

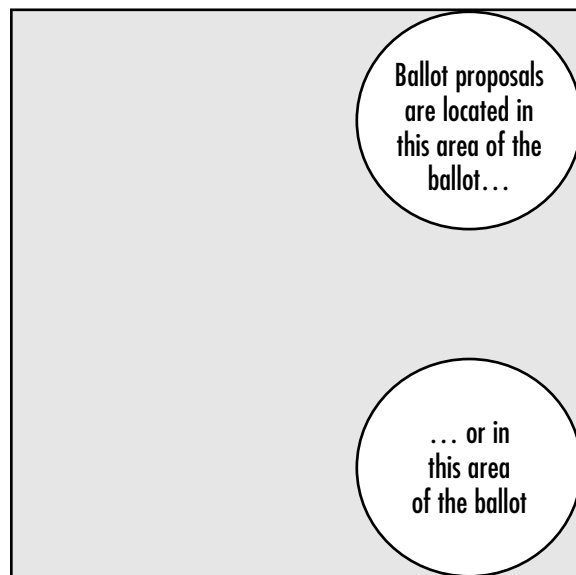
# Special Feature

## Ballot proposals

This year, you will be voting on important proposals to change the New York State Constitution and the New York City Charter. The text and abstract of the State ballot proposals start on page 33.

Turn to page 35 for in-depth coverage of the City ballot proposals, including statements from the public both for and against these proposals.

Ballot proposals are located on the right-hand side of the ballot either near the top or near the bottom corner. Please check the ballot carefully and make sure you vote on these important proposals.



# Welcome to the 2003 City Council General Election Voter Guide



## New York City Campaign Finance Board

As you know, 2003 is a major election year in New York City. Every 10 years, City Council districts change based on the most recent census. This year, City Council district lines have been redrawn, and all 51 Council seats are up for election. You will make important decisions shaping the future of our City and its leadership by voting in the general election this fall. This Voter Guide is designed to help you compare candidates and make choices about ballot proposals as you prepare to vote in the November 4 general election.

The Voter Guide is a nonpartisan, plain-language handbook published by the New York City Campaign Finance Board (the "CFB"), an independent City agency, to give you information about City elections. Under the City Charter, the Guide is printed in English and Spanish, and, consistent with Federal voting laws, it is also distributed in Chinese and Korean in some districts. It contains statements and photos submitted by City Council candidates, information on voting and voters' rights, information on City and State ballot proposals, and maps to help you determine your City Council district.

The CFB administers the New York City Campaign Finance Program. The Program reduces the influence of private money on City campaigns, offers qualified candidates a fair chance to run for office by providing public matching funds for small contributions, and makes available detailed information on candidates' campaign finances. To learn more about the Program and the CFB, see "NYC's Campaign Finance Program" on page 13, or visit our Web site, [www.nyccfb.info](http://www.nyccfb.info).

Informed voters strengthen democracy. We hope that this 2003 General Election Voter Guide will help you make informed choices on election day.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Frederick A.O. Schwarz, Jr.".

Frederick A.O. Schwarz, Jr.  
Chair  
New York City Campaign Finance Board

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This Voter Guide was prepared by staff of the New York City Campaign Finance Board: Elizabeth A. Upp, Winnie Ng, Kym Platt, and Tara Smith.

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# Inside Your 2003 General Election Voter Guide

The Office of City Council Member .....	5
Your Rights as a Voter .....	6
Questions and Answers about Voting .....	7
How to Use the Voting Machine .....	12
NYC's Campaign Finance Program .....	13
The Candidates .....	14
State Ballot Proposals .....	33
City Ballot Proposals .....	35
Map .....	64

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Even if you haven't moved, you may be in a different City Council district this year.

City Council district lines were redrawn for the 2003 (and future) elections based on the 2000 Census.

If you received this Voter Guide in the mail, your Council district number (according to records provided by the NYC Board of Elections) is printed on the address label above your name.

You can also determine whether you are in a new Council district by:

1. Carefully checking the maps provided in the center of this Guide.
2. Calling the NYC Board of Elections toll-free hotline 866-VOTE-NYC or, for the hearing impaired, calling (212) 487-5496.
3. Logging on to [www.nycclfb.info](http://www.nycclfb.info) and using the "find your district" feature in the online Voter Guide.

# The Office of City Council Member

The City Council is the legislative, or law-making, branch of City government. The City Council is responsible for passing local laws for New York City, making decisions about land use, investigating and overseeing City agencies, and approving the City's budget. Each Council member represents one of the 51 New York City Council districts. Council members receive an annual base salary of \$90,000. Council leaders and chairs of committees receive additional pay. Council members may hold other jobs in addition to their Council seats.

**General Election Date:  
Tuesday, November 4, 2003**

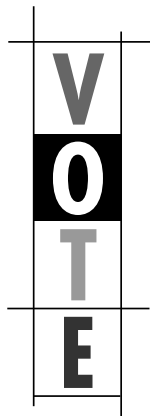
The polls will be open from 6:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. You must be inside your polling site no later than 9:00 p.m. to vote. See pages 7-8 regarding whether you are eligible to vote in this election.

**DEMOCRACY DOESN'T WORK WITHOUT YOU.  
GO VOTE.**

한국어 안내서의 배포처 안내는 (212)513-4110  
으로 전화하십시오.

欲知何處可以索取到中文版的《選民指南》，  
請致電：(212) 513-4110 查詢。

For information about where to pick up a Chinese/Korean language edition of this Voter Guide, please call (212) 513-4110.



# Your Rights as a Voter

You have the right to vote in the November 4, 2003 general election if:

- you registered to vote by October 10, and
- you are inside your polling place no later than 9:00 p.m. on November 4, 2003.

You also have a right to:

- Get help from an interpreter supplied by the Board of Elections at some polling sites if you speak Spanish, Chinese, or Korean. Call the Board of Elections' toll-free voter assistance number, 866-VOTE-NYC (866-868-3692), for more information, including which polling sites have interpreters available.
- Bring anyone except your employer or union agent to help you in the voting booth if you are a person with a disability or if you cannot read the ballot, including someone to interpret the ballot for you.
- Ask election workers how to use the voting machine.
- Bring materials into the voting booth with you, including this Voter Guide. (Please take these materials away with you when you finish voting.)
- Vote by paper ballot if the voting machine is broken.
- Vote by "affidavit ballot" if your name is missing from the list of voters at your poll site (see page 10).

You do not have to show identification to vote in this election.

# Questions and Answers about Voting

**Can I vote in the November 4 general election?**

If you are registered to vote in New York City, you can vote in the November 4 general election, which will include races for City Council and important City and State ballot proposals.

**I don't know if I am registered to vote. How do I find out, and how do I register?**

If you do not know whether you are registered to vote, call the Board of Elections' (the "BOE") toll-free voter assistance number, 866-VOTE-NYC (866-868-3692), or, for the hearing impaired, call (212) 487-5496 to find out.

If you are a registered voter, you should receive a notice from the BOE in August telling you where your polling place is. If you do not get a notice, call 866-VOTE-NYC to find out whether you are registered to vote.

October 10, 2003 was the last day to register for the November 4 general election. To register for future elections, you must fill out a voter registration form and file it in person or by mail with any of the following BOE offices:

## Main Office

32 Broadway, 7th Floor  
New York, NY 10004  
(212) 487-5300

## Brooklyn

345 Adams Street, 4th Floor  
Brooklyn, NY 11201  
(718) 797-8800

## Manhattan

200 Varick Street, 10th Floor  
New York, NY 10014  
(212) 886-3800

## Queens

42-16 West Street, 5th Floor  
Long Island City, NY 11101  
(718) 392-8989

## The Bronx

1780 Grand Concourse, 5th Floor  
Bronx, NY 10457  
(718) 299-9017

## Staten Island

One Edgewater Plaza, 4th Floor  
Staten Island, NY 10305  
(718) 876-0079

Voter registration forms are available at these offices. You can also get a registration form and other information by calling 866-VOTE-NYC. You can download and print a registration form on the BOE's Web site, [www.vote.nyc.ny.us](http://www.vote.nyc.ny.us), or fill out a request online to have a form mailed to you. However they are obtained, voter registration forms must be filled out, signed, and either mailed or hand delivered to one of the offices listed above, because they must have an original signature (in ink) to be valid.

Please note: You cannot **submit** your voter registration form via the BOE's Web site; you may only download or request one.

**How long is my registration good for?**

Your registration has no expiration date. However, your registration may have been cancelled if you moved and did not update your address with the BOE and you did not vote in the 2000 or 2002 (federal) elections. Call 866-VOTE-NYC for more information.

### What if I have moved (within New York City)?

If you have moved since you last voted, you must change your address with the BOE by submitting a new voter registration form and checking the box labeled “Address change.” See above for more information on obtaining and submitting a voter registration form.

If you have moved within New York City and you have not changed your address with the BOE, you may still be able to vote by going to your new polling place and filling out an affidavit ballot that will be available there. However, it is best to update your registration whenever you move by filling out a voter registration form with your new address and sending it to the BOE.

### What will I be voting on in the November 4 general election?

You can vote for one City Council candidate running in your Council district. You may also vote for candidates for other offices that are on the ballot but not covered by this Voter Guide, such as district attorney and judicial offices. You will also be voting on ballot proposals to amend the New York State Constitution and the New York City Charter. The State proposals are on page 33. City ballot proposals are covered extensively beginning on page 35.

### What candidates will be on the ballot in the November 4 general election?

Candidates nominated by the five political parties recognized by the New York State Board of Elections — Republican, Democratic, Independence, Conservative, and Working Families — may run in the general election and may appear on the ballot.

In addition, candidates running as independents may appear on the general election ballot.

Candidates who lost in a party’s primary election on September 9, 2003, may run for office in the general election if they have been nominated by another party or if they run as independents.

### I don’t know which Council district I live in. How can I find out?

The maps in the center of this Voter Guide show the new boundaries of the Council districts in your borough so that you can locate your Council district. **Please remember that your Council district may have changed since the last time you voted** (due to redistricting). Visit the online Guide at [www.nycfb.info](http://www.nycfb.info) to “find your district” and view your candidates. You can also call the BOE’s toll-free voter assistance number, 866-VOTE-NYC, to find out.

### Does this Voter Guide contain information about all the candidates who will be on the November 4 general election ballot?

Not necessarily. This Guide only has information about candidates running for City Council in the general election. It is possible that you will be voting on candidates for other offices, such as district attorney and judicial offices.

Also, some candidates running for City Council may not have sent information to be included in the Voter Guide, or may have sent in that information too late. However, the names of **all** general election candidates for City Council known at the

time this Guide went to press are listed in “Candidates at a Glance” on page 15. Candidates who did not submit information for the Voter Guide, or did not do so in time, have an asterisk next to their names indicating this.

For the most up-to-date information, visit the online Voter Guide at [www.nycfb.info](http://www.nycfb.info).

### Will all the candidates listed in this Voter Guide appear on the November 4 general election ballot?

Not necessarily. It is possible that after this Guide goes to press, some candidates may drop out of the race or be taken off the ballot for legal reasons. Candidates can be removed from the ballot, or put back on the ballot, up until just before the election. So there may be some candidates listed in this Guide who do not appear on the final general election ballot. You should always check the sample ballot at your polling place before voting. You can also check the online Voter Guide for the most recent information at [www.nycfb.info](http://www.nycfb.info).

### In what order are the candidates for City Council listed?

The races for each Council district are in numerical order (district 1, district 2, district 3, etc.). Within each Council district, a candidate’s profile appears in the Voter Guide according to the party line on which the candidate is running. As on the ballot, the order of the party lines is Republican, Democratic, Independence, Conservative, and Working Families. This order is set by the New York State Election Law. Candidates running on more than one party line appear only once in this Guide, in the order their names are expected to **first** appear on the ballot.

There are also independent candidates. These candidates are listed in the Voter Guide in the order in which they will appear on the ballot.

### How do I find information about the City Council candidates running in my district?

Check the map in the center of this Voter Guide to determine which Council district you live in, if you do not already know it. To confirm your Council district, call 866-VOTE-NYC. The notice sent to registered voters by the Board of Elections tells you which Council district you live in. You can also check the online Voter Guide, which has a “find your Council district” feature and up-to-date information about the general election, at [www.nycfb.info](http://www.nycfb.info).

Turn to “Candidates at a Glance” on page 15 for a complete list of the candidates known to be running in your district at press time. To find profiles submitted by Council candidates in your district, turn to “The Candidates” section and find the candidates that have your Council district printed at the top of their profiles. Candidate profiles pages are grouped by Council district, then in the order in which the candidates will appear on the ballot. Remember, you may vote for only one of the candidates who are running for City Council in your district.

### What if there is only one candidate in my Council district?

It is possible that in some districts there will only be one Council candidate on the ballot. All Council candidates who submitted a Voter Guide statement and are on the ballot will appear in this Guide — even if they do not have an opponent

on the ballot. If there is only one candidate running for City Council in your district and you do not wish to vote for him or her, you may “write in” a candidate instead (see page 12 for information on how to write in a candidate’s name).

