



Candidate Questionnaire

Local Candidates Committee NYS Legislative Election - Primary 2026

Name David Orkin

GENERAL INFORMATION

Office Sought (New York State)

District Number 38

In which primary

Age 34

Education Juris Doctor (JD)

Current job, position, or occupation

Before leaving recently to run for office, I was an immigrant workers' rights attorney at Make the Road NY.

Other positions or roles

Elected Bargaining Committee member of my union, UAW Local 2320 (NOLSW), representing over 100 workers in my shop at MRNY.

Previous Offices, Campaigns and Community/Civic Involvement

Many of my clients at MRNY lived across the neighborhoods of AD-38, including Ridgewood, Glendale, Woodhaven, Richmond Hill, and Ozone Park. Through this work, I've built roots to the Latino community in-district.

Campaign Contact Information

Website <https://www.david4queens.com/>

Twitter <https://x.com/david4queens>

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61585363269506>

Instagram <https://www.instagram.com/david4queens/>

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Signature 
on behalf of David Orkin
(Authorized)

GOALS AND PLANS

In addition to evaluating stances on the reform issues, 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 your top three campaign promises or goals, and what actions will you take to achieve them if elected?

New Yorkers just made history by electing Zohran Mamdani as mayor, demanding a more affordable, dignified future that puts working people over the wealthy. In AD-38, Democratic primary voters backed Zohran by 40 points in the final round of ranked-choice voting, delivering a clear mandate for the district. But Zohran needs allies in Albany to carry out that mandate. That's why I'm running to bring this movement to Albany. If elected, my top three priorities will be:

- Taxing the rich to fund an affordable New York for all
- Protecting our immigrant neighbors from ICE
- Securing workers' rights to strong pay and protections

I will work to pass these priorities through an inside-outside strategy. The movement of thousands of New Yorkers that helped elect Zohran is still mobilized and can apply strategic outside pressure to key elected officials, while our elected officials use that leverage to negotiate on the inside. That is why I consider movement co-governance essential to a progressive agenda. For example, I participated in the Tax the Rich Albany Takeover day of mobilization on 2/25, when nearly 2,000 people came to Albany. We've already seen these popular revenue-raising demands reflected in the NYS Legislature's One-House Budget.

How long have you lived in the district in which you are running, and do you have any achievements or involvement in your district you are particularly proud of?

I have lived in AD-38 for seven years.

During much of that time, I worked as an immigrant workers' rights attorney at Make the Road NY (MRNY), serving a largely immigrant and Latino population, with many clients from neighborhoods across AD-38, including Ridgewood, Glendale, Woodhaven, Richmond Hill, and Ozone Park. I've successfully represented many of these clients facing wage theft, harassment, and other workplace violations. Through this work, I have built deep connections to the Latino immigrant communities in the district.

I am running as an openly gay man with deep roots in the local queer community through organizing, social circles, and arts communities in my home neighborhood of Ridgewood.

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

As a democratic socialist, I believe it is essential to deepen democracy and challenge corruption not only in government, but across all areas of our lives, from our workplaces to our communities to our housing.

As an attorney at MRNY, I advocated to the NYC Council for increased funding for the NYC Commission on Human Rights as part of a campaign to end employment discrimination, workplace sexual harassment, and wage theft. I've also represented MRNY on the EmPIRE Worker Protection Act coalition, a bill that would strengthen the State's ability to recover unpaid wages for workers through a fully funded and empowered Department of Labor.

My profound moral indignation at the corruption in the Eric Adams administration was a driving factor in my decision to run for this seat. The incumbent, Jenifer Rajkumar, was Adams' chief ally in Albany, standing with him even through his criminal indictments and appearing at over 150 public events together.

Finally, I firmly believe that the unchecked influence of big money in politics is one of the greatest political

crises of our time, and working-class people are increasingly recognizing that we live in an oligarchy. I'm proud to be running a campaign that rejects corporate donations and is powered by small-dollar contributions and public matching funds. I'm also proud to have the endorsement of Citizen Action of NY, a leading force in the fight that won public matching funds for New York State.

