



2019-2020 Assembly 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	
Preferred campaign contact information: name, email address, phone number	Sandy Nurse Sandramnurse@gmail.com 917-678-5395
How long have you lived in your district?	I have lived in Bushwick since 2009 and have since moved a couple of times. I have lived in the district since the later end of the summer. Prior to that I lived one block from the district.
What civic and political organizations are you involved with in the district?	<p>From 2016-2017 I was on Community Board 4 and participated in the Parks & Rec and Land Use Committees.</p> <p>Additionally, I am a co-founder of the Mayday Space, a political institution that is a home for grassroots social justice movements. Mayday Space has become a place where groups have access to a physical facility that explicitly welcomes them and where they can build power for their movements. While Mayday is not physically in the district, groups from AD 54 have been regularly hosting events and making use of the space since it opened in 2014. In a city where space is at a premium, a space like Mayday is a critical infrastructure that expands access to civic and political work. Each year Mayday hosts over 150 movement and community groups working to build power at a local, national, and global scale.</p> <p>Although not explicitly civic or political to most, I founded BK ROT, which is physically located one block from the district line. The composting operation has hired dozens of young people from the Bushwick Campus Academy School for Environmental Leadership, and many youth from AD 54. It serves hundreds of households and businesses from the district that continue to be underserved by the city for organic waste recycling.</p>
What have you accomplished in public life that you are most proud of?	<p>For nearly a decade I have been working across multiple movements to create neighborhood institutions while strengthening the ability of grassroots groups to push for and win their demands.</p> <p>I am most proud of the work I did to successfully codify the transportation of organic waste by e-bike into city legislation via Intro 1574 the Commercial Waste Zones (CWZ) bill. As the Executive Director of BK ROT, I partnered with a team of organizations working to transform our food and waste systems. We collaborated to push forth a vision of stronger laws for the diversion of food waste from landfills and reducing emissions generated through waste collection. I played a lead role in taking a lofty idea of teenagers and young adults moving waste on bikes and built an alliance to strengthen our advocacy position. I worked to bring our alliance into larger coalitions through building trust. After a three year push, we finally are recognized by the city as an emerging industry that has been successfully given space to grow in the CWZ bill.</p>

	<p>I have also been a direct action organizer where I work with movements to creatively and symbolically confront power. I have helped organize some of the largest political direct actions in New York City in the last seven years, from Occupy Wall Street to Millions March to Flood Wall Street. I have supported dozens of groups to escalate their campaigns in seeking demands for the wide ranging transformations we need. I'm incredibly proud to have the opportunity to support people who feel powerless step into a space of feeling confident to speak to power. Through this work I've been so fortunate to grow a wider family and be supported by a growing community of people committed to positive social transformation.</p>
<p>Why do you want to serve as a member of the Assembly?</p>	<p>I am running for State Assembly because I believe we are in crisis mode and we don't have time to wait for machine Democrats like Erik Dilan to get on board with our solutions.</p> <p>For nearly a decade I have been working with young people of color from District 54. I have worked hard to help them through extreme housing instability as their families are forced to find housing further east or north. I have watched them grow up from 16 year olds living with 8 people in a 2-bedroom to being 24 and still not able to rent a room of their own somewhere.</p> <p>Well after working directly with these kids through BK ROT, we have remained close. I have been watching these kids grow up not able to support themselves in the formal job market because they lack the status for work authorization. They can't get into federally funded housing because they lack status documents. They can't access health care or mental health services to address the trauma they are going through because they are undocumented.</p> <p>Where the state has not provided adequate protections or met the basic needs of these young folks, I have developed mutual aid networks of supportive adults who have done everything from housing them when they left abusive homes, bought countless bags of groceries to send them home with, took them to register for therapy at their cost, and more. It has taken an incredible effort to support the many needs they have and it is highly unsustainable. Children represent the largest demographic in AD 54 and they are highly vulnerable and completely unsupported by the state.</p> <p>We live in a city with the highest number of billionaires in the world and 100,000 youth who don't have a home to go to at night. We have a racist, federally funded goon squad that is kidnapping children and their families in broad daylight and putting them in detention centers. We have a police force that carries out violent acts on our community with impunity. We have a global climate crisis that threatens to literally wash away most of this city while our Governor and state leaders capitulate to oil & gas capital.</p> <p>It is not only a crisis, it is a moral crisis. We are at a point where if our elected leaders do not double down on the most progressive, most radical policy reforms, we may not even have a city to live in.</p> <p>I have been fighting for solutions that are not band-aids, but that are addressing the root causes of these crises: creating jobs that lift up the most vulnerable, climate mitigation systems that help us deal with waste, and</p>

