




### 2018 State Senate Candidate Questionnaire

*Completed questionnaires will be public documents available on our website, so put your best foot forward. If we ultimately hold an endorsement vote in your race, your questionnaire will be circulated to our membership before the vote.*

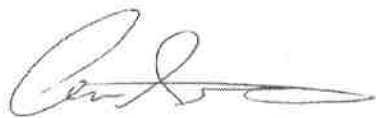
Name	Andrew Gounardes
State Senate District number and neighborhoods represented	SD-22 (Bay Ridge, Dyker Heights, Bath Beach, Bensonhurst, Sheepshead Bay, Manhattan Beach, Midwood, Marine Park, Gerritsen Beach, Gravesend)
Preferred campaign contact information: name, email address, phone number	Dan Merwin - Campaign Manager 
How long have you lived in the above district?	Born and raised - my whole life
What civic and political organizations are you involved with in the district?	<p>I'm active with a local grassroots organization called Bay Ridge Advocates for Keeping Everyone Safe (B.R.A.K.E.S.), which is a pedestrian safety advocacy organization, comprised of mostly local parents. Thanks to our efforts, we successfully persuaded our incumbent state senator to reverse his opposition to installing speed cameras in schools zones in NYC. Additionally, I'm the counsel for Bay Ridge Cares, which I also proudly co-founded. I also founded Concerned R Train Riders, and serve as pro bono counsel for the Bay Ridge Storefront Art Walk. I also served on Community Board 10, and past-president of the Bay Ridge Historical Society.</p> <p>Currently, I serve as Counsel to Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams and as a trustee of the New York City Employees' Retirement System, one of the largest municipal pension funds in the country. Before serving at Borough Hall, I started out working for City Councilmember Gentile helping to fix quality of life issues across our neighborhood. It was that same lesson that motivated me to work on Capitol Hill, tackling important issues like child support enforcement and veterans' benefits, as well as Citizens Committee for New York City, a nonprofit organization that gives grants to community groups.</p>
What are the greatest strengths and struggles of your Senate district?	<p>Greatest strength: Our diversity of the neighborhood. The diverse communities that make up Southern Brooklyn which help to keep the social fabric of our community very strong.</p> <p>Greatest struggle: Southern Brooklyn, like many neighborhoods, are not immune from the crisis of affordable housing, lack of affordable healthcare, public schools that are not fully funded, and a mass transit system that increasingly makes our residents feel disconnected from the rest of the city.</p>
Why do you want to serve as a member of the State Senate?	The issues that are facing my community and the issues that can have the biggest impact on my neighbors can only be addressed by our state government. Any attempts to make a difference on these issues have been stymied by our Republican incumbent state senator, who I believe does not believe in the full potential of our communities.
What have you accomplished in public life that you are most proud of?	In the aftermath of Superstorm Sandy, I joined together with neighbors and friends to form Bay Ridge Cares, a nonprofit organization that serves to provide emergency assistance to those among us facing extraordinary need. In the aftermath of Sandy, Bay Ridge Cares cooked 25,000 hot meals in over

