



2018 Attorney General 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	Zephyr Teachout
Preferred campaign contact information: name, email address, phone number	Campaign Manager: Daniel Torres, [redacted] dtorres@zephyrforny.com
How long have you lived in New York? Where in the state have you lived?	I've been living in New York for nine years. In that time, I've lived in Brooklyn, Manhattan, and Dutchess County
What civic and political organizations are you involved with, either in your area or statewide?	Member of Dutchess County Democratic Committee

What are New York State's greatest strengths and struggles?

New York has enormous strengths, and should be, and can be the crown jewel of our democracy. We have enormous diversity, brilliant people, and a stunning and rich natural environment.

However, our diversity is not utilized to its full advantage. We have some of the worst segregation in the country, the greatest income inequality, and one of the lowest voter turnouts. The policies that are created by our state's legislators tend to be half measures that ultimately do little to mitigate disenfranchisement and provide opportunities to the marginalized. There are a few corporations and people claiming almost all profit and income growth, while the vast majority are squeezed out.

Many New Yorkers struggle to afford housing, receive unfair or unequal treatment, and suffer at the hands of abusive landlords. I believe housing is a human right, and I will use the full powers of the NYS Attorney General afforded by law to protect those rights.

We face a number of health crisis including high rates of asthma and obesity, and high rates of infant mortality and maternal mortality, especially within black communities. In NYC, asthma is the leading cause for children to seek emergency medical treatment, and to miss school. Lead poisoning in already disadvantaged communities is unacceptably high. Research suggests these problems are directly linked to housing.

Big pharma's monopoly over drug costs has at times meant that New Yorkers have to choose between food and life-saving medication. These same companies have created a national public health crisis driven by the deceptive practices and aggressive marketing of addictive and dangerous opioids. Their deceptive marketing converted a niche opioid painkilling drug into one of the most widely used prescription drugs in the country.

Big fossil fuel companies are some of the worst polluters in our state. Lax regulations have allowed them to operate in a manner that endangers the quality of life of so many New Yorkers.

Our state is plagued by corruption, opacity, and pay-to-play politics that exclude so many voices from the conversation. This cannot continue.

All of these issues--healthcare, drug costs, pollution, corruption, voter disenfranchisement, housing costs-- have one thing in common: money. Progressive legislation is either watered down or dead on arrival because of the way that money has infiltrated New York politics. Special interests groups and lobbyists like REBNY, like fossil fuel companies, like charter schools outspend the grassroots efforts that are meant to push necessary legislation forward to diminish the inequality in our state. Until we close the LLC loophole and create real reform in our campaign finance system, we need elected officials who refuse to be bought by these special interests, who refuse to compromise on the basic principle that, as AOC stated, "no one should be too poor to live." I am the only candidate refusing LLC money and corporate PAC money, because I refuse to answer to any of these special interests groups.

I will pursue all of these as AG to make sure New York is a place where all New Yorkers have the opportunity to thrive.

