



Candidate Questionnaire

Local Candidates Committee NYS Comptroller Election -
Primary 2026

Name Raj Goyle

GENERAL INFORMATION

Age 51

Education BA, Duke University; JD, Harvard Law School

Current job, position, or occupation

NYS Comptroller Candidate

Other positions or roles

Co-founder and CEO, Bodhala
Former State Legislator
Former Civil Rights Attorney, ACLU
Senior Advisor, the Rubin Foundation

Previous Offices, Campaigns and Community/Civic Involvement

Two-Term Member, Kansas House of Representatives
Member, New York City Commission on Universal After-School
Founder, Phone Free New York
Board Co-Chair, 5BORO
Co-founder, Indian American Impact
Former Board Member, Planned Parenthood of New York
Former Board Member, Hunger Free America

Campaign Contact Information

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

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

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/rajgoyle4ny/>

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

Bluesky <https://bsky.app/profile/rgoyle.bsky.social>

Other social platforms <https://www.tiktok.com/@raj.goyle>

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.

1. What are your top three campaign promises or goals, and what actions will you take to achieve them if elected?

First, I will protect our future by fully divesting the pension fund from fossil fuels, foreign bonds and Palantir and reinvesting that capital into New York's clean energy transition to create a resilient, green economy. Second, I will leverage the state's \$300 billion pension fund to finance the construction and preservation of hundreds of thousands of units of affordable housing across the state. My third goal is to serve as an affordability watchdog by using the audit power to expose corporate greed and predatory utility hikes that crush working families.

2. 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.

I am a former board member of Citizens Union, and have worked extensively on issues of campaign finance reform for 25 years. As a civil rights attorney at the ACLU, I fought post-9/11 government overreach to protect constitutional checks and balances. During my two terms in the Kansas House, I flipped a 2-1 GOP seat by building a coalition centered on transparency and government accountability. I successfully led efforts to defeat restrictive voter ID bills and fought for ethics reform to curb the influence of special interests. As a legislator, I ran what became known as the "Goyle amendment" which would have required that all third party spending be disclosed. This would have included the dark money spending by the Koch family. I worked with the Democracy Alliance for years on campaign finance reform, and I worked as an advisor to the national organization Issue One, and supported the work of Senator Russ Feingold after he left office. Since moving to New York, I have continued this work by founding Phone Free New York – through which I successfully led to implementation a bell-to-bell cell phone ban in schools to protect the mental health of our state's children – and serving as Co-Chair of 5Boro to advocate for inclusive growth and transparent governance.

ETHICS AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN GOVERNMENT

3. The State Comptroller is tasked with reviewing government contracts and addressing potential cases of waste, fraud, or corruption. Please describe your approach to reviewing contracts, and what areas in State Government procurement you believe most need attention to such issues?

I will implement a value-based contracting approach to ensure that any firm receiving taxpayer dollars meets strict labor, environmental, and equity standards. My primary focus will be on ending Albany's pay-to-play culture by auditing massive contracts that have been awarded with little transparency. I will be laser focused on exiting contracts and investments involving surveillance technology and vendors like Palantir. In doing this, I will ensure that public funds are not being used to undermine civil liberties or support the federal deportation machine.

4. The Governor has attempted to curtail the comptroller pre-audit authority by removing the types of contracts (depending on size and type) that would trigger a review. Governor Cuomo enacted similar measures. How would you ensure contract auditing power is permanent? How will you fight ongoing attempts to curtail the OSC power over contracts?

I will utilize the Comptroller's bully pulpit to alert millions of voters that removing independent oversight is an invitation for corruption and waste. To ensure these powers are permanent, I will aggressively advocate for a state constitutional amendment or law that codifies the Comptroller's pre-audit authority for all major contracts. I will resist executive overreach by forming a coalition of good-government advocates to prove that independent oversight is the only way to prevent the backroom deals that have historically plagued Albany.

5. What would be your auditing priorities? What agencies, authorities, and local governments would you audit first?

My top priorities involve agencies that most impact the daily affordability and safety of New Yorkers. I will first audit the Public Service Commission regarding utility rate-making, the NYPD regarding surveillance technology waste, and NYCHA to address repair timelines and disrepair. I also commit to auditing the 68

billion dollar 2025-2029 Capital Plan to improve the abysmal track record of this agency. I will also hold Fiscal Town Halls in historically underserved neighborhoods so that residents, rather than just politicians, can inform our audit schedule. This ensures the office is responsive to the waste and mismanagement that communities of color and working-class families experience firsthand.

6. 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, and has enacted a Doing Business Database to track such individuals.

Yes, I strongly support implementing a state-level Doing Business Database and applying significantly lower contribution limits for lobbyists and contractors. To lead by example, I have already pledged to reject donations from any firm managing pension assets or holding major state contracts. These measures are essential to severing the link between campaign contributions and government procurement, ensuring that New York's financial decisions are made on merit rather than political influence.

