



# Candidate Questionnaire

Local Candidates Committee NYS Legislative Election - Primary  
2026

**Name** Mike Scala

## GENERAL INFORMATION

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

**District Number** 23

**In which primary** Democratic

**Age** 43

**Education** Juris Doctor

### Current job, position, or occupation

Self-employed attorney

### Other positions or roles

Board President, Queens Defenders  
Counsel and Legal Advisor, QueensLink  
Queens County Democratic Committee Member

### Previous Offices, Campaigns and Community/Civic Involvement

2021 City Council candidate  
2017 City Council Democratic nominee  
Counsel, Ozone Park Block Association  
Charter Member, Ozone Park Howard Beach Woodhaven Lions Club  
Member, Kiwanis Club of Ozone Park-Woodhaven  
Counsel and Legislative Director, NYS Senate  
First Vice President, Queens Public Transit Committee  
Co-chair, Rockaway Ferry Committee

## Campaign Contact Information

**Website** [www.scala.vision](http://www.scala.vision)

**Twitter** @mikegscala

**Facebook** [realmikescala](https://www.facebook.com/realmikescala)

**Instagram** [scala\\_vision](https://www.instagram.com/scala_vision)

## 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?**

Make smart infrastructure investments like QueensLink, which will shorten our commute by up to 45 minutes; enact Tier 6 pension reform so our public employees have more money in their pockets and can retire with dignity; enact a moratorium on utility rate increases.

I will introduce legislation, co-sponsor legislation, join sign-on letters, participate in public rallies and events, and prioritize these goals in Democratic Conference and within budget negotiations.

### **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 was born and raised in South Queens and have lived in this district for the past 10 years.

I'm proud of many achievements for residents, including successful legal action against HPD to unblock an election of directors at Dayton Beach Park, a Mitchell-Lama housing development in Rockaway Beach. Due to this action, where I worked diligently alongside shareholders, the co-op was able to elect a new board for the first time in many years.

During COVID-19, I helped organize a food pantry in Ozone Park that feeds up to one thousand locally families weekly. This was done by bringing together a number of not-for-profit organizations in the neighborhood that I represented as counsel.

As co-chair of the Rockaway Ferry Committee, I advocated for the return of ferry service to the peninsula and ensured we had early departure times to accommodate workers who start their jobs before 9 AM.

As the current President of the Queens Defenders Board of Directors, I'm now leading an organization that represents 1,500 clients in housing court annually. We maintain an outreach center in Far Rockaway where everyone can obtain assistance with housing-related issues free of charge.

### **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 an attorney, I've won high profile election law cases including Matter of Neal v. Liscum, 164 A.D.3d 1540 (3rd Dept. 2018), which is often cited by judges in decisions and stands for the principle that candidates cannot be removed from the ballot if objectors do not strictly comply with service provisions.

I've volunteered my services in Florida, where I assisted in the representation of Nikki Fried in her successful campaign to become the state's Commissioner of Agriculture. Due to the closeness of the election, recounts were mandatory and I helped ensure voters were not deprived of their say.

I've called for transparency measures including state-of-origin legislation where the state must provide a public database of where guns recovered in crimes originate. This, of course, shows that states with lenient laws tend to produce the most guns that are used illegally here.

In my role as counsel and legislative director in the State Senate, I drafted the language for New York's missing adults law, which requires police reports of missing adults. Prior to this law, there was no state-mandated requirement and departments tended to pursue cases where the victim was a white man more than when the victim was a woman or person of color.

In 2024, I released a song "Handcuffs" that made it to the top 5 on the college rap radio chart and speaks about the history of racism in the United States and law enforcement.

# 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)

I believe voters should enroll in the party in which they want to participate. By not enrolling in a party, a voter is choosing to abstain from voting in primaries.

The danger of allowing this can be seen in a district like mine, where the Republican candidate came within 15 votes of winning in 2022. There is no Republican primary for the seat, but this year we have a Democratic primary. If non-Democrats voted in our primary, it would allow Republican general election voters to influence our nomination process.

**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)

Voting is a fundamental right and any limitations on it must meet strict scrutiny to pass constitutional muster. Voter ID laws do not meet this exacting standard and are an unconstitutional violation of voter rights.

**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)**

Yes

## **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

## Comments (optional)

Yes, it makes sense for an incoming mayor to have to confirm any CRC initiated by an outgoing mayor. This prevents mayors who are leaving office from instituting policy that circumvent the will of the voters.

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

I am a former Democratic nominee for City Council in the district that heavily overlaps this Assembly district. In prior campaigns, I never lost this Assembly district in a primary. I'm coming into this race with an established base of support, including thousands of positive IDs that we've been reconfirming. While my opponent is being supported by the party machine, I am the only candidate in this race who is fully pro-choice and running on a platform of putting the people first.