an open seat in a brand new district.
- In the Assembly, 29 of NYC’s 65 seats – or 45% – are held by incumbents who are running for re-election without primary challengers.

Looking back over the last decade, the competitiveness of primaries for the state Legislature seems to have improved significantly. In the Senate, the rate of uncontested incumbents dropped from 80% in 2012 to 53% in 2022. In the Assembly, for the first time in over ten years, the majority of incumbents are contested in the primary. The reasons for this shift likely include the increased interest in local politics spurred by the 2016 presidential election, improvements in election and campaign finance laws that have made it easier to vote and run, and the opportunities opened by newly drawn lines in a redistricting year.

## Rate of uncontested incumbents in the primary:

	2012	2014	2016	2018	2020	2022
<b>Legislature</b>	69%	67%	56%	76%	60%	47%
<b>Senate</b>	80%	54%	54%	77%	65%	53%
<b>Assembly</b>	64%	74%	58%	75%	58%	45%



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*The following district numbers represent new districts, post-redistricting*

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## Bronx

**Senate District 32**  
Luis R. Sepúlveda (D)

**Assembly District 79**  
Chantel Jackson (D)

**Assembly District 80**  
Nathalia Fernandez (D)

**Assembly District 83**  
Carl Heastie (D)

## Brooklyn

**Senate District 18**  
Julia Salazar (D)

**Senate District 19**  
Roxanne Persaud (D)

**Assembly District 41**  
Helene Weinstein (D)

**Assembly District 42**  
Rodneyse Bichotte (D)

**Assembly District 45**  
Steven Cymbrowitz (D)

**Assembly District 47**  
William Colton (D)

**Assembly District 48**  
Simcha Eichenstein (D)

**Senate District 36**  
Jamaal T. Bailey (D)

**Assembly District 85**  
Kenny Burgos (D)

**Assembly District 87**  
Karines Reyes (D)

**Senate District 20**  
Zellnor Myrie (D)

**Senate District 22**  
Simcha Felder (D)

**Assembly District 49**  
Peter J. Abbate, Jr (D)

**Assembly District 52**  
Jo Anne Simon (D)

**Assembly District 53**  
Maritza Davila (D)

**Assembly District 56**  
Stefani Zinerman (D)

**Assembly District 59**  
Jaime R. Williams (D)



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## Manhattan

### Senate District 28

Liz Krueger (D)

### Assembly District 67

Linda B. Rosenthal (D)

### Assembly District 69

Daniel O'Donnell (D)

### Senate District 29

Jose M. Serrano (D)

### Assembly District 74

Harvey Epstein (D)

## Queens

### Senate District 10

James Sanders Jr. (D)

### Senate District 11

Toby Ann Stavisky (D)

### Senate District 12

Michael Gianaris (D)

### Assembly District 23

Stacey Pheffer Amato (D)

### Assembly District 25

Nily Rozic (D)

### Assembly District 26

Edward C. Braunstein (D)

### Assembly District 27

Daniel Rosenthal (D)

### Assembly District 31

Khaleel M. Anderson (D)

### Senate District 13

Jessica Ramos (D)

### Senate District 14

Leroy G. Comrie Jr. (D)

### Senate District 16

John Liu (D)

### Assembly District 34

Jessica González-Rojas (D)

### Assembly District 36

Zohran K. Mamdani (D)

### Assembly District 38

Jenifer Rajkumar (D)

### Assembly District 39

Catalina Cruz (D)



# Staten Island

## Senate District 24

Andrew Lanza (R)

## Assembly District 62

Michael Reilly (R)

## Assembly District 64

Michael Tannousis (R)

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## Open and Vacant Seats

There are 10 open state legislative seats representing districts in New York City in this year's primary elections. Most are open because incumbents are not seeking reelection. Two senate districts are new, created by the redistricting plan to match the population increase in New York City compared to upstate. In the race to represent one of those brand-new districts – District 17 in southern Brooklyn – there is only one candidate. In Staten Island's 63rd Assembly District, there is only one Democratic candidate seeking to replace the outgoing Democratic incumbent, who is not seeking reelection.

## Bronx

### Senate District 34

Currently held by Alessandra Biaggi (D) – running for U.S. Congress

## Brooklyn

### Senate District 17

Vacant - new district created through redistricting - one candidate, uncontested



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## Manhattan

### Assembly District 65

Currently held by Yuh-line Niou (D) – running for U.S. Congress

### Assembly District 73

Currently held by Dan Quart (D)

### Assembly District 75

Currently held by Richard Gottfried (D)

## Queens

### Senate District 59

Vacant - new district created through redistricting (Also covers Brooklyn and Manhattan)

### Assembly District 30

Currently held by Brian Barnwell (D)

### Assembly District 37

Currently held by Cathy Nolan (D)

## Staten Island

### Senate District 23

Currently held by Diane Savino (D) (Also covers Brooklyn)

### Assembly District 63

Currently held by Michael Cusick (D) - one Democratic primary candidate, uncontested





# Candidate Evaluation

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## OVERVIEW

In a split primary election season spanning multiple months and several redistricting plans, Citizens Union has evaluated 40 candidates in 14 races for New York Governor, State Senate, and State Assembly to determine who strongly supports our issues, can advance a reform agenda, and can best fulfill the obligations of the position.

Interview teams made up of Local Candidates Committee members and Citizens Union Board members assessed the candidates based on their responses to Citizens Union’s questionnaire, independent research, first-hand knowledge of the candidates, and interviews with the candidates. The result of that evaluation is detailed in this Voters Directory, which Citizens Union has been publishing as a guide to its supportive members for over a century. All interviews and meetings were held by video conference.

This Voters Directory refers to both primary elections held in the 2022 summer. The primaries for statewide offices, State Assembly, Judges, and Party Positions were held in June. The primaries for the U.S. House of Representatives and State Senate are held in August.

## OUR CRITERIA

The following guidelines are used by the Local Candidates Committee and Citizens Union Board of Directors in the evaluation of candidates:

- Support for Citizens Union’s reform agenda shall be the primary criteria used in deciding its support for a candidate.
- Evidence of ability to wage an effective and competitive campaign shall be considered, but not be determinative.
- Ability to advance CU’s goals, if elected, shall be considered, but not determinative. Incumbents will be held accountable for their



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record of reform in office and shall be judged accordingly on the basis of their demonstrated support for CU's issues.

- State, local, or community issues specific to the race's jurisdiction shall be considered, as will candidates' ability to grasp these issues and propose thoughtful solutions to represent their constituents' interests.
- Evaluation of the candidates and the decision to support a particular candidate shall be made without regard to political party and in a nonpartisan manner.



# Candidate Evaluations

All candidates questionnaires can be found online at [citizensunion.org](https://citizensunion.org).

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## STATEWIDE RACES

### New York State Governor

#### DEMOCRATIC PARTY PRIMARY

#### Kathy Hochul ★ Preferred Candidate

Age: 63 Occupation: New York State Governor

Education: Syracuse University (B.A.); Catholic University (J.D.)

To read this candidate's responses to Citizen Union's questionnaire, [click here](#).