### **If I belong to a political party, do I have to vote for the candidate nominated by my party?**

No. In the general election you may vote for any candidate you choose, no matter what party you are enrolled in.

### **Where do I go to vote?**

You vote at your local polling place. If you are a registered voter, you should receive a notice from the Board of Elections telling you where your polling place is. Read the notice carefully. If you do not have your postcard or you do not know where to vote, call 866-VOTE-NYC.

### **When I get to my polling place, where do I go?**

The notice you received from the Board of Elections tells you what Assembly District (A.D.) and Election District (E.D.) you live in. These numbers are important because they tell you which voting booth to use. If you forget your A.D. or E.D. on election day, the information clerk or any of the election workers will be able to tell you which booth to use.

### **What if my name is not on the list when I get to my polling place?**

#### **Will I still be able to vote?**

If you are not on the poll-list, it may be because your registration form was not received. If you believe that you **are** eligible, you can still vote. Ask for an **affidavit ballot**, which is a paper ballot. Fill it out and enclose and seal it in the envelope supplied. On the affidavit envelope give your old and new addresses along with all other required information and remember to sign it. After the election, the Board of Elections will check its records and your vote will be counted if you are indeed eligible to vote. If not, you will receive a notice that you are not eligible to vote, along with a registration form for future elections.

### **Can I vote if I can’t get to my polling place on election day?**

You can vote by absentee ballot for a number of reasons, such as being away at school, on vacation, disabled, or in the hospital. Call 866-VOTE-NYC to find out if you can vote by absentee ballot, and to request an application for an absentee ballot.

If you cannot get to your polling site on election day, you can vote in person (“In Person Absentee Voting”) at the BOE’s office in your borough (see page 7 for addresses). In Person Absentee Voting is conducted from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday for 15 days, ending on election day. It is also conducted from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, November 1 and Sunday, November 2, and from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. on Monday, November 3 and on general election day, November 4. Call the BOE at 866-VOTE-NYC for more information.

To vote by absentee ballot, follow these two steps:

- 1. File an Absentee Ballot Application.** You can have an absentee ballot application mailed to you by calling 866-VOTE-NYC. You can also pick up an application at any of the Board of Elections’ offices listed on page 7, or download and print an absentee ballot application from the BOE’s Web site, [www.vote.nyc.ny.us](http://www.vote.nyc.ny.us). Fill out the application and mail it or deliver it in person to the BOE office in your borough. For the general election on November 4, 2003, completed absentee ballot applications must be postmarked by October 28, 2003, or must be personally delivered to the BOE office by 5:00 p.m. on November 3, 2003.
- 2. Send in your Absentee Ballot.** If you submit your absentee ballot application in person at your Board of Elections borough office, you will receive your absentee ballot immediately. You can also have it mailed to you. Fill it out and mail or hand deliver it to any of the BOE’s offices. For the general election, completed absentee ballots must be postmarked by November 3, 2003 or personally delivered to the BOE’s office in your borough by 9:00 p.m. on November 4, 2003.

### **How can I get more information?**

The **Board of Elections** has a toll-free voter assistance telephone number to answer questions from voters. To learn more about voting in this election, call 866-VOTE-NYC (866-868-3692), or, for the hearing impaired, (212) 487-5496. There is also information available on the BOE’s Web site, [www.vote.nyc.ny.us](http://www.vote.nyc.ny.us).

The **Voter Assistance Commission** is a nonpartisan government agency created to encourage more New Yorkers to register and to vote. The Commission identifies historically underrepresented groups and works with other public agencies, private groups, and community-based organizations to encourage registration and voting. The Commission holds an annual public hearing after the general election to learn about experiences with voting in New York City and to make recommendations for improvements. The Commission also holds public meetings prior to the general election to discuss other voting issues. To find out when the annual public hearing will be held or to get more information, call (212) 788-8384. You can also write to the Voter Assistance Commission, 100 Gold Street, 2nd floor, New York, NY 10038, or visit its Web site at [www.ci.nyc.ny.us/voter](http://www.ci.nyc.ny.us/voter).

The **Campaign Finance Board’s** Web site, [www.nyccfb.info](http://www.nyccfb.info), has an online Voter Guide including a “find your Council district” feature and a searchable database with up-to-date contribution, expenditure, and other campaign finance information on candidates participating in the Campaign Finance Program.



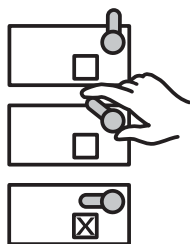


# How to Use the Voting Machine



**1** Separate the voting machine curtains and enter. (The curtains will be closed when you enter and will stay closed.)

**2** Pull the large red handle to the right. Do not move the large red handle again until you finish making all your choices for candidates and for each ballot proposal.



**3** Push down the lever next to each candidate you want and next to “yes” or “no” for each ballot proposal. An “X” will appear in the box next to your choice. If you make a mistake, push the lever back and choose the correct lever.



**4** When you finish choosing your candidates and voting yes or no on each ballot proposal, leave the levers down, and pull the large red handle all the way to the left. The levers will return to their original positions, and your vote will be counted. Leave the booth through the closed curtains.

## A Note About Writing In Candidates' Names:

For most offices, you may vote for a candidate whose name does not appear on the ballot (a “write-in” candidate). First, check with the election workers at your polling place. If you can write in a candidate, find the button above the column of the numbered slots all the way to the left of the voting machine. Push the button and, while holding it in, open the slot opposite the office for which you wish to write in a candidate’s name. In the slot, write in the name of the candidate you want. A pencil is provided inside the voting machine on the left. Cast your vote for other offices in the usual way. For further information, call 866-VOTE-NYC.

# NYC’s Campaign Finance Program

New York City’s Campaign Finance Program (the “Program”), established in 1988, helps people run for the offices of mayor, public advocate, comptroller, borough president, and City Council member without relying on large campaign contributions by giving them the opportunity to qualify for matching funds to help them run competitive campaigns. The voluntary Program is administered by the New York City Campaign Finance Board, the independent, nonpartisan City agency that produced this Voter Guide.

When candidates join the Program, they agree to abide by campaign contribution and spending limits and other requirements, including audits of their campaigns. Candidates who join the Program cannot accept contributions from corporations. In return, these candidates can qualify to receive public funds that match contributions received from NYC residents at a rate of \$4 to every \$1 for contributions of up to \$250. The Program’s contribution limits prevent participants from running campaigns with large amounts of money from just a few wealthy people or groups. The Program’s spending limits help ensure that candidates who are wealthy, or who have the support of wealthy people or groups, do not have an unfair advantage.

Program participants file detailed information with the Board about their contributors and how campaign money is spent. The Board computerizes this information, so it is easy for the public and the press to find out the details of candidates’ campaign finances. This information is available (and searchable) on the CFB’s Web site, [www.nyccfb.info](http://www.nyccfb.info), and on a public computer terminal at the CFB’s offices. Program participants are audited by the CFB to make sure that they are observing the contribution and spending limits and other Program requirements.

When you read this Voter Guide, you will be able to find out which candidates have joined the Campaign Finance Program for the 2003 elections by looking at the bottom of their candidate statements for the phrase “Participating in the NYC Campaign Finance Program.”

If you are interested in running for City office, or in learning more about how the Campaign Finance Program is helping to make local elections in New York more open and democratic, please contact the CFB at:

**The New York City Campaign Finance Board**  
40 Rector Street, 7th floor, New York, NY 10006  
[www.nyccfb.info](http://www.nyccfb.info)

Internet users can e-mail questions to [info@nyccfb.info](mailto:info@nyccfb.info). Questions specifically about this Voter Guide can be e-mailed to [VoterGuideInfo@nyccfb.info](mailto:VoterGuideInfo@nyccfb.info).

# The Candidates

This section begins with a list, “Candidates at a Glance,” of the candidates who appeared at press time to be on the general election ballot for the office of City Council member in your area. After that list, you will see pages with candidate profiles and photos. The information and the photos on these pages were given to the CFB by the candidates. The candidates have signed sworn statements that the information in their profiles is true to the best of their knowledge.

The profiles provided by the candidates are reprinted by the CFB as supplied by the candidates. **The CFB does not edit the information submitted by the candidates.** All candidates have the same deadlines to submit statements and do not have the opportunity to respond to their opponents’ statements.

“Candidates at a Glance” and the candidate profiles may show that candidates are running on more than one party line. The profiles of these candidates will only appear once in this Guide, in the order their names are expected to first appear on the ballot. Please pay careful attention to the “Candidates at a Glance” listing to see the names of **all** the candidates in each race and which lines they are running on. **Even candidates who did not submit profiles to the CFB, or did not submit profiles in time to be included in the Guide, are listed in “Candidates at a Glance,”** with an asterisk next to their names to indicate that they did not submit profiles.

The views expressed in the candidate statements do not represent those of the New York City Campaign Finance Board.

## Candidates at a Glance

### Council Districts 20-27

#### Council District 20

*John Liu (D, I, WF)*

#### Council District 21

*Hiram Monserrate (D, I, WF)*

#### Council District 22

*Peter F. Vallone Jr (D)*

*Jerry Kann (G)*

#### Council District 23

*William M. Horowitz (R, C)*

*David I. Weprin (D, WF)*

#### Council District 24

*James F. Gennaro (D, WF)*

*Walter A. Lamp (C)\**

#### Council District 25

*Helen Sears (D)*

#### Council District 26

*Patrick J. Hurley (R, C)*

*Eric Gioia (D, WF)*

#### Council District 27

*Leroy Comrie (D, I, WF)*

#### KEY:

(R)	Republican	(C)	Conservative
(D)	Democratic	(WF)	Working Families
(I)	Independence	(G)	Green

\* *This candidate did not submit a Voter Guide profile.*



## 20th City Council District



**Democratic  
Independence  
Working Families**

**John Liu**

**Party Enrolled In:** Democrat

**Occupation:** Public Servant

**Occupational Background:** Member of New York City Council currently; previously, manager at leading financial and management consulting firm

**Educational Background:** B.S. Mathematical Physics, State University of New York at Binghamton

**Organizational Affiliations:** Past President, North Flushing Civic Association; past Vice President, Queens Civic Congress; current Democratic District Leader

**Prior Public Experience:** Past member of Community Board 7 (Queens)

John grew up in Flushing. Beginning with kindergarten at PS 20, he attended local public schools. He and his wife Jenny are homeowners in Flushing, living just blocks from where John grew up. Their son Joey is now 2 years old and will soon be enrolled in public school, just as John was.

John has championed school reform in public schools. He has also secured hundreds of new computers for local schools.

John worked with the NYPD to put dozens of additional cops on foot patrol and also created an auxiliary police booth in Flushing to deter and reduce crime.

John fought to keep meals and centers for our seniors. He has fought scams that victimize the elderly.

John is the Chair of the City Council's Transportation Committee and demanded accountability within the MTA and fought against ridiculous fare increases.

John created a plan where local businesses pay the costs of sidewalk cleaning services from morning to night seven days a week in downtown Flushing.

John has only been in office for a year and a half and has already done all this and much more. His leadership is highly regarded, his energy unparalleled, his commitment unwavering and his results unsurpassed.

Let's send John back to the City Council!

(Statement reprinted as supplied by the candidate.)

Turn to page 35 for  
detailed information about  
New York City Ballot proposals.

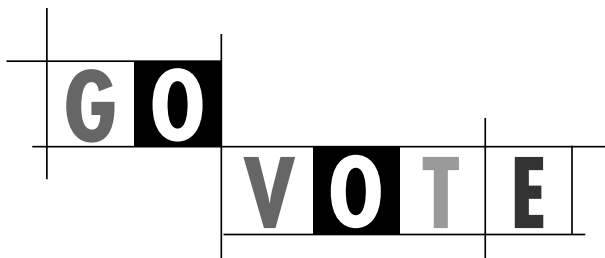
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## General Election date:

Tuesday, November 4, 2003

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Democracy doesn't work without you.



## 21st City Council District



Democratic  
Independence  
Working Families

**Hiram Monserrate**

**Party Enrolled In:** Democrat

**Occupation:** Member of the New York City Council

**Occupational Background:** former Police Officer and Marine

**Educational Background:** Queens College, BA with honors; Enrolled in Masters Program in Urban Studies, Queens College

**Organizational Affiliations:** Latino Officers Association, founder and former Vice President; New York Civil Liberties Union, former board member

**Prior Public Experience:** Democratic District Leader

**A**s a member of the City Council, I am proud to be an advocate working to ensure our communities' quality of life and our children's future. To me, this means fighting to protect our most precious resources -- our safety, our children and our health.

I have worked to protect our neighborhoods and our jobs. As a former police officer, I led the fight for additional police resources and ultimately secured "Operation Impact" on Roosevelt Avenue. This public safety program put hundreds of new officers on our streets and drove crime down to historic lows. As a former union member, I am proud to fight to protect quality, living wage jobs that will help support our families and rebuild our economy.