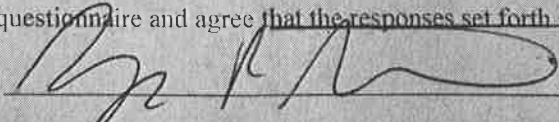
<p>Why do you want to serve as Attorney General?</p>	<p>We are facing a crisis of corruption and lawlessness. The imminent threat to our democratic system posed by the Trump administration includes the potential reversal of long-established fundamental rights for women, minorities, LGBTQ Americans, and the inhumane treatment of asylum seekers and immigrants. From Trump's travel ban targeting Muslim peoples, to his policy of separating children from families at the border, the need to fight back is dire. Particularly in this moment, the NY Attorney General must have deep knowledge of constitutional law, and an unquestionable commitment to integrity and independence. I am an anticorruption and constitutional law scholar and activist, and I have spent my professional career fighting the influence of money in politics and for the rule of law. I want to apply my skill set as Attorney General to protect New Yorkers and make this great state a place where all people can thrive.</p>
<p>What have you accomplished in public life that you are most proud of?</p>	<p>-I was cited in dissent in Citizens United  -I published a book on corruption in America  -While running for Congress, I brought a lawsuit against a variety of Super PACs, including one that supported Democrats, because I so firmly believe in getting dark money out of politics.  -I was an architect of the current Emoluments lawsuit against Trump that is currently in federal court, and which may divest him from some or all of his business interests.</p>
<p>What do you consider to be the highlights of your work experience?</p>	<p>Including the moments I mentioned above:  -I was a special education assistant teacher, and truly believe I made a positive impact on my students' lives  -I represented death row inmates</p>
<p>Why do you want New Kings Democrats' endorsement?</p>	<p>I admire the work New Kings Democrats has done, and continues to implement, to encourage greater participation, to drive progress, and to create a more inclusive and dynamic political system. NKD has a history of making decisions based on their principles, rather than political expediency, a somewhat rare quality in New York politics. I would be honored to receive the endorsement of such an esteemed group of people who are so dedicated to the betterment and diversity of the democratic process.</p>
<p>If elected, what will your top three priorities be while in office?</p>	<p>The role of NYAG evolves over time, but in this moment a primary role is protecting New Yorkers, and the country, against the Trump administration's lawlessness and corruption, which includes protecting them from Trump's white-nationalist policies, and investigating the Trump Organization and Trump Foundation, which operate in NY.  My other major priorities include:  1) Fighting corruption in Albany  2) Taking on centralized corporate power; and  3) Fighting to end mass incarceration and systemic social injustice.</p>
<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>There are a number of reforms that I will push as AG, including universal voting, lowering the age of voting to 17, same day registration, consolidated election days, automatic voter registration, and pushing for a Election Day to be a statewide holiday. I will also vigorously pursue all claims of New Yorkers being denied free access to the polls, including any instances where ballots and voter rolls were dismissed. Additionally, I would use the powers created through Moreland Commission to investigate corruption in Albany, and hold accountable backroom dealing and pay-to-play politics. Lastly, I am in favor of closing the LLC loophole, and I am the only candidate to refuse LLC money and corporate PAC money.</p>
<p>What is your vision for the Brooklyn Democratic Party and for the statewide Democratic Party?</p>	<p>My vision for the Brooklyn Democratic Party and statewide Democratic Party is to increase citizen involvement and to increase the accountability of representatives. With more effective outreach and more political involvement of all communities in New York, we can take on major corporations, Big Pharma, and the fossil fuel industry. We will be able to obtain healthcare for all, better and more inclusive education, as well as clean up and take back Albany from corrupt politicians.</p>
<p>How will you contribute to efforts to attain unified Democratic control of the New York State Senate?</p>	<p>I have been an avid supporter of primaries to hold Democrats more accountable to their constituents, and have endorsed every Democratic candidate that is challenging an IDC member. As Attorney General, I will remain outspoken for Democratic candidates that are progressive and care for the people that they represent. We must have politicians that are prioritizing the interests as of their constituents and not corporate donors.</p>
<p>How do you think the New York State Democratic Party can improve the way it operates?</p>	<p>We must have wide-sweeping campaign finance reform, and improve access to the polls. Banning or placing strong limitations on the amount of money that all candidates, Democratic Party candidates included, can receive during political campaigns from corporate PACs and LLCs would help ensure that elected officials were voting for the good of the people and not corporations. I do not take any such donations.</p>
<p>What is one important way you think New York State government should be reformed, and what is your plan for</p>	<p>We must eliminate the corrupt, pay-to-play system in Albany, and the party patronage system that keeps existing power structures in place. Creating a level of accountability and ensuring consequences beyond a slap on the wrist for rule breakers is paramount. Using the powers of the Moreland Commission to</p>