***In the box below, you may provide additional information on any actions that you have taken or plan to take to improve ethics and accountability in New York State government.**

I plan to establish a dedicated Ethics and Equity Audit Unit within the Office of the State Comptroller. This unit will proactively screen state agencies for systemic bias and civil rights risks, ensuring that our budget is never weaponized against marginalized groups. As a first-generation American, I am particularly committed to ensuring that no state funds or data are shared with federal agencies for the purpose of mass deportations. In other words, I commit to using our fiscal oversight to protect the rights and dignity of every New Yorker. In Kansas, I never took so much as a meal from a lobbyist. Once elected, I will advocate for stricter outside income limits on lawmakers.

BUDGET AND FISCAL HEALTH

7. Funding threats from the federal government and unclear economic prospects could have a dramatic effect on New York. How would you utilize the authority of the Comptroller's Office to ensure the fiscal health of our State?

I will utilize our \$300 billion pension fund as a financial fortress to protect the state's long-term health. I intend to build a Blue State Fiscal Shield by coordinating with other progressive state fiscal officers (similar to the right's State Financial Officers Foundation) to align our investment power against federal threats. By auditing shadow liabilities—such as the social and economic costs of climate change—and diversifying our portfolio into stable New York-based infrastructure and social housing, we can insulate our economy from federal volatility and ensure our fiscal health remains strong. I am also a proponent of using the Recourse Act to compel the federal government to meet its responsibilities to the State of New York when required.

8. Do you believe that the current balance of power between the governor and the legislature in the budget process is appropriate? What steps do you believe are necessary, if any, to change this balance?

The current balance is inappropriate, as the Executive branch holds excessive power to force non-fiscal policy through the budget process. I believe the Legislature needs a more empowered role and a longer review period. To facilitate this, I will use the Comptroller's office to provide independent, real-time fiscal impact statements on policy riders. This will provide the public and the Legislature with the data needed to push back against executive overreach and ensure a more transparent, democratic budget process.

*** In the box below, you may provide any additional information on any actions that you have taken or plan to take to improve the fiscal health and budget in New York State government.**

I will modernize the Comptroller's data capacity to launch a Public Money Dashboard. This interactive tool will allow millions of voters to see exactly where their tax dollars are going, broken down by race, development, and neighborhood. By making state spending data accessible in plain language, we will transform technical financial reports into a powerful tool for grassroots accountability. This transparency will highlight waste and drive the public pressure needed to ensure our budget reflects the actual needs of New Yorkers.

PENSION FUNDS

9. Comptrollers implement various strategies for responsible investing, from divestment to shareholder advocacy and targeted investments. How do you, or how would you, propose to balance maximizing investment returns with broader social responsibility goals?

I reject the false binary that suggests we must choose between high returns and social responsibility. New York's pension fund is tied to the health of the entire state economy. Systemic risks like climate change and the housing crisis are financial risks that threaten our long-term solvency. By divesting from fossil fuels and investing in social housing, we are de-risking our portfolio and building the tax base that sustains the pension, thereby maximizing long-term returns through a strategy of stability and sustainability. The current Comptroller's returns lag the market. We can both make more money for pensioners and hold investments that reflect the values of New Yorkers.

10. The OSC manages nearly \$300 billion in pension funds. How do you, or would you, ensure the highest levels of ethical conduct and transparency in the management of the funds?

I will ensure ethical conduct by capping private equity exposure and disclosing every dollar paid in Wall Street fees, including carried interest. I will ban the use of placement agents and institute a rigorous Human Rights Screening for all investments to ensure our retirees are not propping up private prisons or union-busting firms. By building more in-house investment capacity, we will reduce our reliance on opaque, high-fee managers and bring the management of New York's wealth back into the light of public oversight.

***In the box below, you may provide any additional information on any actions that you have taken or plan to take to improve the fiscal health and budget in New York State government.**

Amongst other audit series, I propose to conduct social media audits to quantify the financial and social costs that addictive algorithms have on New York's youth and our mental health infrastructure. By highlighting these hidden costs, the Comptroller's office can drive the fiscal case for regulation and investment in student mental health. My goal is to use the office's research and reporting powers to tackle modern economic challenges that traditional bookkeepers often ignore, ensuring New York stays ahead of emerging fiscal risks.

ADDITIONAL INFO

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



Citizens Union Links.pdf

What else would you like us to know about yourself?

I bring the soul of an activist and the mind of an entrepreneur to this office. My connection to New York is personal; my wife and I are raising our two daughters in a multigenerational household in close proximity to all four of their grandparents. And my wife and I are now caring for my mother and mother-in-law. I am especially proud of this accomplishment as I was never able to know my grandparents. I understand that for most families, fiscal health is about being able to afford rent, groceries, and utilities. I am running to be the affordability watchdog New Yorkers deserve, using every tool of this office to reclaim our government from special interests and deliver results for the people who keep our state running.