ELECTIONS AND VOTING

1. Do you support opening up New York City's closed primary system, allowing over 1 million unaffiliated voters that are currently locked out of the election to participate in the primary election?

No

Comments (optional)

The goals of an open primary system are commendable: to increase voter participation and, in turn, strengthen democratic legitimacy and the mandate for election outcomes.

However, political parties serve an important function in our society by building majoritarian coalitions and tailoring a political program to those constituencies. A closed primary system is where parties refine their coalitions and build consensus around their programs to make them coherent, while the general election is where these parties compete head-to-head.

As Mayor Mamdani demonstrated in his primary campaign, there is a more effective way to increase voter participation: by crafting a program that inspires disaffected voters to believe the political system can work for them, not just the wealthy. My primary campaign is very much modeled on Mamdani's approach in this sense.

2. Will you oppose any attempt to permanently remove redistricting protections from the state constitution, including existing protections of minority voting rights, population equity, ban on political gerrymandering, and consideration of communities of interest?

Yes

Comments (optional)

One of the main drivers of voter disaffection is gerrymandered districts, where election outcomes are nearly predetermined. I would oppose any measures that weaken protections against this.

3. Do you support reforming the process of filling vacancies in the state legislature by implementing nonpartisan special elections (like the system used in New York City) instead of giving party officials the power to decide who will run as the party nominee?

Yes

Comments (optional)

The existing system of hand-picked successors is undemocratic. Special elections should be decided by voters to ensure a fair path for candidates outside of the party machines.

4. Do you support restructuring the New York City Board of Elections to make it more professionalized and transparent, and less dependent on political parties (S699 Krueger/A1852 Rozic)?

Yes

Comments (optional)

Administrative incompetence and politicization of the BOE risks disenfranchising voters. The BOE should be a transparent, professionalized, independent agency that ensures elections are efficient and fair.

5. Do you oppose requiring registered voters to show ID to vote in New York State?

Yes

Comments (optional)

Voter ID laws function as a tool of voter suppression. I strongly oppose any barriers that make it harder for registered voters to exercise their fundamental democratic right to have a say in how our society is run. Research consistently shows that obstacles to voting disproportionately affect low-income, immigrant, and POC voters, and far outweigh the near-negligible impact of voter fraud on election outcomes.

6. Do you support providing time extenders for polling place voting hours in cases where an emergency leads to voting being disrupted or shut down? (S4602A Gounardes/A5846A Gibbs)

Yes

Comments (optional)

Extending hours ensures that workers, parents, and others who can only vote in narrow windows aren't punished for administrative or technical failures outside of their control.

7. Do you support the Democracy During Detention Act (S440 Myrie/A2121 Walker), which establishes the election infrastructure to make voting accessible for all those eligible to vote who are detained in jails?

Yes

Comments (optional)

Being detained pretrial should not strip a person of their right to vote. I support building the necessary infrastructure to ensure every eligible New Yorker, including those in our jails, can access a ballot and stay civically engaged.

CAMPAIGN FINANCE

8. Are you a public campaign finance participant? If not, please explain why.

Yes

Comments (if needed)

My campaign is rejecting contributions from corporate interests, and as such, is reliant on public campaign financing.

9. Are you a supporter of the state's public campaign matching funds program, and do you commit to ensuring the program is fully funded?

Yes

Comments (optional)

I strongly support this program. It empowers working class candidates to run competitive races without relying on wealthy and corporate donors. I commit to ensuring it is fully funded so that people, not corporate PACs, determine our elections.

10. Do you support requiring disclosure of a contributor's employer in campaign finance reports? (S1910 Rivera/A3092 Carroll)

Yes

Comments (optional)

Knowing a donor's employer helps voters identify when corporate interests or donors with other interests than that of the public are attempting to buy influence in the legislature. Full public disclosure is a critical step towards campaign transparency.