Governor Kathy Hochul assumed office under difficult circumstances that included a government in disarray and a resurgence of the covid pandemic. One of her first promises was to "change the culture of Albany," and she indeed brought in a new style of governing that was sorely needed. Her collaborative and open approach allowed her to build good working relations with the Legislature and New York City Mayor, a rare sight in New York. She assembled an impressive team of dedicated public servants to assist her and has been open to receiving input from all stakeholders.

Hochul's first plan also included a bold vision to replace the state's failed ethics watchdog with a new independent body that would not be appointed by elected officials and would work under more effective and transparent rules, which she framed as "blowing up JCOPE." The reform she passed, a compromise approved in the final stretch of budget negotiations, kept appointment power with elected officials but added a vetting process for appointees, managed by law school deans. While we view it as inadequate, recent signs suggest the vetting process might be better than previously expected. In her interview with Citizens Union, Hochul was honest about the difficulties in getting reform policies to pass and spoke about the pushback she often receives. She said she believes in incremental progress to build support for the future. "It's a game of yards," she said on reform.



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Another critical area of reform where she wants to see change is election administration. Hochul said she supports meaningful reforms to the Board of Elections, including reducing the party-based hiring in election boards, implementing open and competitive hiring processes, and amending the constitution to remove the control of parties over election boards. Acknowledging the political challenges around this issue, Hochul said she wants to start with “low-hanging fruit” and work from there. Her commitment to election reforms is evident from the increased funding she provided to the new public campaign finance system, as well as the support she lent for important policies like ten-day voter registration deadline, poll sites on college campuses, and the New York Voting Rights Act.

The Governor must do more to improve on two important issues. First, her role in approving the gerrymandered redistricting plan that was struck down by the courts, and her decision not to consolidate the two summer primaries, were disappointing. As the state considers the next steps in redistricting reform, the Governor should show the leadership needed to prevent parties from using the process to their advantage, as we saw this year. Second, she has faced a number of controversies involving personal conduct and ethics since entering office, including campaign fundraising practices, the use of the state’s plane for campaign purposes, the rushed approval of the Buffalo Bills stadium deal, and the appointment of a Lieutenant Governor who was later indicted for corruption. The Governor must do more to ensure New Yorkers that she conducts the political affairs of this office in an upright manner and maintains the public trust.

Citizens Union believes that Kathy Hochul is best positioned of the three Democratic candidates to effectuate critically needed changes in how Albany operates. She has shown a willingness and interest to pursue important reforms and demonstrated a better way of governing the state. Citizens Union prefers her in the Democratic Primary for Governor and looks forward to continuing working with her to improve New York’s democracy.



# Thomas Suozzi

Age: 59 Occupation: U.S. representative for New York's 3rd district

Education: Fordham University School of Law (J.D.), Boston College (B.S.)

To read this candidate's responses to Citizen Union's questionnaire, [click here](#).

Citizens Union also interviewed Congressman Tom Suozzi and was impressed by his desire to fix some of the major problems facing the state. A former Nassau County Executive, his accomplishments heading that multi-billion-dollar government have earned him high regards in New York State and around the nation. He is widely regarded as the person responsible for the dramatic turnaround of what was one of the nation's worst-managed counties before he took office. Now Suozzi has decided to leave his congressional seat and run for Governor, because he says New York is losing its influence – and its residents. As a proven executive and someone who knows how to work with the other side – he is a member of the House Problem Solvers Caucus – he believes he is best suited to get the New York government to work. Suozzi supports most of the Citizens Union reform agenda. He published a government accountability plan that addresses campaign finance, budget transparency, and ethics issues. On the latter, he wants to replace the current ethics watchdog, JCOPE, with a truly independent ethics commission, and pledged to support the structure Citizens Union proposed for such a body. He was also critical of the failed plan to gerrymander the state's districts – including his own – but remained skeptical about the possibility of fixing redistricting without federal action. Suozzi does not support getting political parties out of election administration because he believes they provide adequate checks and balances but promises to keep an open mind about solutions to improve the current system. Citizens Union appreciates his valuable addition to this race.

*The following candidates did not respond to Citizens Union's questionnaire:*

*Jumaane Williams.*

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## REPUBLICAN PARTY PRIMARY

### Harry J. Wilson ★ Preferred Candidate

Age: 50 Occupation: CEO of the MAEVA Group

Education: Harvard University (B.A.), Harvard Business school (M.B.A)

To read this candidate's responses to Citizen Union's questionnaire, [click here](#).

Harry Wilson is a corporate restructuring expert. During the 2008 financial crisis, he was one of the leaders of President Obama's auto industry rescue task force. In 2010, he ran for State Comptroller and narrowly lost to the incumbent. Citizens Union endorsed him in that race, and later honored him with a Gotham Great Award. A corporate turnaround specialist, Wilson believes organizations fail due to a series of bad decisions and bad governance, and that New York suffers from the same fundamental problem. He brings a refreshing perspective to running state government and tackling some of its dysfunctions. Ethics reform is a top priority for him. He launched his campaign policy platform with a government reform and accountability plan, which included establishing a new ethics body of professional, nonpartisan professionals appointed by outside groups, and setting term limits for all state elected officials. Wilson also has concrete plans to create more independence in currently politicized bodies of redistricting and election administration. He brings the experience and track record needed to move such reforms forward. Wilson is not aligned with Citizens Union on all issues. Most notably, he opposes public financing of campaigns, which he believes is used to protect incumbents, and thinks there is value in "competing for funds in the marketplace of ideas." However, he committed not to try to repeal the new state-level matching funds program, which is set to kick in next year. Wilson is an independent voice willing to cross the aisle and work collaboratively. Citizens Union believes he is the best candidate in the Republican Primary for Governor.

The following candidates did not respond to Citizens Union's questionnaire: Lee Zeldin, Andrew Giuliani, and Rob Astorino.

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## NY SENATE DISTRICT 33

*Van Nest, Riverdale, Fieldston, Spuyten Duyvil, Bedford Park, Fordham, Belmont, Morris Park, Norwood*

### **Gustavo Rivera** ★ *Preferred Candidate*

*Age: 46 Occupation: New York State Senator, 33rd District*

*Education: University of Puerto Rico (B.A.)*

Gustavo Rivera has served in the state Senate since 2011, and currently chairs the Health Committee, the first senator from the Bronx to hold the position. A reformer who highlights ethics and democracy issues in his campaign platform, Rivera sponsored bills to facilitate voting, reduce the corrupting influence of money in politics, restructure the Board of Elections, and ensure accountability for officials who violate the public's trust. He had not shied away from criticizing the county party machine or the executive chamber when he believed they abused their power, yet he has still managed to move meaningful legislation in Albany. Over 30 of his bills were signed into law - most dealing with healthcare - and passing the New York Health Act remains a top priority for him. Citizens Union supported Rivera in previous elections, and believes he will be a powerful advocate for this newly redrawn district. We prefer him in this race because of his commitment to reform, demonstrated ability to be an effective legislator, and his independent approach.