I have worked to protect our children's education. During a budget crisis, I led the fight against devastating budget cuts to libraries and classrooms, securing over \$1 million for local school computer labs and rallying against budget cuts threatening services at the Corona, Langston Hughes and East Elmhurst libraries.

I have worked to protect the health of our families and seniors. Within the City Council, I fought to save ambulance services in Queens from budget cuts that would have threatened our emergency health system. Throughout the area, I organized grassroots campaigns to help residents access free or low-cost health insurance and organized health care providers, clergy and health advocates in a one-of-a-kind local awareness campaign to fight HIV/AIDS. In City Hall, I fought attempts to close the Corona Senior Center and cut programs providing necessary weekend meals to seniors.

As our community grows, we must fight for our fair share. As your Councilman, I am a proven advocate, working for you.

(Statement reprinted as supplied by the candidate.)

# 22nd City Council District



Democratic

**Peter F. Vallone Jr**

**Party Enrolled In:** Democrat

**Occupation:** New York City Council Member

**Occupational Background:** Managing Partner, VALLONE & VALLONE, LLP; Volunteer Elder Care Attorney for the Diocese of Brooklyn; Assistant District Attorney, Manhattan District Attorney's Office

**Educational Background:** Fordham University-Magna Cum Laude & Phi Beta Kappa Fordham Law School

**Organizational Affiliations:** Board of Trustees of the Variety Boys & Girls Club of Queens & St John's Prep

**Prior Public Experience:** Legal Counsel, Astoria Civic Association, the United Community Civic Association, "C.H.O.K.E." (Coalition Helping Organize a Kleaner Environment), & Sponsors for Educational Opportunity

**F**or the past two years, I have been honored to represent the 22nd Council District where I have worked to protect the environment and our children and keep our city safe.

My first act as a Council Member was to introduce a bill requiring power plants to reduce CO2 emissions. Two bills I sponsored, which are now law, aim to more effectively combat graffiti by increasing the penalties for perpetrators. I also fought for and won the restoration of funding to keep our senior centers and libraries open, and continue twice weekly garbage pick-ups.

As the father of two young daughters both in public school, I know how important it is that every child has a safe learning environment. That's why I introduced a bill that will put security cameras in every public school.

As Chair of the Public Safety Committee, I have fought to stop cuts to the NYPD, demanded more officers be assigned to our local precincts, and rallied to stop the closing of fire houses. I introduced legislation to keep illegal guns off our streets and out of the hands of domestic violence offenders and to abolish the statute of limitations on child abuse offenders and rapists. I was the first to demand that Albany return the cell phone surcharge collected from NYC residents back to us so that we can implement an enhanced wireless 911 system.

In the wake of 9-11, I led the fight to get NYC the money it deserves from the state and federal governments in order to provide enhanced security and to rebuild.

I will continue to work to keep our city safe, strong and clean for my children and yours.

(Statement reprinted as supplied by the candidate.)

# 22nd City Council District



Green

**Jerry Kann**

**Party Enrolled In:** Green

**Occupation:** Copyeditor/Proofreader

**Occupational Background:** Copywriter—scientific publishing

**Educational Background:** M.A. candidate/composition teacher, English Literature, Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, Ohio; B.A., English Literature, Cleveland State University, Cleveland, Ohio, Dec. 1985

**Organizational Affiliations:** West Queens Greens (Secretary); Green Party of New York State (State Committee Member); National Writers Union, UAW Local 1981; New York Labor Party; Citizens Union; Citizens Helping Organize a Kleaner Environment (CHOKE) (Delegate)

**Prior Public Experience:** Candidate, New York City Council, District 22, 2001; Candidate, New York State Assembly, District 36, 2002

**T**he average person does not have enough say-so about what goes on in New York City. Too many important decisions are made behind closed doors without the consent of the people who live here, and often even without their knowledge. Big money has far too much power, and the average citizen has too little. That has got to change.

I want to get the people's input. If elected, I would hold regular public meetings around Astoria to hear the residents' complaints and ideas. And I am not talking about a town hall meeting once every couple of years—but rather at least monthly meetings where anyone who lives in the district can attend and take part. If we had such meetings, members of City Council would have to make their case directly to the people and tell us why we have to put up with more tax hikes, rent hikes, and fare hikes.

My opponent, Peter Vallone Jr., received many large contributions from big real estate interests in his 2001 campaign. No wonder that he, along with other Council members, stood by and let the State government push through a 10.5% increase for rent-controlled tenants. No wonder he voted for the 18.5% property tax hike, which everyone knows will be passed on to tenants. Vallone Jr. did not attend the MTA hearings in Queens prior to the fare hike, and did nothing to oppose it. If he had to face his constituents 12 times a year and explain his positions to them, he probably wouldn't have taken such positions in the first place. And the people would have been better off.

We need a more fair and democratic way of doing things in Astoria, and all over New York City. If we work together, we can do better. A lot better.

(Statement reprinted as supplied by the candidate.)

Turn to page 35 for  
detailed information about  
New York City Ballot proposals.

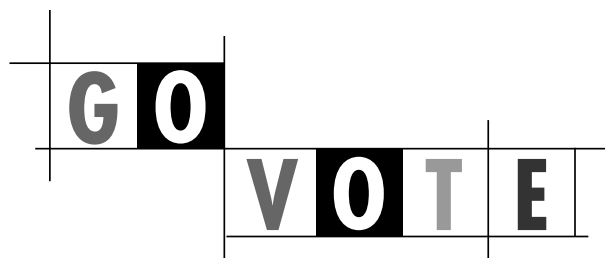
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## General Election date:

Tuesday, November 4, 2003

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Democracy doesn't work without you.



# 23rd City Council District



**Republican  
Conservative**

**William M. Horowitz**

**Party Enrolled In:** Republican

**Occupation:** Free-Lance Journalist

**Occupational Background:** QPTV (Queens Public Television) Intern during Summer 2001; Intern to Steve Malzberg on Newstalk Radio 77WABC Summer & Fall 2002

**Educational Background:** Bachelor of Science in Journalism, St. Johns University

**Organizational Affiliations:** Board Member of the Queens Village Republican Club, Rocky Hill Civic Association, Help Train the JROTC at Francis Lewis High School

**Prior Public Experience:** N/A

I am running to provide a choice to the voters in my councilmatic district. As a young Candidate, I am trying to educate my generation on the issues of the day, showing them that they can make a difference. The voters in my district are very upset with the huge real estate tax hike. My opponent was the person who introduced the increased tax bill in the City Council.

The present City Council only has three non-Democrats in the membership. I am trying to increase the needed diversity in that body. Because of the dangers in our Society today, we cannot short-change our public safety personnel (Police and Firemen). I am against the City Council Propagandizing on various National and International issues. That would be like a Congressman or United States Senator discussing dog-catching municipal ordinances.

As a Journalist, I would Constantly inform my Constituency of the issues facing our municipality. In the field of education, I would use district 26 as the example for the city to emulate, not to water down its performance.

(Statement reprinted as supplied by the candidate.)

# 23rd City Council District



**Democratic  
Working Families**

**David I. Weprin**

**Party Enrolled In:** Democrat

**Occupation:** New York City Council Person, Attorney

**Occupational Background:** 1980-1983 Private Law Practice, 1983-1987 (see prior public experience), 1987-2000 VP, Senior VP and Managing Director in Public Finance for four Wall Street Firms. 1997-2000 Chairman, Securities Industry Association, NY District. 2000-2001, Private Law Practice

**Educational Background:** Jamaica H.S., S.U.N.Y. Albany, B.A. Cum Laude; Hofstra University School of Law, J.D

**Organizational Affiliations:** Vice President, North East Queens Jewish Community Council; Board Member, American Jewish Congress, Transitional Services for NY, Inc., National Conference of Community & Justice, Holliswood Civic Association, Economic Education Foundation of the Securities Industry Assoc., and the Brandies Assoc. of Queens  
**Prior Public Experience:** 1983-1987 Deputy Superintendent of Banks for NYS and Secretary of the NY Banking Board. Democratic District Leader-24th AD-Part A, Executive Member-Saul Weprin Democratic Club, Former Member-NYC Tax Reform Task Force

As the Chair of the City Council Finance Committee, I worked to maintain services for my constituents. I have implemented solutions that will fund schools, maintain library services, senior services, arts and cultural programs, and create affordable housing.

I sponsored over forty bills that have been signed into law. I introduced a bill that bans the sale of all toy guns. I authored a bill creating harsher penalties for those posting placards on trees. I authored legislation to change an archaic law regarding awnings that will now prevent business owners from receiving harsh fines.

I upgraded the computer systems in each library in my district. I obtained funds to restore Cunningham Park, and to expand Queensboro Community College. I played a key role in Down Zoning the community of Holliswood to end the proliferation of multiple family homes. I was instrumental in maintaining the minimum of twice a week sanitation collections throughout NYC.

My endorsements include most City, and State Wide elected officials including Senators Schumer and Clinton, district members of Congress Ackerman, Meeks and Weiner, State Comptroller Hevesi, Attorney General Spitzer, City Council Speaker Miller, Public Advocate Gotbaum, and City Comptroller Thompson. UFT, 1199, PBA, CWA, and The Working Families party, and most major unions have endorsed me.

(Statement reprinted as supplied by the candidate.)

## 24th City Council District



**Democratic  
Working Families**

**James F. Gennaro**

**Party Enrolled In:** Democrat

**Occupation:** NYC Council Member, 24th District

**Occupational Background:** Adjunct Professor of Political Science, Queens College; Policy Advisor to former Council Speaker Vallone

**Educational Background:** M.S., Public Administration; B.A. Geology - SUNY Stony Brook

**Organizational Affiliations:** Past President, Jamaica Estates Association; Past President, Saul Weprin Democratic Club; Member, PSC/CUNY, AFT Local 2334

**Prior Public Experience:** NYC Council Member, 24th District; Queens Community Board 8

**F**or the last two years, I've had the honor and privilege of serving as your Councilman. I am grateful for the trust you have placed in me and proud of what we have been able to accomplish together.

As a parent and professional educator, I have committed myself to providing our children with the tools they need to excel in school. I have funded major education projects, such as computer and science labs, in every public elementary and middle school in our community.

I have been relentless in advocating for as many new police officers as possible for the precincts that protect our community. I'm happy to report that our new officers are making our streets safer than ever. The latest police statistics show that crime continues to decline in our neighborhood.

Despite the tightest budget year in a generation, I've increased funding for many of the senior citizen programs that I sponsor throughout our community. At City Hall, I fought to keep the city's senior centers open, preserve the weekend meals program and restore over \$18 million in funding for senior programs citywide.

My re-election has been endorsed by many leaders whom you know and trust. I am proud to have the support of Ed Koch, Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., Council Speaker Gifford Miller, Public Advocate Betsy Gotbaum, Comptroller William C. Thompson, Jr., Borough President Helen Marshall, U.S. Representatives Gary Ackerman, Anthony Weiner, Gregory Meeks and State Legislators Nettie Mayersohn, Brian McLaughlin, Toby Stavisky, Mark Weprin and Barry Grodenchik.

I am proud of our wonderful community and what we have accomplished together in the last two years. I ask your support for my re-election. There is more work to do; let's continue, together.

(Statement reprinted as supplied by the candidate.)



Turn to page 35 for  
detailed information about  
New York City Ballot proposals.

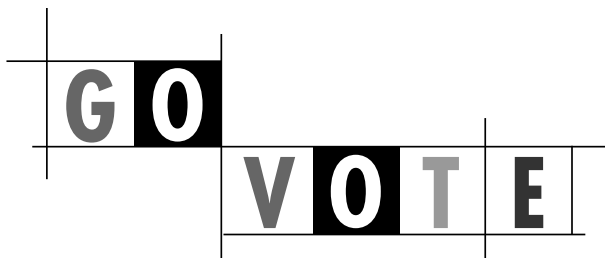
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## General Election date:

Tuesday, November 4, 2003

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# 25th City Council District



Democratic

**Helen Sears**

**Party Enrolled In:** Democrat

**Occupation:** City Council Member

**Occupational Background:** Hospital Administrator, Public Affairs/Transportation Consultant, Senior Consultant

**Educational Background:** B.A. - Sociology/Business @ Queens College, Advanced Studies @ Columbia University, Graduate of Civilian Police Academy

**Organizational Affiliations:** Jackson Heights Garden School, American of Italian Heritage, Queens Women's Center; (all honorary memberships)

**Prior Public Experience:** City Council, Democratic District Leader

I was elected to the City Council two years ago. When I entered the Council, having been a Democratic District Leader for over 25 years, I was no stranger to dealing with city agencies or the State and Federal governments. My experience helped me tremendously as I strived to make a difference for the 25th Councilmanic District and New York City as a whole.

Our City has faced an ongoing budget crisis of dramatic proportions. We face large budget deficits, and by law, along with the Mayor, it is the City Council's responsibility to balance the budget. This means making difficult and unpopular decisions like cutting services.

As Queens Budget Negotiator, it is my responsibility to see that our borough gets its fair share of funding and doesn't suffer disproportionate cuts. It is my responsibility to ensure essential programs can continue to function productively.