11. Do you support requiring Independent Expenditure entities (Super PACs) to disclose their top three donors on ads, similar to the requirements under NYC law? (S8445 Fahy/A10097Solages)

Yes

Comments (optional)

Dark money has no place in our democracy. Voters deserve to know exactly which billionaires or corporate entities are paying for the modern barrage of campaign ads before they cast their vote.

12. Do you support applying lower contribution limits to lobbyists and people doing business with the state or seeking contracts from the state? New York City imposes lower contribution limits for registered lobbyists and individuals doing business with the City.

Yes

Comments (optional)

Lobbyists and state contractors shouldn't have outsized influence. Lowering their contribution limits is a necessary step toward ending the culture of transactional politics in Albany.

ETHICS

13. Do you support requiring lobbyists to report their campaign contributions and fundraising activity, as well as campaign consulting services they provide?

Yes

Comments (optional)

The revolving door between lobbying and campaign consulting creates significant conflicts of interest. Expanding reporting requirements ensures that these dual roles are transparent and that special interests can't operate in hiding.

14. Do you support including lobbying regarding a nomination or confirmation of a nominee that requires Senate confirmation in lobbying reports? (S374 Gianaris/A7456 McDonald)

Yes

Comments (optional)

Lobbying for a political appointment is no different in principle from lobbying for legislation—they are both ways of influencing political outcomes. For the sake of transparency, lobbyists should be required to disclose this activity.

15. Do you support codifying sexual harassment as conduct that violates the public officers and employees code of ethics? (Gounardes S4197/Kelles A6201)

Yes

Comments (optional)

As a labor attorney at MRNY, I have helped clients win numerous workplace sexual harassment cases. I have seen firsthand the tactics employers use to evade responsibility, and I recognize the need for greater state support in addressing these issues.

POLICE ACCOUNTABILITY

16. Do you support giving the New York City Civilian Complaint Review Board access to certain sealed and confidential records in matters involving potential police discipline? (S4966 Bailey/A292 Cruz)

Yes

Comments (optional)

Ensuring that the CCRB has all the necessary information to render judgement is essential for independent oversight and accountability.

17. Do you support transferring disciplinary hearings involving police officers from the NYPD to the Office of Administrative Trials and Hearings (OATH)? (S3927 Myrie)

Yes

Comments (optional)

To build public trust and ensure fair outcomes, disciplinary hearings involving NYPD officers should be conducted independently of the NYPD, which has an inherent conflict of interest in disciplining its own officers.

REVISING CITY CHARTERS

15. Do you support banning the establishment of “lame duck” charter revision commissions, established by mayors right before the end of their term? (S8934 Liu)

Yes

Comments (optional)

We saw with Eric Adams an attempt to create a new CRC even after his voter mandate expired following the 2025 election—this bill would prevent that from happening in the future.

16. Do you support mandating that charter commissions conduct their process over a mandatory minimum timeline of 180 days before issuing recommended ballot questions to a city’s charter?

Yes

Comments (optional)

A longer timeframe allows for more transparent public engagement with the CRC process.

ADDITIONAL INFO

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



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What else would you like us to know about yourself?

I know that across all our differences, working people fundamentally need the same things: dignity, security, and joy in our workplaces, in our homes, and in our communities. We deserve quality public education, childcare, and healthcare, beautiful public spaces, and reliable, affordable public transit. We deserve a vacation. But we have a political system that systematically benefits the rich and well connected over regular working people—an oligarchy. The only way we can rebalance the political forces in our society is to organize and fight for what we deserve.

At MRNY, my coworkers trusted me enough to elect me to the bargaining committee of our union, UAW Local 2320 (NOLSW), representing more than 100 workers. I helped secure our first contract, winning \$10,000+ raises for the lowest-paid staff, a free healthcare option, and a 35-hour workweek. I saw firsthand how these gains, won through our collective power, transformed people’s lives. This is the same fight I’ll bring to Albany for working-class and immigrant New Yorkers in AD-38 and across the state.