### **Miguelina Camilo**

*This candidate did not respond to Citizens Union's questionnaire.*



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## NY SENATE DISTRICT 34

*Parkchester, Clason Point, Castle Hill, Schuylerville, Throggs Neck, Silver Beach, Edgewater Park, Country Club, Middletown, Morris Park, Pelham, City Island*

### **Nathalia Fernandez** ★ *Preferred Candidate*

*Age: 34 Occupation: New York Assembly Member, 80th District Education: Hofstra University (B.A.)*

Nathalia Fernandez has served in the state Assembly since winning a special election in 2018, representing a district that overlaps with this Senate district in Pelham Parkway and Morris Park. She chairs the Subcommittee on Effective Treatment. Before assuming office, she was the Chief of Staff for her predecessor, Mark Gjnoaj, and the Bronx representative in former Governor Andrew Cuomo’s office. There she worked on paid family leave, the Excelsior Scholarship, and the Downstate Revitalization Initiative. In this campaign, her priorities are to strengthen the small business economy, and improve transportation and public safety. Fernandez supported all of Citizens Union’s policy goals on the candidate questionnaire, except for reducing campaign contribution limits, yet seemed willing to rethink that position during her candidate interview. Citizens Union prefers Fernandez in this race because of her experience, leadership qualities, and understanding of the district.

### **Christian Amato**

*Age: 34 Occupation: Founder and CEO, Consense Strategies Education: SUNY Plattsburgh (B.F.A.)*

Christian Amato is the founder and current CEO of Consense Strategies, a digital design and marketing firm that has worked for multiple political campaigns. Previously, Amato managed the digital strategy for Alessandra Biaggi’s campaign in this district. He was appointed as her Deputy Chief of Staff when she won. Amato, who also chairs the Transportation Committee on Community Board 11, prioritizes constituent services and promises to work to provide resources to those in





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need. Amato says he has long fought for JCOPE reform and assisted Biaggi's work while she served as Chair of the Ethics Committee. His policy goals emphasize accountability and transparency. While he supports all of Citizens Union's agenda items and is lauded for his focused campaigning, Citizens Union does not prefer Amato for this race.

### **John Perez**

*This candidate did not respond to Citizens Union's questionnaire*



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## NY SENATE DISTRICT 21

*Flatbush, East Flatbush, Ditmas Park, Flatlands, Marine Park, Bergen Beach*

### Kevin Parker ★ Preferred Candidate

*Age: 55 Occupation: New York State Senator, 21st District*

*Education: Penn State (B.S.); The New School (M.S.)*

A twenty-year veteran of the state Senate, Kevin Parker is the house’s Majority Whip and chairs the committee on Energy and Telecommunications. Parker is a prolific legislator who has passed over 90 laws during his tenure, addressing issues such as climate change, healthcare, housing and police reform. The latter is a top priority for him: he told Citizens Union about his proposals to make it easier to prosecute officers for misconduct and improve the Civilian Complaint Review Board, and he criticized Mayor Eric Adams for his rhetoric around crime and public safety. Parker also prioritizes voting reforms. Most recently, his legislation to require polling sites on college campuses was signed into law through the state budget. Other reform proposals focused on voting, including implementing an election day holiday, extending polling place timing, and restoring voting rights for incarcerated individuals. Parker did disagree with Citizens Union on two issues. He opposes special election reform and objects to moving the new state matching funds program outside the State Board of Elections, believing we should give the State BOE a chance to administer the program. Parker’s track record includes a history of heated confrontations with fellow lawmakers and others throughout his career. His explanation for such behavior, in which he told Citizens Union that he “won’t sit back when conflict is needed”, was insufficient. However, given his proven record in delivering policy achievements on voting rights, elections, and police reform, we prefer him in this race.



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## David Alexis

*Age: 34 Occupation: Director of Community Partnerships at The Drivers Cooperative Education: University of Bridgeport (B.S.)*

David Alexis is a ride-share organizer, former community health worker and socialist activist backed by the Democratic Socialists of America. He currently works for The Drivers Cooperative, a rideshare coop which Alexis describes as “the largest employee-owned coop in the country.” His top priorities include protecting tenants, making health care more affordable and addressing the climate crisis. Alexis supports all of CU’s agenda items. He believes that the Board of Elections needs to be overhauled to take power away from party leaders, that ethics oversight agencies should not feature members appointed by elected officials, and that voting should be made easier statewide. He supports the independent redistricting commission, but believes the body needs to be more insulated from partisan pressure going forward. CU does not prefer Alexis in this race because of his opponent’s proven track record on reform issues in the legislature.

## Kaegen Mays-Williams

*Age: 40 Occupation: Policy Counsel at Everytown for Gun Safety Education: Temple University (B.A.); American University (J.D.)*

Kaegen Mays-Williams is a lawyer for Everytown for Gun Safety, a national gun violence prevention advocacy group. She previously spent ten years in the New York District Attorney’s office, where she worked in the Trial Division, the Public Corruption Unit and the Financial Frauds Bureau. Her top priorities include addressing gun violence, making childcare and eldercare more affordable and supporting small businesses. Mays-Williams supports all of CU’s reform items. She believes that New York must overhaul its election administration and expand voting access, and that members of the independent redistricting commission should no longer be appointed by elected officials. In her interview with CU, she said she’d support legislation that would hold police officers financially liable when sued for misconduct. CU is impressed by Mays-Williams’ command of policy issues and her plans for office.

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## NY SENATE DISTRICT 26

*DUMBO, Downtown Brooklyn, Brooklyn Heights, parts of Forts Green and Park Slope, Gowanus, Carroll Gardens, Red Hook, South Slope, Sunset Park, Bay Ridge, Fort Hamilton, parts of Dyker Heights, and Governors Island*

### **Andrew Gounardes** ★ Preferred Candidate

*Age: 36 Occupation: New York State Senator, 22nd District*

*Education: Hunters College (B.A); George Washington Law (J.D.)*

Andrew Gounardes has served as a New York State Senator since 2019, representing a southern Brooklyn district that overlaps with the newly redrawn District 26 in Fort Hamilton, Dyker Heights and parts of Bay Ridge. The chair of the Committee on Budget and Revenue, and before that the Civil Service Committee, he is an effective lawmaker that succeeded in passing dozens of bills in a relatively short time in office. That track record also includes working on reform issues, including carrying bills that would limit contributions from people who do business with state government, restrict the use of campaign funds for personal use, and allow CUNY and SUNY students to receive course credits for serving as poll workers. He was one of a dozen Senators to publicly oppose Governor Hochul's compromise on JCOPE reform, a move aligned with CU's advocacy efforts at the time. In the future, Gounardes promises to work to reform the Board of Elections, limit corporate donations, strengthen investigations of campaign finance violations, and expand language access at poll sites. On ethics, he wants to give the Attorney General the power to investigate corruption cases and build a truly independent ethics watchdog. He also lays out several proposals to strengthen accountability and transparency at the MTA and in the state budget process. His non-reform priorities include fully funding CUNY, combatting sexual harassment in the workplace, and investing in public infrastructure to reimagine the BQE. Citizens Union endorsed Gounardes in both of his general elections, and believes he would be an excellent representative for the constituents of this newly redrawn district. Given his proven legislative track record, commitment to reform, and deep understanding of the position, we prefer him in this race.



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# David Yassky

Age: 58 Occupation: Full time candidate

Education: Princeton University (B.A.); Yale Law School (J.D.)