I have worked hard to keep senior centers open, provide school funding for updated books and computers, maintain after-school programs, make sure our garbage is collected twice a week, keep libraries open and maintain adequate staffing in our police force to keep our streets safe. Additionally, my staff has helped hundreds of constituents with various problems.

In an effort to make our City a better and safer place to live. I have authored or sponsored numerous pieces of legislation in my first term and I have initiated several programs to improve the quality of life in the 25th Councilmanic District. I am proud of the work I have done so far but there is much more to be done and I look forward to taking on the challenges that lie ahead.

(Statement reprinted as supplied by the candidate.)

# 26th City Council District



Republican  
Conservative

**Patrick J. Hurley**

**Party Enrolled In:** Republican

**Occupation:** Security Director for international hospitality corporation; opinion columnist for various publications

**Occupational Background:** Security manager for international hotel corporation; Asst. Security Operations Manager; copy editor

**Educational Background:** Graduate of De La Salle College, Skibbereen, Co. Cork, Ireland; B.A. (Hons) National University of Ireland; Certificate in legal studies, New School University, Manhattan

**Organizational Affiliations:** President, Regular Republican Club, 30th Ad; member Queens County Executive Republican Party; member of St. Sebastian's Parish, Woodside; officer of County Cork Association of New York; past member New York State Board Ancient Order of Hibernians; co founder Irish Immigration Reform Movement; member American Association of Industrial Security; member NYPD APPL program; member Sunnyside Gardens Association; member Woodside Martial Arts Club

**Prior Public Experience:** N/A

**U**nder our nominal "Republican" mayor, and the anti business Democrats, who control the City Council, New York City is being taxed, levied and fined into oblivion.

The 18.5% property tax hike is picking the pockets of the city's property owners and renters alike. The politically correct smoking ban, premised on discredited research, is having a devastating economic effect on the bar, restaurant and hospitality industries. Both City Hall and the Council have supported draconian tax increases, which penalize hard working middle class families and stifle our economy. The public school system enjoys an annual budget of \$12 billion, yet 250,000 of our young people attend failing schools.

As your councilmember, I will promote an economically rejuvenating agenda of sensible tax cuts and pro business legislation. I will fight to ensure that the 26th CD receives its full share of services. I will strive to eradicate excess, duplication and waste in city government. I will work to enact effective anti graffiti and sanitation legislation.

As a husband, parent and wage earner, I understand the challenges faced by the people of the district. I will work to advance the interests of hard working middle class families, small property owners, small business entrepreneurs, our seniors and our young people. The middle class has been abused, cheated and neglected for too long. On Nov. 4th, vote for Patrick Hurley.

(Statement reprinted as supplied by the candidate.)

# 26th City Council District



Democratic  
Working Families

**Eric Gioia**

**Party Enrolled In:** Democrat

**Occupation:** NYC Councilman

**Occupational Background:** Attorney, Community Activist

**Educational Background:** PS 11; JHS 125; St. Francis Prep; NYU; Georgetown Law

**Organizational Affiliations:** -

**Prior Public Experience:** City Council; The White House

**E**ric Gioia is a tireless worker and tenacious advocate for our neighborhood. Born and raised in Woodside, Councilman Gioia is a product of our neighborhood's public schools - PS 11 & JHS 125. His family has owned and operated Nunziato Florist on Roosevelt Avenue since 1901.

Gioia worked his way through NYU and Georgetown Law as a janitor and doorman, and as a proud member of SEIU 32BJ. He brings to the City Council a wealth of experience from working at all levels of government. From working in the White House to practicing law in New York, Gioia developed the skills necessary to fight for our neighborhood at City Hall.

**Improving Schools:** Gioia has made education a top priority, visiting every public school in our neighborhood and speaking to over 5,000 students. He fought successfully to secure over \$950,000 in computers and also founded a youth baseball league to expand extracurricular opportunities. Reading and math scores are up across the district!

**Making Streets Safer:** Since Gioia took office, violent crime has dropped dramatically. From writing tougher laws on vandalism and graffiti to fighting for our fair share of Homeland Security dollars and successfully bringing over 40 new Police Officers to our Precincts, Councilman Gioia's efforts have made our neighborhood safer.

**Cleaning Our Neighborhood:** Councilman Gioia is working hard to ensure that our neighborhood looks better and cleaner every day. He purchased power washers for neighborhood groups to remove graffiti and sponsored The Doe Fund to clean our busiest streets. From fighting the pigeon problem to filling pot-holes, fixing broken curbs, and planting trees, our Councilman is taking the ideas we talk about at the dinner table and making them a reality.

**Standing up for Seniors:** Gioia fought hard and was able to secure millions of dollars to expand and renovate our neighborhood's senior centers. He also safeguarded the funding to provide weekend meals to seniors.

(Statement reprinted as supplied by the candidate.)

# 27th City Council District



**Democratic  
Independence  
Working Families**

**Leroy Comrie**

**Party Enrolled In:** Democrat

**Occupation:** New York City Councilmember 27th Council District Jamaica Hollis St. Albans

**Occupational Background:** Deputy Majority Leader Archie Spigner Chief Legislative Aide

**Educational Background:** University of Bridgeport- Major- Political Science; Jamaica High School

**Organizational Affiliations:** Past President Community School Board

**Prior Public Experience:** Chalice Administrator St. Albans the Martyr Church, Board Member Guy R Brewer United Democratic Club St. Albans Civic Association Jamaica Branch NAACP Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity

Councilmember Leroy Comrie consistently demonstrates his passion as an advocate for the 27th Council District. Comrie was appointed Majority Whip of the Council and Chair of the Queens Council Delegation Rules Committee Chair Member of Education Land Use Housing and Building Finance Government Operations Committees.

A life-long resident of District 27 married with two children Councilmember Comrie is uniquely in touch with the needs of his district.

Significant Community Victories include Ten million for toxic cleanup preventing closure of Charles Drew Extended Center and PAL Senior Center insured funding for Construction Cambria Heights Library Southern Queens Park Liberty Park Saint Albans Park Continued funding of vital youth senior cultural and economic development programs.

Councilmember Comrie has sponsored several pieces of tough legislation aimed at addressing city wide issues such as exempting senior citizens from the current water rate hikes Introducing legislation seeking to eliminate predatory payday lending practices legislation prompting the City to initiate a major study and analysis of Truck Traffic within New York City with the eventual goal of eliminating residential truck traffic.

Councilmember Comrie works tirelessly to ensure his district not only receives its fair share of services but that our City also receives help it desperately needs from Albany and Washington.

His experience and demonstrated knowledge of Government as well as his energetic leadership in the City Council has earned Leroy Comrie the respect of his colleagues enabling him to work successfully with the leadership of our City for the future of New York and our community.

(Statement reprinted as supplied by the candidate.)

# Ballot Proposals

## Introduction

Ballot proposals are on the ballot for voters to decide. Voters can vote “Yes” or “No.” Ballot proposals are on the right-hand side of the ballot in the voting booth, near the top or bottom corner of the ballot.

In the general election this year, New York City voters will be asked to vote on two State ballot proposals, which will be Questions 1 and 2 on the ballot. The official text and summary for the State ballot proposals follow this introduction. New York City voters will also be asked to vote on three local ballot proposals placed on the ballot by the 2003 Charter Revision Commission, which will be Questions 3, 4, and 5 on the ballot. **Turn to page 35 for extensive coverage of the three local ballot proposals you will be voting on in this election.**

## State Ballot Proposals

### **Question 1: Exclusion of Indebtedness Contracted for Sewage Facilities**

#### **Official Text**

The proposed amendment to Article 8, section 5 of the Constitution would extend for ten years, until January 1, 2014, the authority of counties, cities, towns and villages to exclude from their constitutional debt limits indebtedness contracted for the construction or reconstruction of sewage facilities. Shall the proposed amendment be approved?

#### **Official Summary**

The purpose of the proposed amendment is to continue the authority of counties, cities, towns, and villages to exclude from their constitutional debt limits indebtedness incurred for the construction or reconstruction of sewage facilities. The State Constitution currently provides that indebtedness contracted on or after January 1, 1962 and before January 1, 2004, for the construction or reconstruction of facilities for the conveyance, treatment, and disposal of sewage shall be excluded from the constitutional debt limits of counties, cities, towns and villages. The effect of the proposed amendment would be to extend for ten years, until January 1, 2014, the period during which sewer debt shall be excluded from the constitutional debt limits of counties, cities, towns and villages.

## **Question 2: Elimination of Small City School Districts from Constitutional Debt Limitations**

### **Official Text**

The proposed amendment to Article 8, section 4 of the Constitution would eliminate School districts that are coterminous with, or partly within, or wholly within a city having less than one hundred twenty-five thousand inhabitants, from the entities subject to a general constitutional debt limitation. Shall the proposed amendment be approved?

### **Official Summary**

The purpose of the proposed amendment is to eliminate school districts coterminous with, or partly within, or wholly within, a city having less than one hundred twenty-five thousand inhabitants, from general constitutional debt limitations.

The State Constitution currently provides that these small city school districts are not allowed to contract indebtedness for education purposes that would exceed an amount equal to five percent of the average full valuation of taxable real estate in the school district. This limitation may be exceeded in relation to specified projects with voter approval, and the consent of the Regents of the University of the State of New York and the State Comptroller. Similar constitutional debt limitations are currently provided for counties, cities, towns and villages, but no other school districts. School districts are currently subject to a statutory debt limitation of ten percent of full valuation of taxable real property in the school district. The proposed amendment would eliminate the constitutional debt limitation applicable to small city school districts.

# **New York City Ballot Proposals**

# NYC Ballot Proposals

## City Ballot Proposals

### Introduction

In this election, in addition to the two State ballot questions, there are three important City ballot proposals for voters to decide. These proposals have been put forward by the Charter Revision Commission, a governmental body appointed by the Mayor earlier this year to consider changes to the City Charter. The Commission held public meetings and hearings, and has published reports on its work. Transcripts of the meetings and hearings, and copies of the reports, are available from the Commission at (212) 676-2060 and on their Web site, [www.nyc.gov/html/charter/home.html](http://www.nyc.gov/html/charter/home.html).

Each of the three proposals covers a different subject: City elections (pages 37–55), City purchasing (pages 56–58), and government reorganization (pages 58–61). For each proposal, the following information is provided in this section of the Guide:

1. The official text and summary (prepared by the Charter Revision Commission);
2. Highlights of major pro and con arguments (prepared by the Campaign Finance Board); and
3. Pro and con statements submitted by the public (which were edited for space by the CFB). The statements from the Charter Revision Commission members (both pro and con) are presented first, followed by statements from organizations and individuals in alphabetical order.

The highlights of the major pro and con arguments are based on statements made by different groups and individuals at public hearings, in the press, and in submissions to the Campaign Finance Board. **These highlights and the pro and con statements submitted by the public and reprinted in this Guide do not in any way represent the views of the Campaign Finance Board, which takes no position for or against these ballot proposals.**

The arguments presented in this section may not represent all possible arguments for or against each proposal. The CFB urges you to follow the public debate on each proposal, and not to rely only on the information presented in this Guide, so that you can make informed decisions on election day.

The full text of all statements submitted by the public is available on the CFB's Web site, [www.nycfb.info](http://www.nycfb.info).

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### Question 3: City Elections

#### Official Text

This proposal would amend the City Charter to establish a new system of city elections for the offices of Mayor, Public Advocate, Comptroller, Borough President, and Council member. The September primary election would be open to all voters and all candidates, regardless of party membership or independent status. The top two vote getters would compete in the November general election. In both elections, candidates could indicate their party membership or independent status on the ballot. Candidates participating in the voluntary campaign finance program, which provides public campaign funding, could not accept contributions from political parties or party committees. The new system would replace the current system of political party nominations through primary elections in which only party members may vote. The changes would take effect after the 2005 Citywide election. Shall this proposal be adopted?

#### Official Summary *(prepared by the Charter Revision Commission)*

This proposal would make changes to the way the City conducts its elections for the offices of Mayor, Public Advocate, Comptroller, Borough President, and City Council Member. The proposal would provide for a single September primary election open to all eligible voters and candidates, and the top two vote getters in that election would compete in the November general election. The changes would take effect after the 2005 citywide election and apply to all elections, including special elections to fill vacancies in office.

**How it Works** — Currently, candidates who are running for elected office compete against each other in party primary elections (followed in certain instances by runoff primaries). In these elections, which are held in September, each party's members cast ballots to decide the general election nominee of that party. Candidates may also be nominated for the general election through an independent nominating petition process. Under the proposed system, all candidates for an office would run against each other in the September primary election. Voters would be eligible to vote for any candidate, including a candidate who belongs to a different political party or is registered as an independent. Only the top two finishers in the primary election, regardless of their party or independent registration status, would compete in the November general election.

**Who is Eligible to Vote** — Currently, only registered voters who are enrolled in political parties may vote in primary elections. Voters registered as independents cannot participate until the general election. Under the proposed system, all voters, including independent voters not enrolled in any party, would be eligible to participate in the primary election.