trying to implement such reform?	investigate fraud, legal and illegal corruption, and hold accountable perpetrators of sexual misconduct.
What would you do as Attorney General to reform criminal justice in New York, to create a system that treats people of color and disadvantaged communities more equally? Are there actions you could take that would not require action from the legislature or the Governor?	<p>The NY AG has an transformative opportunity as the chief law enforcement officer in the state, to fully examine and publish a comprehensive report on the injustices in the system, at every point of contact from policing in our schools and neighborhoods, to re-entry rights and services post-incarceration. As NYS AG I will be a tireless moral voice against mass incarceration.</p> <p>According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, 70 percent of people in jail are innocent in the eyes of the law -- men and women awaiting trial -- a majority of whom are young men of color, caged up because they cannot afford to post bail. This policy of cash bail serves to criminalize poverty, and often ensures inmates suffer further abuse and violence within the system. As the top prosecutor for the state, the attorney general has a moral obligation to play a leadership role in reforming a system that infringes on the basic human and legal rights of our citizens.</p> <p>Mass incarceration is the legacy of slavery and it is inextricably linked to the system of oppression that locks black people and other minorities behind bars, and out of jobs, schools, and markets, As Attorney General I will advocate several necessary reforms to ensure a moral and just criminal justice system:</p> <p>Discovery Reform Speedy Trials Legalization of marijuana Re-entry programs Changing the culture of prosecution</p>
Would you retain Barbara Underwood as Deputy Attorney General?	Yes. Definitely yes. Barbara Underwood has done a fabulous job and would be an important asset to have as Deputy Attorney General.
What is your legal experience? How many verdicts have you taken, what area(s) of law do you practice/have you practiced, taught?	I am an anticorruption and constitutional law scholar. Constitutional, corruption, antitrust, election law, property law
Are there any pending matters handled by the AG's office that you expect you will recuse yourself from if elected?	No.
Our understanding is that the Attorney General invokes a few different laws for subpoena and enforcement power. What other legal mechanisms could the AG's Office employ to take actions on behalf of New Yorkers?	<p>NY AG can sue on behalf of the people of NY when civil rights are violated. The AG may do this in many contexts: voting rights, tenants' rights, employment rights, etc.</p> <p>Under EL 63(12), anyone individual or company doing business in NY that repeatedly violates ANY law, so very broad mandate to pursue corporate malfeasance.</p> <p>Martin Act is another crucial tool to police Wall Street and other corporations.</p> <p>NY real estate, business, and Wall street make the NYAG's power of corporate wrongdoing enormously important.</p> <p>Lastly, bully pulpit. Transformative opportunity as the chief law enforcement officer to examine and call out injustice at all levels of the criminal justice system, from over-policing in schools to lack of re-entry programs.</p>
Assuming that you are familiar with the legal bureaus that make up the Attorney General's office, have you identified any bureaus/subject matter areas that are lacking? If so, what?	<p>Real Estate Finance Bureau -- Enforcement has been improved, but we are facing a housing crisis in New York, which is driven in part by the greed and often illegal conduct of developers and landlords.</p> <p>Criminal division -- for both real estate and public integrity. It is crucial that the AG have a broad referral to go after public corruption both civilly and criminally, and pursue landlords who harass tenants in often dangerous ways.</p>
What funds have you raised for this campaign? What are the major sources of your campaign funds?	As of our last filing we have raised over \$550,000, all of which came from individuals, and none of it was from LLCs or corporate PACs. 97% of donations are small dollar donations. We also received over 10,000 individual contributions.

What endorsements have you received from publications, electeds, community leaders, or political organizations?	<p>Central Brooklyn Independent Democrats (CBID)  Three Parks Independent Democrats  Four Freedoms Democratic Club  Muslim Democratic Club of New York  Indivisible Brooklyn  Indivisible Nation Brooklyn  Indivisible NY-24  NYPAN  Zenaida Mendez, Former President NOW-NY  Heather Stewart, Empire State Indivisible  Roberta Kaplan, LGBT and civil rights leader, lawyer and activist  Lawrence Lessig, Harvard Law Professor  Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Democratic nominee for the 14th Congressional District  Shaun King, Columnist and Civil Rights Activist  Phil Steck, NYS Assemblyman for the 110th District  Larry Tribe, Harvard Law Professor  Ro Khanna, Congress Member in the 17th District of California  John Sarbanes, Congress Member in the 3rd District of Maryland  Terry Gipson, former NYS Senator</p>
What areas of the state do you see as your biggest sources of votes and support?	The biggest sources of votes and support come from progressives all over the state of New York.
Which elected in New York State do you admire most and why?	Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez. Her commitment to a grassroots, people-powered, low-dollar campaign, all while facing a powerful incumbent backed by enormous wealth, makes Alexandria an independent voice for her constituents, and a beacon for our democracy.
What are some of the ways you think New York City or State residents can best participate in civic life?	<p>The best ways to participate in civic life are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Voting during every election</li> <li>2) Join local political organizations and clubs</li> <li>3) Volunteer and support political campaigns that you believe in</li> <li>4) Dedicate time to helping other members of your community (this could be helping at assisted living residencies or even helping at food shelters)</li> </ol>
What is one fun fact about you?	I was a champion cross-country runner. And I'm six months pregnant!

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

Candidate Signature: 

Date: 7/31/18

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)