David Yassky represented the northern parts of this new state Senate district on the New York City Council between 2002 and 2009. He was then appointed by then-Mayor Bloomberg to be Commissioner for the NYC Taxi and Limousine Commission, and was later the dean of Pace University School of Law. Most recently, he served as Director of State Policy in former Governor Cuomo’s office; In his interview, he assured Citizens Union that he had no involvement in the numerous ethical scandals of the Cuomo administration. His top priorities in this race include universal screening for language-based learning disabilities, full funding for special-needs, and reducing housing costs. Yassky indicated support for all of Citizens Union’s reform policy goals on his questionnaire, but in his interview expressed support for the congressional district lines approved by the legislature, which were deemed to have been gerrymandered. Citizens Union values Yassky’s depth of experience at the local, state and federal level, yet prefers his opponent who has been a powerful advocate for reform issues in Albany.

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## NY SENATE DISTRICT 27

*East Village, West Village, Alphabet City, Lower East Side, Financial District, SoHo, Tribeca, Chinatown, FiDi, Battery Park City*

### Brian Kavanaugh ★ Preferred Candidate

*Age: 55 Occupation: New York State Senator, 26th District*

*Education: Princeton University (B.A.); NYU School of Law (J.D)*

Brian Kavanaugh currently represents much of lower Manhattan and parts of Brooklyn in the state Senate, and he has represented the east side of Manhattan in Albany for the last 15 years. An effective lawmaker who chairs the Committee on Housing, Kavanaugh has been instrumental in achieving new protections for New York renters and direct assistance for struggling tenants, including extending the moratorium on evictions during the pandemic. Kavanaugh is also a long-time reformer. During his time in the Assembly, he sponsored many election and campaign finance reforms that passed the lower house but died in the Senate. He was the prime sponsor of three important reforms enacted in 2019, which closed the LLC loophole, improved ballot design, and shortened the party enrollment deadline. Most recently, he passed a bill to reduce the voter registration deadline to the constitutional minimum of 10 days, which he has been sponsoring since 2008. Citizens Union prefers Kavanaugh in this race because he is an effective legislator with a proven track record of advancing the reform agenda, and deep ties to his district.

### Danyela Souza Egorov

*Occupation: New York City Strategy Advisor, New York Charter Schools*

*Association; Managing Partner, Our Kids Consulting*

*Education: FGV - Fundação Getulio Vargas (B.A.); Harvard Kennedy School (M.A.)*

Danyela Souza Egorov was born in Brazil, and lauds access to education as her “passport for a better life.” As such, she has spent her career working to expand education access for children through charter education. Souza Egorov is the founding board chair of Brooklyn RISE Charter, a public elementary school serving 150 students in Sunset Park. She is also the co-founder of the New



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York State Charter Parent Council, and the Vice President of the District 2 Community Education Council. In that role, she has been an outspoken critic of the DOE under the de Blasio administration. Egorov lists her main issues as allowing school choice for all New Yorkers, revisiting the controversial bail reform laws, and making it easier to own and operate a small business in New York City. Egorov supports most of Citizens Union’s reform issues except for removing the constitutional requirement that empowers the two major political parties to nominate commissioners to boards of elections, because she fears that if removed, there will be “no way to prevent total domination of the BOE by one party.” Citizens Union prefers her opponent in this race due to his track record of success at advancing key legislation, but encourages Egorov to continue her work in the community.

### Vittoria Fariello

*This candidate was not available for an interview.*

*NOTE: Citizens Union also interviewed **Yuh-Line Niou**, who left this race to run for Congress*

### NY SENATE DISTRICT 30

*Harlem, parts of East Harlem, parts of the Upper West Side, Morningside Heights and Hamilton Heights*

### Cordell Cleare ★ Preferred Candidate

*Age: 56 Occupation: New York State Senator, 30th District*

*Education: SUNY Empire College*

Cordell Cleare has represented Harlem in the New York state Senate since November of last year, when she won a special election for the seat vacated by Brian Benjamin, who was appointed to be Lieutenant Governor. Cleare worked with State Senator Bill Perkins for nearly two decades, serving as his Chief of Staff, and later ran against him - unsuccessfully - for a City Council seat. Her priorities include fully funding NYCHA, improving funding for public schools, and enhancing public safety while ending mass incarceration. Cleare indicated support for all of Citizens Union’s reform policy goals, but expressed doubt about reforming special elections, noting



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that her own selection process was rigorous and competitive; she won the party committee vote despite not being backed by the county party. Despite only serving in office for a short time, she demonstrated a good grasp of the job and deep understanding of the issues facing her constituents. Citizens Union prefers Cleare in this race and looks forward to working with her to advance reform in Albany.

## Shana Harmongoff

Age: 39 Occupation: Full time candidate

Education: South Carolina State University (B.S.); The Appalachian School of Law (J.D.); The Appalachian School of Law (M.L.S.)

Shana Harmongoff was the former Director of Community Affairs for then-Senator Brian Benjamin and later became his District Office Director. She indicated she had no knowledge of or involvement in Benjamin’s alleged corruption scheme for which he was indicted. Her priorities include housing the homeless, preventing gun violence, and improving mental health. Harmongoff indicated support for all of Citizens Union Policy goals. In her interview, she spoke passionately about improving transparency at JCOPE and the redistricting process through increased community involvement. She also promises to “reform modern-day policing” by hiring mental health professionals to assist police officers. Citizens Union was impressed by her dedication to this district and community service, and believes her energy and knowledge will lead to a promising future in this field.

### ASSEMBLY DISTRICT 65

Financial District, Chinatown, Lower East Side, Little Italy, Two Bridges, Nolita, East Village

## Grace Lee ★ Preferred Candidate

Age: 42 Occupation: Founder and CEO, Nine Naturals

Education: Columbia University (B.A.); University of Chicago (M.B.A.)

Candidate Website: <https://www.graceleeforassembly.com/>

To read this candidate’s responses to Citizen Union’s questionnaire, [click here](#).

Grace Lee is a business owner and community activist in Lower Manhattan. In recent years, she has pushed for the cleanup of a





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toxic waste site near her kids' school, advocated for deaf tenants at a dilapidated apartment building, and spoken at rallies against anti-Asian violence. Her top priorities include creating more affordable housing, expanding health care access, supporting small businesses, and investing in public schools. She is concerned about the impact the planned demolition and reconstruction of the Manhattan jail would have on Chinatown residents, and wants to look for alternatives. She supports all of CU's agenda items, and stressed she will demand accountability in Albany including on ethics oversight. Lee ran for this seat two years ago. At that time, Citizens Union commended her for her community activism and strong vision for this district. We prefer her in this race, and look forward to seeing her take that vision to the state legislature.

## Illapa Saritupac

Age: 35 Occupation: Social worker

Education: New York University (M.S.W)

Candidate Website: <https://illapa.nyc/>

To read this candidate's responses to Citizen Union's questionnaire, [click here](#).

Illapa Sairitupac is a social worker and ecosocialist activist. Sairitupac grew up in Westchester and Dutchess counties as the son of Peruvian immigrants and moved to New York City after finishing college. His top issues include implementing a Green New Deal for New York, protecting tenants from rent increases and retaliatory evictions, enacting statewide universal health care, and making CUNY tuition-free. Sairitupac supports all of CU's reform agenda. He detailed several reforms to professionalize election boards, transition to a fully vote-by-mail system by 2030, and develop a system in which an independent commission draws district maps. CU is impressed with Sairitupac's organizing prowess and his commitment to addressing environmental issues in this district.