**Ballot Access** — Currently, registered voters who carry or sign a petition to place a candidate on the ballot generally must be enrolled in the same party as the candidate petitioning to get



on the ballot. Under the proposed system, all eligible registered voters, regardless of their party enrollment or independent status, would be permitted to carry and sign a petition to place a candidate on the ballot. In addition, the maximum number of petition signatures required would generally be the same maximum number that is currently provided for candidates to be placed on the primary election ballot. The new signature requirements would also apply to candidates in special elections to fill vacancies.

**The Ballot** — Currently, the ballot lists a candidate’s party affiliation. Under the proposed system, candidates would be permitted, but not required, to list their party registration or independent status on the ballot.

**Political Party Campaign Contributions** — Currently, all candidates, including those who participate in the City’s voluntary campaign finance program, which provides money from the City treasury to help fund candidates’ campaigns, are permitted to accept campaign contributions from political parties, up to specified limits, but candidates may not accept contributions from corporations or unregistered political committees. Under the proposed system, candidates who participate in the campaign finance program would also be prohibited from accepting campaign contributions from political parties. In addition, the Campaign Finance Board would have the authority to address party expenditures in relation to candidates participating in the City’s campaign finance program in order to protect the contribution and spending limits of the program under the new system of elections.

**Voter Guide** — Currently, all candidates may place biographical summaries, campaign information, and a picture of themselves in the printed Voter Guide. This proposal would create a video Voter Guide that broadcasts candidates making brief statements on a municipal cable television channel.

**Vacancies in Nominations** — Currently, if a candidate dies or a nomination otherwise becomes vacant, the candidate’s committee to fill vacancies generally chooses a successor to run in his or her place, if time allows. Under the new system, the next eligible top vote getter in the primary election could fill the vacancy and advance to the general election accordingly. If the vacancy could not be filled in that manner, then a committee to fill vacancies would fill it.

### Pro and Con Arguments *(prepared by the Campaign Finance Board)*

**PRO:** The Charter Revision Commission conducted an open and thorough review. It held several public meetings in each borough, had among its members highly qualified civic leaders representing varied backgrounds, and operated in a fair and independent manner to come up with a proposal to increase voter and candidate participation in the electoral process, especially among racial and political groups whose participation has been limited.

**CON:** The Commission, as chosen by the Mayor, did not fairly or independently study the issues. The Chair of the Commission announced that certain changes to the City’s election process would be placed on the ballot before the

Commission members had a chance to study the issues. The Commission has failed to demonstrate that the current system is inadequate, and in fact, the proposal might decrease voter turnout, decrease opportunities for minorities and small party candidates, and increase the role of money and celebrity in elections.

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**PRO:** Most major U.S. cities, including Los Angeles, Boston, and Chicago, hold nonpartisan elections. New York City already provides for nonpartisan special elections to fill vacancies in the offices of Mayor, Public Advocate, Comptroller, Borough President, and City Council Member. Although the Commission’s proposal permits party labels for candidates on the ballot and is therefore not the same as a strictly “nonpartisan” election, it is similar in that it eliminates party primaries.

**CON:** Most major cities are not comparable to New York City and have different political cultures and political histories. Jacksonville, Minneapolis, and New Orleans are the only major U.S. cities that have election systems comparable to the Commission’s proposal. Even in cities that have experience with nonpartisan elections, evidence is inconclusive about achieving the stated goals of the Commission.

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**PRO:** The Democratic Party dominates New York City politics, so the Democratic Party primary often determines who wins the general election. Voters not enrolled in this party currently are disenfranchised because they cannot vote in the Democratic primary elections. The Commission’s proposal, by permitting all voters to vote in the primary elections, will enfranchise these voters and increase voter turnout.

**CON:** No New York City voter is “disenfranchised.” Any voter can choose to be enrolled in a party and exercise the right to participate in that party’s primary. There is no evidence that voter turnout will increase in New York City because of the proposed change.

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**PRO:** Partisan primaries need to be eliminated to open up the political system to candidates who are not enrolled in the dominant party, which will result in more competitive primary elections and a better crop of candidates.

**CON:** Party primaries are already competitive and yield good candidates, and are open to any candidate who wants to compete as long as the candidate is enrolled in the party. Moreover, third parties will have less impact on elections because third party candidates will not likely make it to the general election and will not be able to participate in “fusion” tickets.



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**PRO:** The system proposed will open up the process in ways that will involve more minority voters and candidates in local elections. Many minority voters are not enrolled in a party.

**CON:** Minorities are established forces within the parties, and benefit from the current system. Changing the role of parties will negatively affect the ability of minorities and the less affluent to have their voices heard.

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**PRO:** The Commission’s proposal will dilute the power of party bosses by putting the focus on the candidate, not the party. This will foster a diversity of viewpoints, giving voters more choices.

**CON:** The proposal will increase the power of party bosses by depriving party members of the ability to choose the party’s candidate. The proposal will also produce fewer well-defined candidates.

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**PRO:** The Commission’s proposal, by reducing the role of parties and forcing candidates to appeal to the broad spectrum of voters — as opposed to the party leadership — will moderate the political positions of candidates, reward coalition builders as opposed to party regulars, and make candidates more accountable to the voters.

**CON:** Parties are important. They put forward agendas; recruit, train, and support candidates; and mobilize voters. They also force candidates to take stands, serve as a moderating force against extremism, and build coalitions.

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**PRO:** The Commission’s proposal bans contributions from parties to candidates and would effectively control “soft” party spending by mandating that the Campaign Finance Board adopt new rules linking party spending to specific candidates. The Campaign Finance Program would be protected.

**CON:** The proposal could impair New York City’s successful campaign finance reform program by allowing parties to spend unlimited amounts of “soft” party money on preferred candidates. There is no Constitutional way to control “soft” money in the context of nonpartisan elections.

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**PRO:** Most municipal functions, such as garbage collection or mass transit, are not partisan issues, so the City’s elected officials who make these policies should not be elected in a partisan manner.

**CON:** All issues of municipal government can involve judgments that reflect policy considerations, including political issues that are addressed in different ways by the different parties.

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**PRO:** Because candidates will not necessarily indicate their party affiliation on the ballot, voters will be forced to pay more attention to candidates and issues, creating a more informed electorate.

**CON:** If candidates do not indicate their party on the ballot, some voters will be confused, and others may base their decisions on race, ethnicity, or name recognition alone. Increasing the importance of name recognition benefits incumbents and wealthy or celebrity candidates.

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**PRO:** More competitive elections will reduce cases of “voter roll-off.” Voters who cast votes for candidates for the offices at the top of the ballot (such as Governor or Mayor) would be more likely to vote for candidates for local offices (such as City Council).

**CON:** If candidates do not list party affiliation on the ballot, “voter roll-off” will increase because voters will have less information about the candidates and will only vote for candidates (such as Governor) who will continue to be listed by party.

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**PRO:** Nonpartisan elections, in general, have been the subject of public debate for many years, including reviews by the 1998, 1999, 2001, and 2002 Commissions. The Commission members had ample time and opportunity to study the issues, and crafted a unique new system of city elections, reflecting concerns about adopting a strictly “nonpartisan” system.

**CON:** The likely impact of the Commission’s proposal is uncertain, and may have significant negative consequences. The changes proposed by the Commission are significant and complex, and the Commission did not conduct sufficient research on them. The academic research on the effects of eliminating party primaries is inconclusive.

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**PRO:** The voters have had adequate opportunity to study the issues, and no additional research would offer new, relevant information.

**CON:** The process was rushed. The Commission did little research on the potential impact of its final proposal on changes to the City’s electoral system, which was adopted late in the process, giving inadequate time to witnesses to comment on them and to voters to study them.

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**Frank J. Macchiarola (Charter Revision Commission Chairman)**

New York City is notorious for its corrupt party bosses and the political machines they control. Boss Tweed may be long gone, but his spirit lives on in the City’s politics. In Tweed’s time, and still today, party bosses derive much of their power from their control over the ballot. How can we fight back?

If the Commission’s proposal passes, all voters, regardless of party, will have the opportunity to participate in the City’s primary election. Currently, the Democratic primary decides the election winner in about 95 percent of the City’s races — the mayoral race is the one big exception.

Most voters in New York City, including myself, are Democrats. But there are an awful lot of us who feel that all voters, and not just a small group of party members, should have the opportunity to cast meaningful votes.

To achieve this, the Commission on which I served has made a simple proposal: every registered voter, including independents, would be eligible to participate in the primary election.

Let’s bury Boss Tweed, for good.

**Patricia L. Gatling (Charter Revision Commission)**

Today in New York City there are over 1 million registered voters who are ineligible to cast a meaningful vote in the general election held in November. Nearly 15 percent of these voters are African-American or Latino.

They are ineligible to cast a meaningful vote because they are barred from voting in the primary election held in September. The reason that they are barred from voting in the primary is because they exercised their right to be unaffiliated with a political party.

As one of the two African-American members of the Charter Revision Commission, I was surprised to learn that so many members of my community are being left out of the electoral process.

When this subject was brought up, my only concern was whether this change would negatively impact the minority community. In fact, quite the contrary; I have learned that the current party system has a negative impact.

Opponents of non-partisan elections claim that it violates the Voting Rights Act of 1965 when, in fact, it is our current party primary system that may be violative of the Act, since it prevents a large number of African-Americans and Latinos from accessing the system.

Non-partisan elections would open primary voting to all registered voters.

**Mohammad S. Khalid (Charter Revision Commission)**

After hearing the testimonies of many New Yorkers, I voted for non-partisan elections to be considered by the voters in the November referendum of 2003 for the following reasons:

There is a lack of competition in city elections, because party bosses have more control than voters. In 2001, only 42 of the 51 council races could be considered competitive.

As a member of the minority community, I disagree with the critics who allege that non-partisan elections will disenfranchise the minority community any more than the current system already does. Non-partisan elections will allow more minority candidates and voters to participate in an open and fair system.

There is no doubt that the campaign finance board may have a little difficulty in adjusting their voluntary campaign finance program. The board is already providing the service under the current system. The program can be changed according to the proposed system. The board has authority to make changes as required by law, and laws can be changed. After all, the power lies in a majority of the voters and not in the hands of a few who do not want a change due to a personal agenda.

**Michael R. Bloomberg (Mayor)**

It is the duty of every government to promote opportunity and participation by tearing down obstacles that stand in its way, to provide services efficiently, and to operate according to the highest ethical standards. This year’s Charter Revision Commission has gone a long way toward promoting these ends.

The proposals to be placed before voters this November will change the way the City does business by reducing the burdensome regulations which frustrate and hamper companies’ efforts to work for the City, while at the same time increasing opportunities for small businesses, particularly those owned by women and minorities. They will bolster the City’s ethics laws by providing enhanced enforcement measures to punish those that violate them. And they will put elections back in the hands of the voters by opening the process to all.

**Margaret S. Chin (Deputy Executive Director, Asian Americans for Equality)**

As a former candidate for the City Council and a long time community organizer in the Chinese American community, I feel strongly that non-partisan elections will increase voter participation in the Chinese American community.

I have taken part in many voter registration drives in Chinatown. When filling out the voter registration form, when Chinese American voters are asked to “choose a party,” he or she will most likely check the last box “I do not want to enroll in a party.” Many new immigrants are hesitant to be affiliated with a political party because of prior negative experience with parties in their homelands.

In New York City where candidates winning the Democratic primary will most likely win the general election, they will not spend too much time reaching out to the Chinese American community. With non-partisan elections more Chinese American voters will be able to participate in the democratic process and hopefully will begin to gain more clout with their votes.

### **Harry Kresky (Counsel, New York State Independence Party)**

Five Charter Revision Commissions have studied this important reform. Thousands have testified at scores of hearings. Nonpartisan municipal elections are favored by those who do not benefit from the existing partisan political status quo — independents, insurgent Democrats, members of minor parties, and other people interested in public service who are not professional politicians. This is a reform whose time has come.

Most of those testifying against nonpartisan municipal elections are Democrats who hold office. They are the main beneficiaries of the current system, a Democratic Party monopoly in which the winner of the Democratic primary almost always wins in the general election — and few general elections are competitive. In the 2001 general election only 1 of 51 City Council races was classified as “highly competitive” where the margin of victory was less than 5%. The vast majority (82%) were won by landslides — their margins of victory averaged 64%.

Nonpartisan municipal elections would change that. The 1.5 million New Yorkers who cannot now vote in the critical first round, because they are not enrolled Democrats, will be able to fully participate in the entire process of choosing our public officials. The top two vote-getters in round one would compete in a runoff.

### **Randy Mastro**

I write in support of the Commission’s proposal to create non-partisan elections. As a former New York City Deputy Mayor and chair of two such commissions, I had the opportunity to study this very issue.

More than 80% of America’s 50 largest cities now have non-partisan elections for mayor. In Los Angeles, Chicago, Detroit and so many other major cities across this country, non-partisan elections are now the law.