	<p>successfully opening public space for community access. I have spent nearly a decade in the streets calling for more democracy, more equality, more equity, and the end of capitalism and white supremacy. I have spent nearly a decade working at the neighborhood level to build alternative institutions and socially just systems that model community self determination and new ways of social life.</p> <p>Erik Dilan does not have a vision. In the four years he has been in office, he has never put forth a plan to address the housing crisis, the crisis within our immigrant community, nor the crisis of climate change. Instead he has taken hundreds of thousands of dollars from real estate capital and other corporate interests.</p> <p>In short, Erik Dilan is not a fighter for the working class. He is fighting to stay in his family's business of being a politician. He is coasting by and doing the least. Right now he is claiming legislative wins that he resisted participating in right up to the very end. We are facing grave threats and the lack of leadership from him is indefensible. Erik Dilan needs to go.</p> <p>As State Assembly member I will not need to be convinced that we need drastic social transformation that prioritizes the most vulnerable in our communities. I will be a willing partner in that fight. I will proactively be finding more ways to push harder for policies that protect people now as we face the coming impacts of climate change and an overt US fascism. I'm not someone who was handed a political legacy. I am not someone who has been angling to be a politician for years. I have worked hard to pull together solutions that address systemic problems. I know how to build partnerships, alliances, and coalitions that can get us to our goals. I believe my record of getting things done and being deeply accountable to our community makes me the right person for this seat.</p>
<p>Why do you want New Kings Democrats' endorsement?</p>	<p>New Kings Democrats is a group that I've watched over the years through the meetings and events held at Mayday. I appreciate and value the work NKD is doing to try to remake the Brooklyn Democratic Party into a more reflective, participatory party. My experience with NKD has largely been through building relationships with individuals in the group. Most recently the #RepYourBlock initiative was something I was tracking and I think it's a critical project for increasing civic engagement at a hyper local level. I recently attended the last General Meeting and my impression coming from that meeting was that NKD seemed like a very welcoming space that has been built with a lot of care and consideration. I liked hearing the people that were making their speeches talk about how they feel they have learned a lot and have been supported by NKD over many years. I very much value organizing groups that put time into leadership development and where the wider group has a deeper commitment to not only the work, but to each other. New Kings Democrats are exactly the type of group that I would want to have an endorsement and support from.</p>
<p>Would you be willing to run on a slate with District Leader candidates?</p>	<p>I am open to running on a slate with District Leader candidates. In general, I like to spend time with someone on a one-on-one level to really understand who they are, what really matters to them, and what their vision is. I would want to have that opportunity as part of being diligent with building alliances.</p>
<p>If endorsed by NKD, would you be willing to carry County</p>	<p>Yes!</p>

<p>Committee candidates running through our #RepYourBlock campaign on your petitions, if these candidates canvassed for you?</p>	
<p>What are your District's greatest strengths and struggles?</p>	<p>District 54 has a lot of beautiful community institutions and grassroots projects that are doing some of those most robust work on youth development, addressing food insecurity, and increasing access to cultural work. I love spending time with farmers in their spaces in Bushwick and East New York. I have spent a lot of time building with youth programs that are providing access to art, political education, and leadership development. I find the community to be very resilient and joyous despite the high level of need that exists.</p> <p>The struggles people face in the district are primarily related to housing, immigration protection, and health.</p> <p>The majority of the population is paying over 30% of their income toward housing, and another 33% are severely rent burdened. Meanwhile, Black and Brown homeowners are being harassed and offered buyouts from speculators for their property, threatening the primary wealth-building institution in our community. The district also has the highest number of families seeking shelter, mostly families with children. Twenty four percent of the district are people who are not citizens and may or may not have documents, but nonetheless need healthcare, access to economic stability, and the simple ability to live without fear.</p> <p>From my many years working within the larger food justice movement, I know Bushwick and East New York are severe food deserts. One part of the district is literally called NYC's biggest "food swamp", meaning it has the highest concentration of high-calorie fast and junk food. Working with young people from the District, I also know it has very high rates of child asthma and adult onset asthma.</p>
<p>What is your vision for the Brooklyn Democratic Party?</p>	<p>I would like to collaborate with NKD on making the issues with the Brooklyn Democratic Party visible to a wider audience. Most people, even those that are very active in following local politics, do not understand why the Brooklyn Democratic Party is relevant to their broader work and how it impacts their civic lives. I think there are opportunities during the campaign to raise the issues within the party through lifting up District Leaders working to reform it. I think adding the #RepYourBlock campaign to my petitions could be a way of getting more people involved in the process and ultimately increase civic engagement.</p>
<p>If elected, how will you support the work of New Kings Democrats and its partners to make New York State government more transparent, accountable, or inclusive?</p>	<p>I am in full alignment with NKD's policies pushing for more accountability and accessibility to our democracy. New York voter turnout ranks near the lowest nationwide due to various obstacles and barriers to registering to vote, changing parties, and voting. Even with recent changes regarding changing party affiliation and registration, we need to be doing more to encourage people to directly partake in our electoral process. As Assembly Member, I will push for greater accountability around funding and lobbying and fight to get big money out of politics. Notably, my opponent did not sign on to the Fair Elections letter calling for a Public Financing Commission, nor did he commit to supporting Public Financing in this year's budget. I will champion these reforms and other similar issues that will ultimately encourage greater</p>