## Denny Salas

Age: 39 Occupation: Social worker

Education: Bay State College (B.A.)

Candidate Website: <https://www.dennysalas.com>

To read this candidate's responses to Citizen Union's questionnaire, [click here](#).

Denny Salas is a former political lobbyist and fundraiser who most recently worked as a charter school administrator. His top priorities include implementing new afterschool programs for students, making



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homeownership more affordable and implementing wage subsidies for small businesses. Salas supports all of CU’s agenda and said that police accountability was his top-priority good-government issue. In his interview with CU, he proposed improving body cameras, ending qualified immunity and expanding mental health services for officers. Salas also supports overhauling the Board of Elections, consolidating the trial court system, making JCOPE more independent from elected officials, and ensuring district lines can’t be drawn by legislators going forward. CU appreciates Salas’s creative policy ideas and his drive to serve his community.

### Alana Sivin

*This candidate was not available for an interview, and has announced she is leaving the race.*

*NOTE: Citizens Union also interviewed **Jasmin Sanchez**, who did not make it on the ballot.*

## ASSEMBLY DISTRICT 73

*Upper East Side, Midtown East, Turtle Bay, Sutton Place, Murray Hill*

## NO PREFERENCE IN THIS RACE

### Alex Bores

*Age: 31 Occupation: Cofounder and President, Foresight Partners*

*Education: Cornell University (B.S.); Georgia Institute of Technology (M.S.)*

*Candidate Website: <https://alexbores.nyc>*

*To read this candidate’s responses to Citizen Union’s questionnaire, [click here](#).*

Alex Bores has spent almost all of his life on the Upper East Side, and attended New York City public schools from K-12. Bores has a master’s in computer science and has spent his career working to improve government’s use of technology, including by helping to implement software for local Covid aid programs. A Democratic District Leader, Bores’ top priorities include requiring new buildings to use electric power, increasing the affordable housing stock in the state, and eliminating subsidies for fossil fuels. Bores supports all of Citizens Union’s agenda items, and he is focused on effectively using technology in state government. During his interview, he detailed

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creative and well-informed solutions for fair redistricting, independent ethics oversight, and other reform issues. Citizens Union appreciates his engagement with these policy issues and thoughtful answers.

## Kellie Leeson

*Age: 48 Occupation: Co-Lead Organizer, Empire State Indivisible; Adjunct Assistant Professor, NYU*

*Education: UNC Chapel Hill (B.A.); Columbia University (M.A.)*

*Candidate Website: <https://kellieforassembly.com/>*

*To read this candidate's responses to Citizen Union's questionnaire, [click here](#).*

Kellie Leeson is the co-President of Empire State Indivisible and an adjunct professor at NYU's Wagner School. She previously served as a regional deputy director at the International Rescue Committee and held various positions in international humanitarian and refugee support organizations. Leeson supports all of Citizens Union's reform agenda. She proposes stronger checks and balances in the budgeting process, reforming the economic development grant system, extending the legislative calendar, improving public engagement and community input on bills, as well as broad reform of election administration. Her non-reform priorities include more funding for public education, committing state funds to climate justice, and providing affordable child care and increased assistance for small business in District 73. Citizens Union admires Leeson's commitment to improving state government, her experience in building coalitions, and her dynamic approach to the position.

## Russel Squire

*Age: 37 Occupation: Attorney, Covington and Burling; Chair of Manhattan Community Board 8*

*Education: Princeton University (B.A.); Georgetown University (J.D.)*

*Candidate Website: <https://squireforny.com/>*

*To read this candidate's responses to Citizen Union's questionnaire, [click here](#).*

Russel Squire is an attorney and an active community member from the Upper East Side. He is the Chair of Manhattan Community Board 8, a former president of the Lexington Democratic Club, and a District Leader. His top priorities include prioritizing public safety in the district and getting more funding for local schools, including to programs for children who have fallen behind during the pandemic. Squire supports all of Citizens Union's reform agenda, and his



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campaign platform on accountability and transparency calls for establishing a stronger ethics agency, professionalizing boards of elections, and revising Albany’s procedures such as “three people in a room”. Citizens Union appreciates Squire’s leadership experience, history of community involvement, and his no-nonsense approach. However, as a group that prioritizes ethics in government, we are concerned about reports of violations of state campaign laws by the campaign and certain donors to it.

**Adam E. Roberts**

*This candidate did not submit a candidate questionnaire.*

*NOTE: Citizens Union also interviewed **May Malik**, who announced she is leaving the race (questionnaire).*

**ASSEMBLY DISTRICT 75**

*Chelsea, Parts of Koreatown & Flatiron District, Theater District, Midtown Manhattan, Columbus Circle*

**Chris LeBron** ★ *Preferred Candidate*

*Age: 37 Occupation: Full time candidate*

*Education: Hunter College, St. Lewis University*

*Candidate Website: <https://www.chrislebron4ny.com>*

*To read this candidate’s responses to Citizen Union’s questionnaire, [click here](#).*

Chris LeBron, a lifelong resident of Hell’s Kitchen, is a former City Council staffer and political consultant. He is a founding president of the W. 47th Street Tenants Association and an active member of the local community board and the Hell’s Kitchen Democratic Club. His top priorities are increasing the number of affordable housing units and passing good cause eviction, passing the New York Health Act, and increasing funding for public schools. LeBron supports all of Citizens Union’s policy goals, and spoke about the need to reform our election administration system and create a truly independent redistricting commission. Citizens Union was impressed by his deep ties to the community, his experience, and his spirited approach. We prefer him in this race.



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## Tony Simone

Age: 52 Occupation: Full time candidate

Education: Hofstra University (B.A.), Columbia University (M.P.A.)

Candidate Website: <https://tonyfornewyork.com>

To read this candidate's responses to Citizen Union's questionnaire, [click here](#).

Tony Simone was the director of community outreach with former City Council Speaker Christine Quinn. He has years of political strategy experience, working with a variety of elected officials and campaigns. Most recently, he served as the Director of External Affairs with Hudson River Park Friends. His top priorities include protecting and expanding affordable housing by passing Good Cause Eviction, combating climate change, and improving New York's healthcare system. Simone supports all of Citizens Union's reform agenda. He proposed reforms to make it easier for candidates to run for office and improve campaign finance disclosure processes. Citizens Union was impressed by Simone's breadth of experience and effective advocacy.

## Harrison Douglas Marks

Age: 34 Occupation: Attorney

Education: Yale University (B.A., J.D.)

Candidate Website: <https://www.harrisonmarksforny.com>

To read this candidate's responses to Citizen Union's questionnaire, [click here](#).

Harrison Marks is an attorney who worked in the investment and consulting industry, and served as a special advisor for the Office of Management and Budget in the Obama administration. His top priorities include navigating the public health crisis, improving quality of life in his district, and using technology to enhance government functions. He is supportive of all of Citizens Union's reform agenda. He proposed improving digital citizen engagement with government, holding community board meetings online, reducing the campaign contribution limits and increasing the salary of state legislators. Citizens Union appreciates his experience and encourages him to continue his career of public service.