Non-partisan elections are about good government. As one of our greatest mayors, Fiorello LaGuardia, once said, there is no Republican or Democrat way to pick up the garbage. Partisan primaries have disenfranchised hundreds of thousands of independent voters who cannot vote in party primaries, which are often the only truly competitive races in a city still dominated by one political party.

Non-partisan elections are a better way to conduct municipal elections than the partisan system we have now.

### **John Mooney (Vice Chairman, Station Agent Section, Transport Workers Union, Local 100)**

The best and most significant history of the union movement is when unions stand up for all workers and for the community.

In the case of this ballot Proposal, the union bureaucracy is lining up with the Democratic Party bosses to oppose this important change. That might be best for their own narrow interests but it does not serve rank and file members or the community.

The question for the rank and file is — what side are we on? Are we on the side of the ordinary working people of the city or on the side of the union bosses? The working people of New York have diverse political affiliations and many of us are independents who are locked out of meaningful participation in our city elections.

As a union leader I believe we must do what is right and most noble. We must stand for the rights of all working people and all the communities of New York. That’s why I’m supporting the Proposal to change City Elections.

### **National Latino Officers Association (Anthony Miranda, Executive Chairman)**

As someone who has run for public office and experienced firsthand the unfair and wasteful aspects of our current partisan election system, I strongly support a “yes”.

Nonpartisan elections can eliminate the most important “entry barriers” that candidates face when they try to run for office without the help of (or in active opposition to) the party machine.

In partisan elections, access to the ballot is tightly controlled by this machine, which uses New York’s outdated ballot access laws to knock competition off the ballot. The proposal makes getting on the ballot simpler and more democratic.

The Proposal on City Elections also allows all registered voters, in every party and those unaffiliated with a party, to participate in the September and November elections. This means more voters have a say in who is elected, and also means candidates will have to reach out to all constituents, not just “primary” voters. A nonpartisan system makes elections more competitive, and thus encourages more voter participation.

### **New Era Democrats (John R. Orlando, Vice-President)**

As most New Yorkers have seen with the scandalous process of electing county judges, the system gives too much power to parties and not enough to the people. Citywide, there are over 830,000 voters not registered in the two major parties. Voting “YES” on nonpartisan elections would permit all voters to select candidates in primaries as well as the general election. The new election process would force candidates to contact new constituencies and meet with a diverse voter.

The opponents argue a nonpartisan system reduces voter turnout, splinters minority voting power and eliminates parties. Studies of cities with an elected mayor, using nonpartisan elections, prove these accusations wrong. In fact, cities with a nonpartisan system have increased voter turnout and elected minorities in greater percentages. Nonpartisan elections would not eliminate parties, since candidates can opt to place party affiliation on the ballot.

Nonpartisan elections are not a cure for our political woes, but it is one step closer to establishing a more effective election process. Franklin Roosevelt said “the country demands bold, persistent experimentation. It is common sense to take a method and try it. If it fails, admit it frankly and try another. But above all, try something.”

### **100 Blacks in Law Enforcement Who Care (Eric Adams, Co-Founder)**

New York City is embarking upon an opportunity for voters to decide on how elections are held. The current system of choosing candidates is not open to all New Yorkers. A nonpartisan election is not an attempt to disenfranchise minorities or any particular party. It is an opportunity to open up the electoral process. Our system of elections cannot continue to lock out people who do not want to be affiliated with any party.

The men and women in this group are registered as having no party affiliation and therefore are not allowed to carry petitions, vote in primaries, or have a decision in shaping who will be on the ballot during the general election. In some elections they vote for a Democratic candidate and other times they vote for one of the various other party lines based on their individual preference for another candidate’s position.

The Commission’s model addresses these concerns and allows New York to join those other progressive cities that realize that the best election system is that which includes all registrants’ participation in the governmental decision making process.

### **People’s Coalition for Nonpartisan Municipal Elections**

(Lenora B. Fulani, Chair)

I’ve been traveling across the city debating Black and Latino elected officials on this proposition, a reform which opens up elections to more voters and more candidates. The debate always boils down to this: Are the interests of the communities of color equivalent to the interests of the Democratic Party? The Democratic machine and the party bosses say, “Yes.” My answer is “No”!

Black, Latino and Asian people are seeking more diverse political options than ever before. 44% of Black young adults consider themselves independents, not Democrats, but they are shut out under the current system. Growing numbers of Latinos and Asians are becoming independents, too. We must include all independent New Yorkers — there are nearly a million of us — if our political system is to develop along with

the actual changes taking place in our communities. This is not a time to lock people out!

Nonpartisan elections open the door to greater minority empowerment. 41% of the 50 largest U.S. cities with nonpartisan elections have elected Black or Latino mayors. All New Yorkers can take advantage of this new system in creative and empowering ways!

### **Christopher B. Spuches**

Last year I ran for State Assembly. I’d been a member of the Democratic Party since I registered to vote. When I attempted to challenge an incumbent in the Democratic Party primary, however, I faced the wrath of the party machine.

The Democratic Party summoned me to a loyalty hearing and I was found not to be “in sympathy with the principles of the Party” — even though I supported the Party’s platform on key issues. The courts, upon the Democratic Party’s recommendation, formally expelled me from the Party.

I became the first person to be expelled from a party in New York County. Consequently, I was barred from running or even voting in the Democratic Party primary. I’m not alone; each year, both parties bounce challengers off primary ballots to protect their preferred candidate. This chilling effect stifles new ideas and leads to stagnant thinking and an inefficient government.

With non-partisan municipal elections, this will no longer happen. The power to nominate candidates will be returned to the people, and away from the backroom politics of political parties. That’s a big win for all New Yorkers.

### **Staten Island Independence Party (Steven K. Isler)**

Is it an election when everyone knows in advance who’s going to win every seat on the City Council, before even one vote is cast?

Oh sure, you can vote for a Council candidate if you want, but it won’t make any difference. Politicians call that democracy. Do you? Or would you prefer a system where every candidate has an exactly equal chance to get on the ballot and your vote might actually make a difference.

Independent candidates need 2,700 signatures to get on the ballot (Democrats need 900), and then they are relegated to the sixth column of the voting machine. Is that fair? And is it any wonder that most sensible people don’t even bother trying? The problem is not that the best candidate doesn’t win; it’s that the best candidates don’t even get on the playing field.

We must restore the power of democracy to the people of New York, as most other cities have done. It’s a matter of fairness, of equal access to the ballot for every citizen, not just the politicians’ favorites.

Your vote for City Council is a wasted vote. But your vote for open elections will count for years to come.

**Robert A. Straniere** (New York State Assembly)

Fourteen years ago, I first urged the New York City Charter Revision Commission to consider non-partisan city elections.

As with school board elections, candidates for all city offices should be allowed to run on their own qualifications, not some arbitrary political party label. Running city government depends more on one's ability to effectively manage the delivery of municipal services than on one's political ideology.

Non-partisan elections will increase the pool of qualified candidates. It will also save the city from the high cost of expensive, publicly financed primary elections.

I believe that the switch to this method will stimulate the electoral process in a positive way, as more diverse ideas and points of view will be allowed to surface for public debate. Such action can only benefit the public policy-making process.

**J. Phillip Thompson** (Associate Professor, Massachusetts Institute of Technology)

Electoral reform is needed to increase citizen participation in elections. Arguments that electoral reform will weaken the power of historically disadvantaged communities of color are not supported by evidence from other cities using non-partisan voting systems.

Advances in minority representation in New York in recent decades has consistently followed on the heels of electoral reform. This was true of lawsuits brought against legislative redistricting plans that helped elect minority representatives in Brooklyn; of the lawsuit eliminating the Board of Estimate that led to the election of David Dinkins, the City's only minority mayor; of a reform expanding the size of the City Council in 1991 that resulted in more minority representation; and it was true of term limits that resulted in a more diverse City Council. In each case, electoral reform was vigorously opposed by political incumbents. It is no different today.

Supporting the Commission's proposal does not preclude the pursuit of other important reform proposals — such as same day voter registration and voting rights for non-citizen taxpayers. The proposed reform is a helpful step in addressing a growing disjunction between the rapidly changing city population and electoral bodies that resist change.

*Additional "pro" statements were submitted by Bob Armstrong (Manhattan Libertarian, Drug Affairs Director); Susan Cleary (Republican District Leader); Pedro Espada, Jr. (City Council); Fiorello La Guardia Good Government Committee (Nicholas Chahales, President); Martin J. Golden (NY State Senator); Richard E. Green (President, New York City Community Youth Worker); Lawrence D. Littlefield; Olga Mendez (NY State Senator); Gary Papkin; Pat Russo (City Council Candidate); and George Spitz. The full text of all submitted statements can be viewed at [www.nycfcb.info](http://www.nycfcb.info).*

**Bill Lynch** (Charter Revision Commission)

As a member of the Charter Revision Commission, I voted against the proposal on changing City Elections. This proposal would eliminate party primaries, a right that voters have had since 1911. The proposed system is a hybrid, free-for-all where multiple candidates from each party run together and optionally list their party affiliations even if they have not earned their party's nomination. This system is only used in Jacksonville, Minneapolis, and Louisiana. It was not proven to increase voter participation. It tends to qualify extremist candidates for runoffs, ends fusion politics, and undermines the Campaign Finance Law.

This is a solution in search of a problem. I believe in party voters being able to nominate the candidates who reflect their views. We have an able and diverse City Council as a result of that process. If it ain't broke, don't fix it.

To increase voter participation, we should implement Election Day voter registration, extend voting days, and let permanent resident non-federal citizens participate in our municipal elections. These proposals did not make the ballot.

For more information, see my Minority Report to the Charter Revision Commission at [www.nyc.gov/charter](http://www.nyc.gov/charter)

**Joseph A. O'Hare, S.J.** (Charter Revision Commission)

I decided to vote against putting on the ballot the recommendations for changes in city elections.

After considering the testimony from many citizens and groups over the past several months, I remain concerned about the possible unintended negative consequences of such a fundamental change. In particular, I am concerned about the possible damage done to third parties and fusion tickets; about the great irony that the elimination of party primaries could actually increase the power of party bosses by stripping away the right of party rank and file to vote in party primaries; and, most of all, about the dangers this fundamental change poses for New York City's Campaign Finance Program, dangers which the staff of the Commission may not understand and certainly do not appreciate.

While it is true that elected public officials and Democratic Party leaders were vehement in their opposition to this proposal, and it could be argued that they have a vested interest in the current system, it is also true that every good government group argued against this proposal.

**The Association of the Bar of the City of New York**

The Association of the Bar of the City of New York opposes the proposal to establish "nonpartisan" elections for City offices. There has been no showing that such a dramatic change will produce the benefits its proponents claim. While



the proponents' main argument is that independent voters do not participate in party primaries, there is no evidence that independent voters' interests are being ignored (and they can register in a party if they choose), nor that nonpartisan elections would increase voter participation. City elections have been highly competitive; three of the last six mayors have been Republicans. Also, our political system, while not without fault, has shown a capacity for electoral reforms — such as public campaign financing and term limits — which have expanded electoral choice.

We are concerned about the impact of nonpartisan elections on the City's excellent campaign financing system. A shift to nonpartisan elections may have the unfortunate, anomalous result of allowing parties to spend far more on candidates than they can presently. Furthermore, nonpartisan elections would weaken political parties, affecting their important role in balancing various interests, vetting government decisions and forging the compromises which are important to City governance.

### **Brennan Center for Justice at NYU School of Law (Deborah Goldberg)**

Every good government group that testified before the Charter Revision Commission opposed placing electoral change on the ballot. Our top reasons to vote “NO” on the ballot proposal on City elections are: (1) The Commission refused to do the careful study and analysis that should precede such a major change to the City's election system. The public now cannot assess the impact of the system on communities protected under the Voting Rights Act. (2) The proposed system is used in only two cities (Jacksonville, FL, and Minneapolis, MN) and Louisiana. In Louisiana, it allowed former KKK leader David Duke to become the Republican candidate for governor. Here, too, the proposed system may help extremist candidates. (3) The proposed system denies political parties the right to place endorsements on the ballot, while allowing candidates to list only their party membership. The change would hurt minor parties (such as the Conservative Party and Working Families Party), which are a vibrant part of New York's political system and provide useful information to voters. (4) The proposed system seriously threatens the City's successful and well-regarded campaign finance program, by separating candidates from their parties and opening a loophole for huge party expenditures.

### **Common Cause/NY (Rachel Leon, Executive Director)**

Common Cause/NY joins the chorus of civic organizations in New York City urging a no vote on the proposal to prohibit New Yorkers from voting in political party primaries. This change, which would be a dramatic shift for city voters, has been rushed to the polls by an undemocratic charter revision commission whose Chair stated his intention to put this question on the ballot before holding a single meeting.

There has not been enough vigorous public debate on the impact of such a fundamental change or of the serious unintended consequences that may result.