	<p>grassroots participation and small-dollar donations. I will also fight for reforms to make it easier to run for office, as well as push for a matching contribution system like NYC has for city elections in order to ensure greater public accountability and ownership over our elections. Additionally, I will push for lower contribution limits and automatic voter registration. Furthermore, on the issue of transparency, I will champion strong anti-corruption practices and policies, and am excited to strengthen our burgeoning public financing policies for state office.</p>
<p>What is one important way you think the State Assembly should be reformed, and what is your plan for trying to implement such reform?</p>	<p>I plan to push for term limits on State Assembly Members. I support the efforts of the State Senate in previous years to pass a bill that sets term limits to eight years for Assembly Members. My plan is to work in coalition with others who are running for State Assembly to make this a piece of their campaign platform and work to build with Assembly Members who are also in favor of term limits. The incumbent is an example of a political dynasty, someone who is coasting on low turnout elections and name recognition - not pushing brave, progressive policies. I also want to partner with grassroots groups to push progressive legislation on this issue while pressuring elected officials as an "inside-outside" strategy.</p>
<p>If elected, what will your top three legislative and budgetary priorities be while in office?</p>	<p>I am running to ensure everyone has a safe home, people in our community can live without fear of deportation, and that we have a livable future. Specifically, I will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. fight for Good Cause eviction legislation to bring rent relief to tenants in buildings with fewer than 6 units and work with others to increase funding for the repair and new construction of public housing; 2. work towards a true Sanctuary State by supporting measures to keep ICE out of courts, extend healthcare and access to other social services to our immigrant community, and support stronger worker protections that fight against wage theft and abuse; 3. and fight to make the biggest polluters pay for climate change mitigation and resiliency planning programs such as support for localized food growing and retail distribution systems and funding for increasing the efficiency and consistency of public transportation.
<p>Please review NKD's rent regulation platform, adapted from the Housing Justice for All platform: https://bit.ly/32dVcM9 If elected, will you fight for the passage of the planks of this platform that were not enacted in 2019, including but not limited to universal rent control?</p>	<p>Yes. Regarding #2, I will fight hard to pass Good Cause eviction to ensure tenants in my and other districts do not have to fear losing their homes based on arbitrary and unjustified rent increases. This legislation would positively affect approximately 8,000 households in AD54, so it is a priority. With Good Cause eviction, we would bring essential regulations to currently unprotected tenants while halting predatory rent increases. And, because East NY (CD 5) is the community district that sees the most families entering the shelter system, we would see a drastic reduction in family homelessness, also a priority for me.</p> <p>Additionally, as my district has many homeowners, I would push to see a more progressive property tax system, one that taxes higher income homeowners (often white) more than low and middle income homeowners, often people of color. Currently, the opposite often happens, perpetuating the racist legacy of prohibiting people of color from building wealth through homeownership. Similarly, I would make it easier for homeowners to opt into non-speculative homeownership models that guarantee longevity and security (e.g. through CLTs and shared equity/limited equity ownership models) to ensure future generations aren't priced out of this wealth building mechanism. In addition to fighting for the re-regulation of deregulated apartments, I will fight to ultimately end homelessness by working with state and city officials to pass</p>