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## Layla Law-Gisiko

Age: 50 Occupation: Documentarist, Manhattan Community Board 5 Land Use Committee Chair

Education: La Sorbonne Université (M.A.), Paris Assas Université (M.A.)

Candidate Website: <https://www.laylaforny.com>

To read this candidate's responses to Citizen Union's questionnaire, [click here](#).

Layla Law-Gisiko, a documentarist and journalist, is running for this seat as a vocal opponent of the Penn District development plan. She has served on Manhattan's Community Board 5 for seventeen years, and as the chair of its Land Use Committee, has led the fight against what she calls an "ill-conceived plan" to raze nine blocks around Penn Station. Relatedly, she seeks to reform the state's economic development procedures and to repeal tax exemption for Madison Square Garden. Other reform proposals on her platform include replacing JCOPE with an ethics oversight agency with teeth, expanding early voting and no excuse absentee ballots, and expanding the state's campaign finance system. She supports all of Citizens Union's reform agenda. Her non-reform priorities include lowering class size in public schools and promoting affordable housing. Citizens Union appreciates her activism and service to her community and encourages her to continue her work for the betterment of New York.

*NOTE: Citizens Union also interviewed **Lowel Kern**, who announced he is leaving the race.*



# Queens

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## NY SENATE DISTRICT 59 (Queens/Brooklyn/Manhattan)

*Astoria, Queensbridge, Dutch Kills, Long Island City, Hunters Point, Greenpoint, Kips Bay, Tudor City, Gramercy, Stuy-town and Cooper Village*

### Elizabeth Crowley ★ Preferred Candidate

*Age: 44 Occupation: Former New York City Council Member, Chair, Friends of QNS  
Education: Fashion Institute of Technology (B.A); Pratt Institute (M.S.)*

Elizabeth Crowley represented Maspeth, Glendale, Middle Village, Woodhaven, Ridgewood, and Woodside on the New York City Council from 2009-2017. She later co-founded 21 in '21, a group dedicated to electing more women to the Council. In the past few years, Crowley led Friends of the QNS, advocating to establish a new transit line from Jamaica to Long Island City, and ran for Queens Borough President in the 2020 and 2021 elections. Her campaign priorities include assistance for small businesses, protecting reproductive rights, and getting affordable housing that incorporates urban planning principles. Crowley indicated her support for all of Citizens Union's reform agenda, including merit-based hiring at boards of elections, campaign funds matching programs, and the creation of a truly independent body to oversee legislators and election bodies in their redistricting processes. She is backed by the County Democratic party, but has a history of independence and has not always been aligned with the Party organization. Citizens Union believes Crowley is the most qualified candidate in the race. Her experience serving communities in Queens and moving policy would make her an effective lawmaker in Albany, including on reform issues. We prefer her in this race.

### Kristen Gonzalez

*Age: 26 Occupation: Executive Committee Member of Queens Community Board 4,  
Product Manager at American Express  
Education: Columbia University (B.A.)*

Kristen Gonzalez, a product manager at American Express and a tech organizer for the Democratic Socialists of America, was raised in Jackson Heights and now lives in Long Island City. She serves on the executive committee of Community Board 4. She has worked

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as an intern for the Obama administration and for Senator Chuck Schumer. Her top priorities as noted in the candidate questionnaire, included a rigorous, grassroots constituent affairs program, and developing policy with the guidance of activists and organizers. Her platform focuses on housing, climate, and healthcare. Gonzalez supports Citizens Union's reform agenda. During her interview, she spoke about increasing voting access and incorporating constituent feedback into oversight appointments. Citizens Union was impressed by Gonzalzel' energy and commitment to her community, and encourages her to continue her involvement in civic affairs.

## Nomiki Konst

*Age: 38 Occupation: Reporter/Political commentator and activist*

*Education: Unconfirmed University of Arizona (B.A.)*

Nomiki Konst is a political commentator on progressive issues who appears on outlets like CNN, CBS, NPR, and the Hill. She also hosted a daily talk show on SiriusXm. Konst founded several nonprofits dealing with investigative journalism and political discourse; she was recognized by Citizens Union at a 2017 Spring for Reform event for her investigative work with The Young Turks. Konst served as an appointee of Senator Bernie Sanders to the DNC's Unity Reform Commission, which sought to review the party's nomination process, where she researched the party's campaign finance practices. She indicated her support for all of CU's reform agenda, and said she would prioritize reforming ethics and oversight bodies concerning sexual harassment and campaign finance issues, especially the use of matching funds. She also detailed proposals to fix boards of elections. Citizens Union was impressed by Konst's understanding and familiarity with national, state, and local policy issues.

## Michael Corbett

*Age: 40 Occupation: Vice Chair of the New York State Democratic Party and*

*District Leader at Manhattan Democratic Party*

*Education: Hofstra University (B.A.)*

Michael Corbett, a lifetime resident of Murray Hill, worked in the City Council for the last seven years, mostly as a staffer for former Council Member Costa Constantinides, who represented Astoria. Corbett was also involved with the Young Democrats of America, where he rose the ranks of the party, serving in various leadership



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roles. In 2018 he was appointed as the Vice Chair of the state party. Corbett, a third-generation Teamster who has spent 15 years as a union mover with Local 814, prioritizes worker's rights. He proposes creating a pathway to apprenticeship, promoting labor recruitment in high schools, reinforcing protections against retaliation against union workers, and supporting workforce development in communities. Corbett indicated support for all of CU's reform agenda items. He stressed that redistricting powers should be given to an independent and non-partisan group, and proposed re-assessing the Board of Elections to ensure employment is not based on patronage. Citizens Union appreciates his familiarity with both sides of the river in this new Senate district, and his straightforward approach to reform issues.

### Francoise Olivas

*The candidate did not respond to Citizens Union's questionnaire.*

## ASSEMBLY DISTRICT 37

*Hunters Point, Long Island City, Court Square, Sunnyside, Blissville, Maspeth, Ridgewood, Fresh Pond*

### Brent O'Leary ★ Preferred Candidate

*Age: 51 Occupation: Attorney, President of Woodside on the Move*

*Education: Trinity College, (B.A.), Boston University (J.D.)*

*Candidate Website: <https://brentfornyc.com>*

*To read this candidate's responses to Citizen Union's questionnaire, [click here](#).*

Brent O'Leary is a corporate lawyer and community organizer in central and western Queens. He founded two community groups in Woodside and Hunters Point, was involved in local mutual aid relief during the pandemic, and has fought to keep overdevelopment out of Queens. His top priorities include increasing public safety, better training for police officers, and passing the New York Health Act. He says he will continue the outgoing assembly member's work on education. O'Leary supports Citizens Union's reform agenda, and promised to focus on campaign finance reform and police accountability. Citizens Union prefers O'Leary in this race because of his record of community service and history of grassroots

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organizing in this district. We believe he will be committed to a strong reform agenda in Albany.