First, there is a fear that non-partisan elections could open the door to unregulated soft money spending by political parties that would no longer be constrained by the provisions of state law or city rules. As an organization that has fought the abuses of soft money spending, we share a deep concern that this proposal could exacerbate this problem.

Second, voting rights groups have raised questions that ending party primaries could lower voter turnout, decrease information to voters, and advantage wealthy candidates, making elections more about name recognition than issues. For more information on the proposal, please visit [www.commoncause.org](http://www.commoncause.org)

### **Bill de Blasio (City Council Member)**

This proposal calls for the elimination of party primaries. Eliminating party primaries from city elections would be a step in the wrong direction.

New York City has already made historic changes to its election system with the adoption of term limits and the best municipal campaign finance program in the country. These reforms have opened up our election system and made it possible for hundreds of candidates to run for public office. In 2001, there were approximately 250 candidates who ran for office. In my primary race alone I faced five other challengers. Throughout the city we saw dynamic and competitive campaigns that energized voters and brought more New Yorkers into the political process.

Whatever is wrong with our politics will not be fixed by eliminating party primaries.

This is especially true given that the elimination of party primaries could undermine everything we've achieved up to now as a result of the city's landmark campaign finance program. The elimination of party primaries would favor millionaires and billionaires who run for office by enhancing the role money and special interests play in elections. Why change the system to favor the wealthy?

### **David Dinkins (Former Mayor)**

Party primaries and strong campaign finance guidelines have helped to produce a representative government, one that includes the City's first African American Comptroller, a Latino President of the Borough of The Bronx, two African American women as Presidents of the Boroughs of Manhattan and Queens, and a City Council that seats 25 people of color among its 51 members — including the first Asian American elected City official.

We can, and we will, achieve even greater diversity in the years to come, but eliminating party primaries is not a step in that direction. It would, instead, be a step backward.



**Eric Gioia (City Council Member)**

This referendum will actually magnify the effect of big money in elections, turn voters away from the issues and towards candidates' ethnicities, and even increase the power of political parties.

Today, ballots list candidates' party affiliation. By eliminating primaries, there could be a long list of candidates to choose from, like the California fiasco, and with no requirement to list party affiliation, voters may rely more on the kind of last name candidates have rather than the issues they stand for.

In addition, parties can't spend money in primaries, but under the proposed system, nothing would prevent a party from spending on one candidate, giving him or her a huge advantage — and giving voters even less choice in choosing what candidates they want on the ballot.

Lastly, right now, you can't spend your way onto the ballot — you have to be affiliated with a party. But with "non-partisan" elections, if you spend enough, you're virtually assured a place on the ballot.

Non-partisan elections are a step backwards for New York City.

**Betsy Gotbaum (Public Advocate)**

Party primaries play a vital role in our electoral system. Primaries allow for citizens to engage with important civic issues early in the political process, and ensure that candidates develop policy platforms that matter to voters.

Doing away with party primaries would diminish the role of ideas, ideals, and ideology in campaigning. Instead, campaigns would focus on promotional advertisements that lack substance. This would give an unfair advantage to wealthy candidates, who would be able to outspend their competitors and raise their visibility among voters, regardless of their past experience and work in serving the public or the public good.

I know how difficult it is for a woman to get elected to city-wide office. The elimination of primaries would jeopardize the very diversity that we have achieved, making it more difficult for women and people of color to get elected.

Without the political engagement and selection process afforded by primaries, voters would be more confused when faced with potentially dozens of candidates (as now in California). This could have a devastating effect on voter turnout.

**A. Gifford Miller (Speaker, City Council)**

The proposal to eliminate party primaries alters dramatically the manner in which you elect representatives. Political parties, be they Democrat, Republican, Working Families, Independent, or other, serve a vital function. Without party labels, you will not be able to identify a candidate's beliefs, which is extremely dangerous. There will be confusion,

manipulation and undue influence by wealthy candidates and candidates with hidden and extremist views.

The elimination of primaries may also violate the federal voting rights act. Party primary elections are one place that minority combined votes can have an impact, and help overcome electoral obstacles. Thus, the proposal may dilute the voting strengths of people of color.

With regard to so-called procurement reforms and agency reorganization, a few may be arguably of merit, but others are confused, ill thought and ill prepared. Eliminating the Preliminary Management Report would remove an important tool for monitoring agency spending. The Commission was the wrong place for these recommendations since the proposed changes could be accomplished by local law after public hearings and testimony. This is how laws are passed and enacted — thoughtfully and with due deliberation.

**Douglas Muzzio (Professor, Baruch College, CUNY)**

The proposed election system is a rarely used and never studied hybrid: a two stage election with the first round open to all candidates irrespective of party affiliation and a general election with the top two vote getters. The commission studied none of the 10 cities with such runoffs and only one of the three cities (and Louisiana) which allow party affiliation on both ballots. Worse, the commission did not examine this system as it might interact with New York's unique demography, geography, and politics, particularly the synergistic effects with term limits and campaign finance.

Among the questions unaddressed, let alone unanswered are: What's the politics and governance that result from such a system? What replaces parties? How will government improve? Will services get better?

Commissioners O'Hare and Lynch, in their dissents, pointed to unintended negative consequences, noting the dangers posed to the campaign finance law, the possible perverse strengthening of party leaders, and the fostering of extremist candidacies.

These consequences will result from the failure of the commission to produce objective, rigorous, methodologically sound analyses. The commission's reports are replete with omissions, errors in logic and fact, questionable assumptions, and unsupported projections.

**New York Public Interest Research Group (Gene Russianoff)**

**This proposal would be a dangerous risk for the city, greatly changing our voting rights in ways no one can now fairly predict.** That's because the Commission didn't do its homework. Opponents raised serious questions, including whether killing party primaries would lower voter turnout, advantage wealthy candidates, and make elections less about issues and more about celebrity. But the Commission didn't fully address these issues, instead racing to get on the ballot.

**It would undermine the city’s campaign finance law**, which is designed to reduce the influence of special interests. That’s because party spending in a party primary is now constrained by state law and city rules, but would not under the proposal.

**It is the product of a bad process.** The commission had a closed mind. Its chairman announced the outcome in advance and top staff served simultaneously in jobs on the payroll of Mayor Bloomberg, the proposal’s chief proponent.

**It is opposed by the city’s leading non-partisan civic groups.** For more information on the proposal, go to [www.nypirg.org](http://www.nypirg.org).

### New York State Democratic Committee

**Party Primaries Empower Voters** — This proposal would eliminate Democratic primary elections entirely and would deny 2.7 million Democrats a collective voice in city elections. Party primaries have long been our way of ensuring voters get to choose their own party’s candidates. The elimination of party primaries would take power away from voters and return it to “party bosses.”

**Negative Consequences of New System** — The elimination of party primaries would likely: favor millionaires and billionaires running for office; undermine the city’s landmark campaign finance program, which has helped hundreds of candidates, including minorities, women and immigrants, run for office; create confusion; undermine the political impact of minorities; benefit extremist candidates; deprive voters of information gained from cross-endorsements; and limit voters’ choices in November to two candidates *who may be from the same party*.

**Tainted Process, Tainted Outcome** — Mayor Bloomberg handpicked the Commission to put this proposal on the ballot. Before the full Commission was appointed or the public heard from, the Commission’s Chair said a proposal to eliminate party primaries would be put on the ballot. Despite inconclusive evidence on the impacts of eliminating party primaries, the Commission rubber stamped the Mayor’s proposal.

### Charles B. Rangel (Congressman)

Political parties were developed based on core philosophical beliefs and principles. There are many political parties and persons eligible to vote may enroll in any of them or be unaffiliated. In a democracy, majority rules and 2.7 million Democrats should not be denied the opportunity to come together in a primary to choose their party’s nominee to run in the General Election. While there are changes that could improve our electoral process, this proposal is not one of them. Given the importance of money in seeking high public office, adopting this proposal will place the working class and people of color at a disadvantage while creating advantages and opportunities for those of great personal wealth. If adopted,

this proposal will create confusion and provide elections similar to the “circus like” California recall election now taking place.

### Stonewall Democratic Club NYC (Tom Smith, President)

Party primaries give the party members the say in who the nominee of their party is. The proposal will remove the very heart of the system that created reforms in this city for the poor, people of color and for the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender communities. Under the proposed system, a smaller group of people, perhaps only party leaders, will designate their endorsements, increasing the influence of big money on an already burdened system, and destroying a well balanced public campaign finance system

The new proposal would dilute the voting strength of people of color and we believe is a clear violation of the Federal Voting Rights Act. If this passes we can look forward to the years of court battles it will take to reverse this ill thought plan.

Almost every good government group in New York is opposed to this proposal. Leaders of most of the major parties are against it. It is a rare moment in the history of this city that so many groups that never liked each other are speaking out against one bad piece of public policy.

### Working Families Party (Dan Cantor, Chair)

The Mayor’s proposal is good for wealthy candidates who can buy their way into public life. It’s good for candidates who want to disguise what they stand for. But that doesn’t mean it’s good for the rest of us.

A “non-partisan” system is like TEAMS WITHOUT UNIFORMS. Imagine a football game with all players wearing identical jerseys. No team name, no number, no logo, just the player’s name. It would be hard to know who to root for.

Same goes for voting. When a party says “So-and-So is our candidate,” voters get a sense of what that candidate stands for. Few people have the time to research every candidate’s positions and qualifications. You need a signal. That’s what a party label and party primary are about.

When a candidate runs Republican-Conservative, that means one thing. When they run Democrat-Working Families, that means another. Voters can make up their own minds if they have good information, and this proposal — by wiping out this kind of major party/minor party “fusion” ticket — will make good information harder to come by.

We have both Giants and Jets fans in the WFP. And we like the fact that they wear different uniforms.

Additional “con” statements were submitted by Citizen Action of New York City (Michele J. Maglione, Director); Citizens Union; Leroy Comrie (City Council); Herman “Denny” Farrell, Jr. (NY State Democratic Committee Chair); Helen Sears (City Council); and the Women’s City Club of New York. The full text of all submitted statements can be viewed at [www.nycclb.info](http://www.nycclb.info).

## Question 4: City Purchasing

### Official Text

This proposal would amend the City Charter to:

- remove from the Charter detailed requirements for specific purchasing methods;
- increase qualifications for City purchasing officials;
- provide for citywide coordination to enhance opportunities for small businesses and minority and women-owned businesses;
- reduce required procedures for security-related contracts;
- reduce impact on City contractors, including not-for-profit organizations, of delays in contracting and payment; and
- consolidate financial audit requirements for City contractors.

Shall this proposal be adopted?

### Official Summary *(prepared by the Charter Revision Commission)*

Chapter 13 of the Charter establishes many of the rules by which the City may purchase (or procure) goods and services. The proposal would make changes to Chapter 13 and to several related sections.

**Administrative flexibility** — Currently, the Charter contains provisions governing a variety of purchasing methods. The proposal would delete a number of these provisions and would require the Procurement Policy Board (“PPB”) to issue rules on most of the deleted topics. In addition, the proposal would authorize the PPB to issue rules for all alternative purchasing methods.

Currently, the Charter generally requires that purchases of goods be made by the Department of Citywide Administrative Services (“DCAS”). This proposal would allow the commissioner of DCAS to delegate a specific purchase of a specific good to another agency, for direct purchase by that agency, provided that the DCAS commissioner could not make this delegation for goods to be generally used by City agencies.

Currently, the Charter authorizes the Mayor to designate DCAS to perform specified administrative functions for certain specified City agencies. This proposal would permit the Mayor to designate additional agencies for which DCAS could perform procurement services.

Currently, the Charter requires proposed contractors and subcontractors for contracts above a certain monetary value to submit reports on workplace employment issues. This proposal would eliminate Charter provisions governing the content and review of these employment reports, and would require the commissioner of the Department of Small Business Services (“DSBS”) to issue rules on these topics.

**Qualifications for City purchasing officials** — Currently, the Charter contains no provisions governing the training or qualifications of City purchasing officials. This proposal would require the PPB to issue rules setting forth training and professional standards for these purchasing officers, taking into account the volume and complexity of agency contracting activities.

**Small businesses and minority and women-owned businesses** — Currently, the Charter requires the Department of Small Business Services (“DSBS”) to take steps relating to the promotion of equal opportunities for minority and women-owned businesses. This proposal would require citywide agency coordination by the Mayor to enhance opportunities for vendors.

**Security-related contracts** — Currently, the Charter generally requires public notice and hearing of contracts for the purchase of goods and services. This proposal would provide an exception to this requirement where the Mayor determines that the notice or hearing would disclose sensitive information that, if made public, could be detrimental to the security of the City or its citizens.

**Timeliness of contracting and payment** — Currently, the Charter requires that the PPB issue rules for the prompt payment of vouchers, including rules for the payment of interest to vendors whose vouchers are not paid on time. This requirement would be modified to require uniform interest for all vendors. In addition, this proposal would require the PPB to issue rules: mandating timetables for the completion of purchasing steps and remedies for failure to meet such timetables; providing for expedited renewal or extension of existing human services contracts in certain circumstances; and requiring the development of annual contract plans by the City’s human services agencies. This proposal would also establish an annual mayoral procurement report, which would include not only procurement activity indicators (as currently required to be included in the Mayor’s management report) but also indicators on agency performance relative to the timeliness of agencies’ procurement actions.

