



Dear 2022 Candidate:

The Village Reform Democratic Club is interested in knowing about your qualifications, thoughts and plans for the office you're seeking. We have prepared this very brief set of questions to help us know you better as we decide on our Club endorsements.

Please provide your name, website URL, the office for which you're running and contact information in case our members wish to request additional information or clarification.

1) What are your top 2-3 issues going forward? If elected or re-elected, what will be your specific approach to each of them?

I've been called an advocate legislator, and to me that means not only telling you what I support, but offering a clear plan for how we build the coalitions and move the votes necessary to turn our progressive values into lasting public policy.

I believe it is absolutely critical to continue fighting for fully funded public housing and expanding and strengthening the development of our Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities, allowing our seniors to age in place while remaining in the communities they love. We must also ensure that NYCHA residents have a meaningful voice in decisions concerning NYCHA's Blueprint, and strengthen community voices in critical community issues such as new construction and zoning.

Our COVID recovery must be fair and equitable. This is why I support the significant expansion of state Community Development Financial Institutions and putting in place a modern tax structure that removes the burden from low-income New Yorkers by asking the ultra-wealthy to pay their fair share. CDFIs are a central part of this plan, as they direct much needed investment towards communities of color and neighborhoods routinely overlooked by multinational banks and lenders. I have already begun building the coalitions to get this done by leading on our 2022 People's Budget, and supporting core elements of the Invest in Our New York and Public Banking NY plans, and I am eager to fight for their inclusion during this session's budget debates.

Lastly, I am committed to further supporting local AAPI community organizations, Jewish groups, and our minority communities as they face an unprecedented rise in hate crimes, violence, and abuse. Last session, I secured \$10 million for community organizations fighting race-based and ethnic violence, and I fully intend to seek more this session. I've also maintained an open door with community organizations to streamline the process of reporting and addressing incidents of targeted hate or violence. Our city simply can not continue to foster an environment where huge portions of our residents do not feel welcome in their own cities and walk the streets fearing attack because of their ethnicity or religion.

2) Please list 2-3 things you have done for our community (the greater Greenwich Village area) and the results you achieved. What were the challenges, how did you address them, and how did you involve the community?

Even though the bulk of my Assembly district does not include the Village, I have always made myself and my staff available to any Village residents who come to me looking for help or support, and I have maintained close relationships with Assemblymember Glick and local community organizations for those times when we must come together and make our voices heard on the issues that matter.

Wherever possible I have added my voice to the chorus of tenants and residents asking for their views to be included in community zoning and construction projects. One example of this is the Elizabeth Street Garden, where I have been deeply involved with local community leaders regarding the lease termination and the community's desire for more representation, as well as working across districts with Assemblymember Glick to ensure the voices of these constituents are heard by our government policymakers. I have also been a proud supporter and organizer for Pause the Saws, and stood with our communities to voice their concerns about Governor Cuomo's plan to build a 29,000 square foot monument to essential workers without proper feedback from local residents. My commitment to transparency and accountability in community decision-making does not end at my district lines, and I am always happy to be a voice for those who are too often ignored by lawmakers.

My office and I were able to double and then double again the budget for our state's NORC programs. It is invaluable for our communities that we ensure our seniors can age in place in the communities they love without worrying about lack of access to services or skyrocketing rents. I believe this is not an issue that can be restricted to specific parts of our city – the need to fight for NORCs, affordable public housing, and loft laws touches residents in my district as well as in the Village.

For the third year in a row, I spearheaded critical human service budget restorations. When the Governor fully cut funding for the Settlement House program, I led the fight to restore and expand the program. This year's budget now includes \$2.45 million for the Settlement House

Program (SHP), a full restoration. I look forward to offering residents of the Village an open door and an impassioned voice for their concerns when I am State Senator.

3) What do you most want our club members to know about you and why you believe you're the best candidate for the position?

I have been in my district of Lower Manhattan every day of this pandemic, fighting alongside my team to ensure those in need are fed, those who need access to medical care receive it, and all of us weather this pandemic as safely as possible. My constituents trust me to be there for them, and they are a powerful part of why I have been able to run and win multiple primaries and general elections despite facing challenges from powerful or deep-pocketed opponents.

Our victories must be more than symbolic. They should improve the lives of every New Yorker in real, measurable ways—even if that means pushing against politically connected or wealthy interests who benefit from keeping our system broken.

In the Assembly, I have actively engaged with advocacy groups, listened to the needs of my constituents, and turned their energy into meaningful legislative change. Whether I am amplifying the voices of our public housing residents calling for housing justice, organizing a press conference with community leaders to condemn anti-Asian hate, participating in a hunger strike with taxi drivers, or jumping into a dumpster to retrieve my constituent's belongings when they were vacated by their predatory landlord, I show up for my constituents and for the issues that matter to our community with my voice, my platform, and my vote. I will continue to organize for justice alongside constituents and advocacy organizations using a number of tactics — holding press conferences, writing op-eds, attending protests, lobbying and organizing my colleagues, and more. I will continue to build coalitions of power for our issues in my district and amongst my colleagues.

I am ready to empower our community voices in Albany as their State Senator, and I pledge to be a strong progressive leader ready to turn our principles into policies that ensure a just COVID recovery for all. I look forward to listening and working with our communities to ensure that all of our needs are fully met and represented.