## Juan Ardila

*Age: 26 Occupation: Know Your Rights Coordinator at the Legal Aid Society of New York  
Education: New York University (M.P.A.)*

*Candidate Website: <https://www.juanforthepeople.com>*

*To read this candidate's responses to Citizen Union's questionnaire, [click here](#).*

Juan Ardila has been a community organizer in Queens for much of his adult life. He is a coordinator at the Legal Aid Society of New York City and previously served as a staffer for former Council Member Brad Lander. Ardila's top priorities include promoting affordable housing in his district, enacting Good Cause legislation, legalizing Accessory Dwelling Units and basement and attic apartments, and aiding pandemic recovery by improving healthcare access. Ardila is supportive of all of Citizens Union's reform agenda. In his interview, he said he would "lead by example" in relation to ethics reform and called for the expansion of voting access to hold politicians accountable. Citizens Union appreciates Ardila's commitment to grassroots work and his support of needed reforms in issues like redistricting and election administration.

## Johanna Carmona

*Age: 32 Occupation: Senior Associate Attorney at Slater Slater Schulman LLP  
Education: New York University (B.A), Seton Hall University (J.D.)*

*Candidate Website: <https://johannacarmonaforassembly.com/>*

*To read this candidate's responses to Citizen Union's questionnaire, [click here](#).*

Johanna Carmona, an attorney and former Assistant District Attorney in Brooklyn, is running to replace her former boss, Assembly Member Cathy Nolan, who offered her to run for this seat. The daughter of Colombian immigrants, Carmona was born and raised in Sunnyside and now serves on the local Community Board. She is running to help families and "rebuild our city and state" after the pandemic. Carmona differs from Citizens Union over large parts of the reform agenda. She opposed key goals in Board of Election reform, including implementing open hiring; objected to lowering contribution limits for registered lobbyists and those who do business in the state, citing first amendment concerns; and opposed reforming the process of filling vacancies in the legislature. In her



interview, she said she would need more information on such topics before taking a position.

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## James Magee

Age: 41 Occupation: Attorney, James Magee Esq. LLP

Education: Fordham University (B.A.), Saint John's University (J.D.)

Candidate Website: <https://magee4queens.com>

To read this candidate's responses to Citizen Union's questionnaire, [click here](#).

James (Jim) Magee is an attorney specializing in criminal defense, personal injury, civil rights, and civil litigation. He previously served as a prosecutor at the Kings County District Attorney's Office.

Raised in Sunnyside, he now provides pro bono legal mediation for community members. Magee says he decided to run for office after seeing the failure of both legislative houses to fix bail reform and raise taxes on the rich. If elected, he would push to restore judicial discretion on bail, strengthen progressive income tax, and work to create the Inter Borough Express train line. Magee says he is committed to increasing police accountability and improving relationships between law enforcement and the community.

Although he promises to "make voting convenient to everyone" on his platform, he stated his opposition to most issues on the Citizens Union reform agenda, including proposed reforms to campaign finance, election administration (BOE), and ethics oversight.

However, during his interview, he acknowledged he was unfamiliar with those issues.



# Staten Island/Brooklyn

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## NY SENATE DISTRICT 23

*North Shore of Staten Island, Coney Island, Brighton Beach, Manhattan Beach, Fort Hamilton Army Base*

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## Jessica Scarcella-Spanton ★ Preferred Candidate

*Age: 32 Occupation: Full time candidate*

*Education: CUNY College of Staten Island's Verrazano School (B.A.)*

Jessica Scarcella-Spanton is the former Director of Operations in the office of the outgoing State Senator, Diane Savino. Previously, she served as a legislative director for Assembly Member Janele Hyer-Spencer's office, who represented eastern Staten Island and parts of Brooklyn, and worked on government and community relations at the MTA. Her top priorities include improving NYCHA housing, reforming public safety and criminal justice, and implementing universal childcare. Scarcella-Spanton is aligned with all of Citizens Union's reform policy goals. In her interview she was candid about her experience working in the state legislature as a young woman and went into detail about reforming ethics in Albany. She indicated support for removing party patronage at the Board of Elections and she supported replacing JCOPE prior to the creation of the New York Commission on Ethics and Lobbying in Government. Citizens Union appreciated her experience working in this district and managing the different needs of the two boroughs. Citizens Union believes with her experience in the legislature, as well as her energetic spirit, Scareclla-Spanton will be able to hit the ground running in Albany.

## Sarah Blas

*Age: 34 Occupation: Freelance Equity and Inclusion Consultant*

*Education: CUNY College of Staten Island*

Sarah Blas is a diversity, equity and inclusion consultant, and has worked with a number of organizations on Staten Island, including the Community Education Council for District 31, where she is an elected member. Her top priorities include improving housing, healthcare and education. Blas supports all of Citizens Union's reform policy goals. In her interview she mentioned supporting legislation to professionalize the Board of Elections and spoke about



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the lack of trust her community has in state government. Citizens Union appreciated her connections to both Staten Island, where she currently resides, and Brooklyn, where she grew up. The group was impressed to learn that she organized to register voters in NYCHA housing, where she is also a resident. Citizens Union encourages her to continue her community and civic involvement..

### **Bianca Rajpersaud**

*The candidate did not respond to Citizens Union's questionnaire.*

### **Rajiv Gowda**

*The candidate did not respond to Citizens Union's questionnaire.*

# Questionnaire

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Candidates for office are asked to complete a questionnaire on a variety of topics related to Citizens Union's reform agenda and their plans for office. Below you can find these questions, and candidates responses (not only from those candidates interviewed).

Questionnaire also included open-ended questions, but only yes/no questions are presented below. Responses to the full questionnaire from all candidates can be found on Citizens Union's website

## ETHICS

- 1 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?  
*Candidates interviewed before the August Primary were not asked question 1.*
- 2 Do you support the new independent ethics oversight agency to also replace the Legislative Ethics Commission (LEC)?
- 3 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? *Candidates interviewed before the August Primary were not asked question 3.*
- 4 Do you support significantly limiting outside compensation earned by state legislators and eliminate stipends, while increasing their pay?

## VOTING AND ELECTIONS

### **Election administration**

- 5 Do you support removing the constitutional requirement in election administration that empowers the two major political parties to nominate and effectively control election boards?
- 6 Do you support reducing the party-based hiring in boards of elections to the minimum currently required by the constitution?



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

### **Voting rights**

- 8 Do you support re-passing the constitutional amendment to enact same-day voter registration, and putting it on the ballot in 2024?
- 9 Do you support re-passing the constitutional amendment to enact no-excuse absentee voting, and putting it on the ballot in 2024?

### **Open and Competitive Elections**

- 10 Do you support easing access to the ballot for parties and independent candidates, by returning to the pre-2020 voting and signature thresholds?
- 11 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?

## **CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM**

- 12 Do you support further reducing campaign contribution limits?
- 13 Do you support setting even lower contribution limits for registered lobbyists and those who do business with the state?
- 14 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?
- 15 Do you support moving the campaign finance matching program to be administered by an independent, nonpartisan body outside of the State Board of Election

## **COURT REFORM**

- 16 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?



