



Candidate Questionnaire

Local Candidates Committee NYS Legislative Election - Primary 2026

Name Mariama James

GENERAL INFORMATION

Office Sought (New York State)

District Number 65

In which primary

Age 54

Education BS Accounting

Current job, position, or occupation

freelance accounting and perpetual volunteering for over 20 years

Other positions or roles

Member BoD Sophie Gerson Healthy Youth and the Harlem Historical Society, Member of the WTC Survivor Steering Committee and the WTC Scientific Technical Advisory Committee, Member NY Presbyterian Lower Manhattan Hospital Community Advisory Board, Member, QoL Committee Chair and Treasurer Manhattan Community Board One, Vice Chair Manhattan Democrats (New York County Democratic Party), Democratic District Leader Assembly District 65 Part C

Campaign Contact Information

Website mariamajames.com

Twitter @mariamajames13

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Instagram @mj4nyc1

Signature

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?

Securing True Housing Stability and Affordability: Goal: Protect and expand deeply affordable housing, focusing on Mitchell-Lama protections and 100% affordable developments on government-owned land. Action: I will sponsor legislation to strengthen the Loft Laws and Sections 8 & 9, while leveraging my experience co-founding the 5 World Trade Center coalition to ensure public land serves the public good through permanent affordability. Ensuring Equitable Healthcare for All New Yorkers: Goal: Protect specialized care and ensure full Medicaid funding for seniors, persons with disabilities, and the LGBTQIA+ community. Action: Building on my work creating and funding the James Zadroga 9/11 Health Law, I will fight for stable healthcare funding that prioritizes high-need populations, including HIV/AIDS services and gender-affirming care. Investing in Youth and Waterfront Resiliency: Goal: Bridge the equity gap in education and protect our community from climate-related disasters. Action: I will advocate for fully funded Title 1 schools and expanded after-school enrichment like the programs I've supported through Sophie Gerson Healthy Youth. Simultaneously, I will push for state-level funding for waterfront resiliency projects to protect Lower Manhattan from future storms like Hurricane Sandy.

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 am a lifelong resident of the 65th District, having lived in my Southbridge Towers apartment since I was three months old. My family's roots here are deep; my grandfather was one of only three Black men who helped construct the original Twin Towers. I am particularly proud of the following achievements: The James Zadroga 9/11 Health Law: I was instrumental in creating and passing this federal law, which currently provides healthcare and compensation to over 140,000 survivors and responders. 5 World Trade Center Advocacy: I co-founded the coalition that secured 400 deeply affordable housing units at 5WTC, with a 20% preference for 9/11 survivors and first responders. Community Green Space: I successfully lobbied the DoT and Parks Department to close "Little Pearl Street" to create a new public park on Fulton Street.

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.

Financial Oversight and Transparency: I have spent over 20 years managing complex budgets as a PTA Treasurer, the Treasurer of Downtown Independent Democrats (DID) for three years, and my ongoing role as Treasurer of Community Board 1. In these roles, I have ensured that every dollar is accounted for and that financial processes remain transparent to the community. Government Accountability: Through my work on the WTC Survivor Steering Committee and the Scientific Technical Advisory Committee, I provide critical oversight for health programs to ensure they remain responsive to the people they serve. Election Integrity: As a District Leader, I have actively worked to improve local election operations, including successfully advocating for the removal of poll workers when safety and performance standards were not met. Legislative Reform: I have proposed legislative changes to government forms to allow for more granular reporting of nationality and ethnicity, ensuring that diverse communities are accurately represented and served by state and city agencies.

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 established parties have the right to choose their own nominees without influence by those who don't share their ideologies and others have the right to establish their own parties

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

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

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

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

Yes

Comments (optional)

Except at times when the Board has deemed "ID is required" NY is a "signature state"

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

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

CAMPAIGN FINANCE

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

Yes

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

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

Yes

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

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

ETHICS

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

Yes

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

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

No

Comments (optional)

As a Black woman aware of our history in this country particularly as it relates to our men being falsely accused of sexual harassment and worse, I'd first have to know and understand what would constitute sexual harassment, how will we ensure the accusations are accurate and what if anything would be the additional consequences beyond an ethics violation. Until then, I'm fine with voters thinking for themselves as they did regarding Cuomo and others

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

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

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

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

ADDITIONAL INFO

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



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