	<p>Home Stability Support.</p> <p>I will also fight for longer-term solutions like diverting both restricted and unrestricted funding within the Department of Homeless Services (DHS) budget - currently nearly \$2 billion per year - to permanent, non-speculative housing solutions and building more social and public housing. This all entails my support of the Flip Tax Bill proposed by Senator Salazar and the Cease and Desist bill proposed by AM Wright.</p>
<p>NKD is a proud member of Communities United for Police Reform. Please review CPR's Safer NY platform: https://www.changethenypd.org/safer-ny If elected, will you fight for the passage of these bills?</p>	<p>Yes. I would like to collaborate with NKD in fighting police violence and abuses of police power across New York. I am in full support of CPR's legislative platform and stand in solidarity with the families of police violence victims. I have worked with many groups over the last eight years to carry out actions that amplify the stories of the murders that NYPD officers have done with impunity. I was a lead organizer for the Millions March in 2014 that turned out over 50,000 people in the streets. I also have been a lead organizer on actions against the Police Benevolent Association (which Dilan takes money from). At the peak of Black Lives Matter, I supported organizers who were working with families who have lost loved ones to police violence. I will fight alongside all families affected by police violence to push for a repeal of code 50a. I will collaborate with Communities United for Police Reform on their state legislative work.</p>
<p>Please review NKD's voting rights platform: https://www.newkingsdemocrats.com/voting_rights If elected, will you fight for the passage of the planks of this platform that have not yet been enacted, including but not limited to full enfranchisement for people with criminal records?</p>	<p>Yes, especially winning the right to vote for formerly incarcerated people and non-citizens. I also want to explore ranked choice voting when and where appropriate.</p> <p>Additionally, as part of my work around addressing climate change and working with the youth who will face the worst impacts of the crisis, I would push for enfranchising 16 year olds.</p>
<p>NKD is a proud supporter of the Sexual Harassment Working Group. If elected, will you commit to working side-by-side with the SHWG to fight for changes to the culture of sexual harassment and abuse in Albany?</p>	<p>Yes. I am a survivor of sexual violence and a domestic violence household. I am fully committed to ending all forms of gender-based violence.</p>
<p>What funds have you raised for this campaign? What are the major sources of your campaign funds?</p>	<p>I raised \$20,000 in pledges during the early fall and am now getting those in. My campaign will be a grassroots campaign that will not take money from real estate capital or large corporate pacs. I will largely depend on calling in the local, citywide, and national network I have built over the last ten years to host fundraisers and parties. My goal is to raise \$50,000 by the end of 2019.</p>
<p>What endorsements have you received from publications, electeds, community leaders, or political organizations?</p>	<p>My campaign launched at the end of September and so I am currently in the process of seeking endorsements from endorsing parties, community organizations, and community leaders.</p>
<p>What areas of the district do you see as your biggest sources of votes and support?</p>	<p>Bushwick is where I have worked with many community organizations over the years and built a lot of relationships through offering space for gathering used by many groups from the district annually (Mayday Space), creating a composting service that hundreds of residents in the district have made use of (BK ROT), and building out infrastructure for local farms and gardens in Bushwick and East New York. I have the strongest connections with people in Bushwick and the parts of Cypress Hills including East New York.</p>

<p>Which member of the State Assembly do you admire most and why?</p>	<p>What's been exciting is the wave of new Assembly members and folks who have been there for a while that are pushing progressive platforms. I've been following Yuh Line Niuo, Harvey Epstein, and Diana Richardson who are fighting to end homelessness, pushing for a Homes Guarantee, and rallying around decriminalizing sex work (to include Ron Kim on that front). What I like about these candidates is that they seem to be directly accountable to movements through going to meetings and taking leadership from member based organizations. This type of leadership that works hand in hand with movements and with their members who are impacted is the type of leadership that I admire and want to see more of.</p>
<p>What is one fun fact about you?</p>	<p>I built my own house! I am a carpenter and was lucky enough to do a job that allowed me access to a little bit of land upstate. I designed my cabin on notebook paper and framed it out in less than a month. I also teach carpentry classes for women and Black, Indigenous, People of Color in the city and upstate throughout the year.</p>

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

Candidate Signature: 

Date: 10/29/2019

You must sign this questionnaire! When complete, please e-mail your signed and scanned questionnaire to politics@newkingsdemocrats.com