# Questionnaire Responses

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	District	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12	Q13	Q14	Q15	Q16
<b>BRONX</b>																	
Diaz	AD 81	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Dinowitz	AD 81	S	S	S	S	O	S	S	S	S	O	S	S	S	S	S	O
Sepulveda	SD 32	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	O
Rivera	SD 33	NA	S	NA	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Fernandez	SD 34	NA	S	NA	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	O	S	S	S	S
Amato	SD 34	NA	S	NA	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Harris	SD 34	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Gisondi	SD 34	NA	S	NA	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
<b>BRONX / WESTCHESTER</b>																	
Vasquez	SD 31	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Olivares	AD 54	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Alexis	SD 21	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Mays-Williams	SD 21	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Parker	SD 21	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	O	S	S	S	O	S
Alleyne	AD 60	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
<b>BRONX / MANHATTAN</b>																	
Brisport	SD 25	NA	S	NA	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Yassky	SD 26	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Gounardes	SD 26	NA	S	NA	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
<b>BROOKLYN</b>																	
Harmongoff	SD 30	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Cleare	SD 30	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Simone	AD 75	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
LeBron	AD 75	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Marks	AD 75	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Law-Giskio	AD 75	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Kern	AD 75	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Squire	AD 73	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Malik	AD 73	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Bores	AD 73	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Leeson	AD 73	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
<b>MANHATTAN</b>																	
Fariello	SD 27	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Kavanagh	SD 27	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Niou	SD 27	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Egorov	SD 27	S	S	S	S	O	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Taylor	AD 71	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Glover	AD 70	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Lee	AD 65	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Sanchez	AD 65	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Sairitupac	AD 65	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Andrews	AD 65	S	S	S	S	O	O	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Salas	AD 65	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Kessler	AD 66	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Danzilo	SD 47	NA	S	NA	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
<b>QUEENS</b>																	
Magee	AD 37	S	CO	O	O	CO	O	S	O	S	S	S	O	O	S	S	S
Carmona	AD 37	S	S	S	S	O	S	S	S	S	S	O	S	O	S	S	S
Ardila	AD 37	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
O'Leary	AD 37	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Crowley	SD 59	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
<b>QUEENS / BROOKLYN / MANHATTAN</b>																	
Gonzalez	SD 59	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Corbett	SD 59	NA	S	NA	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Scarcella -Spanton	SD 23	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
<b>STATEN ISLAND / BROOKLYN</b>																	
Konst	SD 59	NA	S	NA	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Blas	SD 23	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S

### KEY

- S Support
- O Oppose
- CO Conditionally Oppose
- NA Candidate was not asked this question





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## CITIZENS UNION MISSION

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 125 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. Some of our current initiatives include a new agenda for police accountability, monitoring the City Council’s redistricting process and increasing civic engagement. In all of these efforts, we have been — and will remain — nonpartisan.

Stay up to date with the latest happenings of the CU team and our work by liking our [Facebook page](#) and following us on [Twitter](#).

## THE VOTERS DIRECTORY

This summer, New Yorkers vote in two primary elections, after a state court ruled that U.S. House and State Senate districts must be redrawn. In June, primaries were held for statewide offices, State Assembly, Judges, and Party Positions. The primaries for the U.S. House of Representatives and State Senate will be held in August.

To help our supportive Citizens Union members prepare to vote, Citizens Union has been publishing an annual Voters Directory for over a century. The current edition provides a roster of Citizens Union’s preferred candidates in several key races, and information about the rigorous evaluation process and assessments of candidates.

We caution voters that there may be last minute elimination or reinstatement of candidates on the ballot, so the list contained in this directory may have changed since this document was printed.

For more information, visit the NYC Board of Elections website at <https://vote.nyc/> or call (866) VOTE-NYC.

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## CANDIDATE EVALUATION PROCESS

In this bifurcated election cycle in a redistricting year, Citizens Union has evaluated 40 candidates in 14 races for New York Governor, State Senate, and State Assembly to determine who strongly supports our issues, can advance a reform agenda, and can best fulfill the obligations of the position.

Interview teams made up of Local Candidates Committee members and Citizens Union Board members assessed the candidates based on their responses to Citizens Union’s questionnaire (a prerequisite for interviews), research, first-hand knowledge of the candidates, and interviews with the candidates, which are approximately 30 minutes each. The interview teams then made advisory recommendations to the full Local Candidates Committee, which deliberated and made recommendations to the Citizens Union Board, which made the final decision. All interviews and meetings were held by video conference.

A “Preferred” rating reflects a candidate that Citizens Union deems not only qualified for the office, but also a viable candidate, committed to an agenda of positive reform. Please note that candidates not preferred may nevertheless be highly regarded, which is generally reflected in the commentary.

Citizens Union issues a “Preferred” rating in primary elections, and an “Endorsed” rating for General Election contests. A “No Preference” rating may result when there is insufficient information available, it is believed that the candidates are of equal merit, or if no candidate interviewed by Citizens Union is believed to be effective or capable of representing the district. A “Dual Preference” designation may be offered to two qualified candidates, but not a “Dual Endorsement.” A “Dual Preference” shall be used only as a last resort, and, in the case of such determination, CU shall explain its reasoning in its Voters Directory.



# Acknowledgments

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This Voters Directory would not be possible without the hard work of members of the Citizens Union Board, Local Candidates Committee (LCC), staff and interns. 30 volunteer LCC members and staff members formed nonpartisan interview teams and evaluated 40 candidates in 14 races. We thank them for contributing their time, energy, and expertise to interviewing and evaluating candidates, especially during this challenging moment. We thank you for your support, and hope you enjoy the latest edition of the Voters Directory.



# Citizens Union Board of Directors

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Penelope L. Christophorou,  
*Vice-Chair*  
Nancy Bowe, *Treasurer*  
Christina R. Davis,  
*Secretary*  
Eboné M. Bishop  
Michael A. Cardozo  
Cliff Chenfeld  
Stacey Cumberbatch  
Allan H. Dobrin  
Gail Erickson

Ester R. Fuchs  
Chris Giglio  
Lorna B. Goodman  
Robert M. Hallman  
Robert M. Kaufman  
Sandra Lespinasse  
Alan Lubliner  
Malcolm MacKay  
Anthony S. Mattia  
Gary P. Naftalis  
Tom Osterman

Alan Rothstein  
Kenneth Seplow  
Peter J.W. Sherwin  
Gregory Silbert  
Anthony R. Smith  
Hector Soto  
Jason Stewart  
Darryl C. Towns  
Jim Walden  
David W. Wang  
Warren Wechsler

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Anthony S. Mattia, Chair  
Tim Abraham  
Scott Avidon  
David Brauner  
Stacey Cumberbatch  
Gail Erickson  
Joseph Gapper  
Eric Gioia  
Robert Grant  
Robert Hallman

Bill Herrlich  
Mary Hines  
Patrick Lespinasse  
Sandy Lespinasse  
Matthew Levison  
Alan Lubliner  
Corinne Marcus  
Robert Mascali  
Jane McGroarty  
Bill Meehan

Rose Pierre-Louis  
Richard Ropiak  
Alan Rothstein  
Kenneth Seplow  
Tony Smith  
Judy Stanton  
Ed Strauss  
Martin Tandler  
David Wang  
Jeremy Wilcox

## Staff

Betsy Gotbaum,  
*Executive Director*  
Dan Kaminsky,  
*Policy Manager*

Sally McCullough,  
*Director of Finance  
and Administration*  
W. JaVon Rice,  
*Technical Manager*

James Robinson,  
*Director of Development*  
Ben Weinberg,  
*Director of Public Policy*

## Interns

Isabella Day Creatura  
Alex Domb  
Makayla Flecha

Margaret Kearney  
Hali Radecker  
Alisha Sukhram

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