	<p>six weeks for those who were displaced and affected by the storm. Today, we operate as the “neighborhood Red Cross.”</p>
<p>What do you consider to be the highlights of your work experience?</p>	<p>Working in all levels of government and the nonprofit sector has reaffirmed for me the fulfilling nature of service to others. Whether helping seniors apply for home heating assistance as a constituent aide for Councilmember Gentile, or drafting legislation to strengthen interstate child support enforcement for U.S. Sen. Menendez, to supporting nascent community groups with microgrants at Citizens Committee for NYC, to helping Brooklyn residents lead safe and healthy lives at the Borough President’s Office - my entire career has been focused on trying to make a difference in other peoples’ lives, no matter how big or small.</p>
<p>Why do you want New Kings Democrats’ endorsement?</p>	<p>Since its founding, NKD has been at the forefront of making our party and government more accountable, transparent, and just plain honest. Through my work with the Bay Ridge Democrats, we worked side-by-side with NKD time and time again to promote our shared goals of building community power that is responsive to people. I want this endorsement because I believe that we can continue to work together to make a difference for all Brooklynites.</p>
<p>If elected, what will your top three legislative and budgetary priorities be while in office?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Campaign Finance Reform, including lowering the limits on contributions, or fully financing elections so we can end the corrosive influence of money in politics.</li> <li>2) Lead the effort for a constitutional amendment that will guarantee free public education from Pre-K through college for all New York residents.</li> <li>3) Being a leading champion on pedestrian safety issues and ending the roadblocks to placing speed cameras at all NYC school zones.</li> </ol>
<p>If elected, how will you support the work of New Kings Democrats and its partners to make New York City government more transparent, accountable, or inclusive?</p>	<p>The powers of the state legislature have significant oversight power over NYC government, and while as a general matter NYC should have more autonomy, I will not hesitate to use my legislative, investigatory, and oversight roles to ensure the City of New York is delivering for the people of New York in any way possible.</p>
<p>What is your vision for the Brooklyn Democratic Party?</p>	<p>My vision for the Democratic Party that represents the largest number of Democrats of any county in America is one that is fully responsive and accountable to the diverse communities that make up our borough; one that seeks to build community power through grassroots organizing and giving all voices a seat at the table.</p>
<p>How will you contribute to efforts to attain unified Democratic control of the New York State Senate?</p>	<p>I’m running as a Democrat to caucus with the Democrats. I will not waver from that position. Any way that my efforts can help elect more Democrats to increase our representation, I will pledge my efforts.</p>
<p>How do you think the Democratic Party can improve the way it operates in the State Senate?</p>	<p>Once in the majority, the Democrats should allow bills to be voted on the open floor to see where Senators stand on issues and legislation, as opposed to the way the Republicans currently operate in the Majority (i.e., killing bills in committee). This would add transparency to the process and give voters additional information on their legislator. Additionally, it would be a great beginning to finally changing the tone of Albany as corrupt and undemocratic. The Democratic conference can set the standard.</p>
<p>What is one important way you think the State Senate should be reformed, and what is your plan for trying to implement such reform?</p>	<p>Adopt stronger ethics rules, both legislative and through Senate rules to ensure the days of Albany’s status quo politics come to an end, including rules recently adopted around sexual harassment.</p>
<p>What funds have you raised for this campaign? What are the major sources of your campaign?</p>	<p>In my last public filing I raised \$114,000 from nearly 700 donations. 56% of my donations were \$50 or less. Nearly 40% of my donations were from within my district, a higher number than both other candidates in this race.</p>

funds?	
What endorsements have you received from publications, electeds, community leaders, or political organizations?	The Brooklyn Young Democrats, Run for Something, Brooklyn County Chair Frank Seddio, and the Central Brooklyn Independent Democrats.
What areas of the district do you see as your biggest sources of votes and support?	Across this district is a 2-to-1 Democratic advantage, where the average Democratic performance is 57%. It cuts across 9 different assembly districts and spans 11 different neighborhoods. 68% of the projected turnout will come from the neighborhoods of Bensonhurst, Bath Beach, Dyker Heights, and Bay Ridge - areas where I grew up and have long been active in civic life.
Which member of the State Senate do you admire most and why?	State Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins, of course! I say this enthusiastically, not only because she's the first woman to lead a party caucus in the State Senate, but also from a personal perspective. I see her career in public service and her campaign for State Senate very similar to my own. We both ran/are running against entrenched officials who we felt were/are not responsive to the needs of our districts. As I've admired Senator Stewart-Cousins for some time, I appreciate being in a similar position and aim to succeed as she did.
What are some of the ways you think New York City residents can best participate in civic life?	Join a community board, join their neighborhood block association, and if they don't have a block association - form one! Speak up and speak out whenever you don't like what's happening in your neighborhood. And, of course... VOTE!
What is one fun fact about you?	I summited Mt. Kilimanjaro in March 2017, and I've run two marathons (NYC 2016 and Athens 2017).

I have reviewed this questionnaire and agree that the responses set forth in this document are accurate:

Candidate Signature:



Date: 4/24/2018

***You must sign this questionnaire! When complete, please e-mail your signed and scanned questionnaire to [politics@newkingsdemocrats.com](mailto:politics@newkingsdemocrats.com) and [info@newkingsdemocrats.com](mailto:info@newkingsdemocrats.com)***