**Financial audits** — Currently, the Charter does not provide for financial audits of vendors by agencies. This proposal would require the PPB to issue rules governing City agency requirements for annual financial audits of vendors, including rules providing for consolidated audits across multiple contracts held by vendors with one or multiple agencies.

**VENDEX** — Currently, the Charter does not contain any provisions regarding VENDEX, the City’s computerized vendor integrity data system, which was created pursuant to the City’s Administrative Code. This proposal would require the Mayor and Comptroller to jointly issue rules necessary to maintain the VENDEX system. The proposal would not limit the power of the Council to legislate with respect to the VENDEX system.

**Effective Date** — The proposal would generally take effect immediately after approval by the voters. However, the employment report and VENDEX provisions would take effect nine months after such approval.

## Pro and Con Arguments *(prepared by the Campaign Finance Board)*

**PRO:** The proposed changes will streamline and simplify the City procurement process to improve the efficiency and efficacy of the City's contracting. The current procurement system is too inflexible. The Commission's proposals will offer an appropriate level of flexibility to the City in contracting for goods and services, while retaining the necessary integrity and accountability of the process.

**CON:** Many of the proposed changes are not the proper subject of a ballot proposal. Procurement matters are complicated and arcane. They should be considered by the experts, not the general public. It should be left to the City Council and the Mayor who have the power to effect these changes through legislation or administrative procedures, to do so. The proposed changes that by law must be presented to the voters shift too much power to the Mayor, and upset a careful system of checks and balances.

### STATEMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC CITY PURCHASING — PRO

#### Helen Sears (City Council Member)

This seems like a logical proposal that will alleviate some of administrative strains of requirements for specific purchasing methods.

*See also Michael R. Bloomberg (Mayor) on page 43. Additional pro statement submitted by George N. Spitz; available at [www.nycffb.info](http://www.nycffb.info).*

### CITY PURCHASING — CON

#### Leroy Comrie (City Council Member)

I have long been a supporter of changes in city purchasing to enhance opportunities for minority and women owned businesses and to stop delays in contracting and payments. In fact, I have a bill that would compensate small vendors for delays in payments. But this is the issue — these very important changes belong before the City's legislature — the City Council — not as a single question on a ballot. In my opinion, the June 26th Staff Report of the Commission did not discuss these changes in detail.

*See also A. Gifford Miller (Speaker, City Council) on page 52.*

## Question 5: Government Administration

### Official Text

This proposal would amend the City Charter to:

- authorize the Mayor to issue rules governing the professional conduct of administrative law judges and hearing officers in the City's administrative tribunals,

require the coordination of such tribunals, and expand the authority of the administrative tribunal of the Department of Consumer Affairs to hear all matters within the agency's jurisdiction;

- enhance the enforcement authority of the Conflicts of Interest Board by allowing increased penalties for violations of the City's ethics laws;
- replace the current sixteen member Voter Assistance Commission with a seven member panel, which would include the Public Advocate; an appointee of the Council Speaker; and five appointees (one from each borough) of the Mayor, with Council advice and consent. The coordinator of voter assistance would be appointed by the Mayor, with Council advice and Consent, instead of by the Commission; and
- require annual publication only of the Mayor's Management Report. The Preliminary Mayor's Management Report would no longer be required.

Shall this proposal be adopted?

### Official Summary *(prepared by the Charter Revision Commission)*

The proposal would make the following changes to the Charter in areas related to government administration and accountability.

**The City's Administrative Justice System** — Currently, Administrative Law Judges and Hearings Officers who preside over cases in the City's administrative tribunals are generally not subject to a uniform code of professional conduct. This proposal authorizes the Mayor to issue rules governing the professional conduct and training and development of the City's Administrative Law Judges and Hearing Officers.

In addition, these Administrative Law Judges and Hearing Officers currently conduct thousands of administrative hearings annually in a variety of specialized tribunals, many of which are housed at specific agencies. There is no centralized mechanism to coordinate the operational policies and management practices of these tribunals. The proposal would create the new position of Coordinator of Administrative Justice, in the Office of the Mayor, to coordinate such policies and practices.

Finally, the proposal would expand the authority of the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) to hear more cases in its own tribunal. Currently, DCA cannot adjudicate many of the violations it issues in that tribunal. Instead, DCA has to take legal action in the State Courts. The proposal would authorize the Department to: (1) conduct administrative hearings to adjudicate violations of any law within the Department's jurisdiction; and (2) impose civil penalties of up to \$500 per violation (except to the extent that penalties are otherwise provided).

**Penalties for Violations of the City's Ethics Laws** — The City's ethics law, known as the Conflicts of Interest Law, is enforced by the Conflicts of Interest Board (COIB). The proposal raises the maximum penalty allowed from \$10,000 to



\$25,000. COIB would continue to have discretion in determining the appropriate penalty. In addition, the proposal authorizes COIB to commence a civil forfeiture action to recover moneys from those who have profited from a violation of the law.

**Voter Assistance Commission** — The Voter Assistance Commission (VAC) facilitates voter registration. Currently, VAC is comprised of sixteen members: the Public Advocate, the Budget Director, the Corporation Counsel, the President of the Board of Education, the Chair of the Campaign Finance Board, the First Deputy or another Deputy Mayor; the Executive Director of the Board of Elections; six members of the public appointed by the Council and three appointed by the Mayor. The chair is elected by the members from the membership. Appointed members serve for a term of three years. On recommendation of the Mayor, VAC appoints the Coordinator of Voter Assistance.

The proposal reduces VAC from sixteen to seven members. Of the seven members, five (one from each borough) would be appointed by the Mayor with the advice and consent of the Council, one would be appointed by the Council Speaker in consultation with the Mayor, and the Public Advocate would also serve. One of the appointed members would be designated to serve as chair by the Mayor, in consultation with the Speaker of the Council. Appointed members would serve for four-year terms. The Coordinator of Voter Assistance would be appointed by the Mayor with the advice and consent of the Council.

**The Preliminary Mayor's Management Report** — The Preliminary Mayor's Management Report (PMMR) reports on the performance of City government in the first four months of each fiscal year. It is followed by a final Mayor's Management Report (MMR) that evaluates the full fiscal year. The proposal eliminates the requirement that the City produce a PMMR.

**Effective Date** — The proposal would generally take effect immediately after approval by the voters. However, the provisions concerning VAC would take effect on April 1, 2004, after such approval.

#### Pro and Con Arguments *(prepared by the Campaign Finance Board)*

**PRO:** The Commission's proposal to establish a coordinator for administrative hearings and a code of professional conduct for the City's administrative law judges and hearing officers will offer needed centralized coordination of the City's various tribunals and increase the professionalism of administrative hearings. This will result in better information sharing and budgeting, accountability, and management, as well as improving the hearings themselves.

**PRO:** The Commission's proposal on the Department of Consumer Affairs will afford businesses more rights and protections, and also enable the Department to enforce its laws more effectively and at reduced cost by permitting the Department to resolve more matters at these hearings, rather than in the courts.

**PRO:** The Commission's proposal on the City's ethics requirements will result in better enforcement and compliance with these important laws.

**PRO:** The Commission's proposal to restructure the Voter Assistance Commission will enable the Commission to overcome significant operational challenges, making it more effective and enhancing its ability to function independently of the Mayor.

**PRO:** The Commission's proposal to eliminate the Preliminary Mayor's Management Report will do away with a duplicative effort that has been superseded by alternative, more technologically advanced reporting mechanisms.

**CON:** The Commission's proposals on administrative hearings, the Department of Consumer Affairs, and the Preliminary Mayor's Management Report are technical and specific matters, and are not the proper subjects for a Charter Revision Commission. Rather, these types of changes should be considered through the ordinary legislative process by the City Council, and by administrative action by the Mayor.

**CON:** The Preliminary Mayor's Management Report is an effective tool for oversight of the City's management. It should not be eliminated.

### STATEMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION — PRO

#### George N. Spitz (Former Mayoral Candidate)

The proposal dealing with Government Administration is especially deserving of voter support, because it enhances the enforcement authority of the Conflicts of Interest Board by allowing increased penalties for violations of the City's ethics laws. A strong vote for this section sends a message that citizens of New York City desire clean government.

#### Jane Kalmus (Vice-Chairman of the Voter Assistance Commission)

The newly revised Voter Assistance Commission will now provide in a nonpartisan manner information and assistance to the citizens of the city on how to register and vote regardless of race, gender, income or education. We applaud the Charter Revision Commission for revising the structure of the Voter Assistance Commission.

*See also Michael R. Bloomberg (Mayor) on page 43. Additional pro statement submitted by Helen Sears (City Council); available at [www.nycctfb.info](http://www.nycctfb.info).*

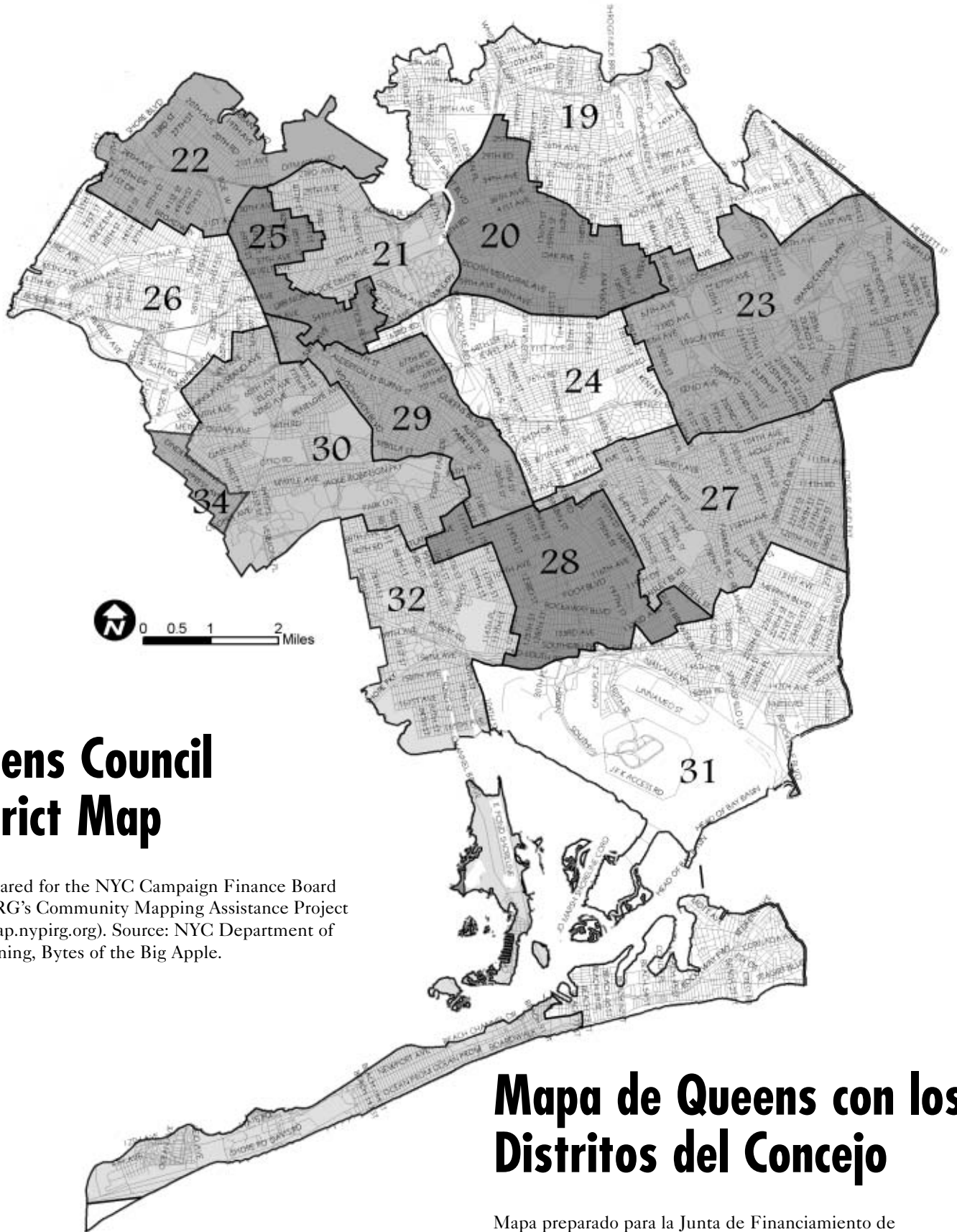
### GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION — CON

*See A. Gifford Miller (Speaker, City Council) on page 52.*

# Notes

# Notes





# Queens Council District Map

Map prepared for the NYC Campaign Finance Board by NYPIRG's Community Mapping Assistance Project ([www.cmap.nypirg.org](http://www.cmap.nypirg.org)). Source: NYC Department of City Planning, Bytes of the Big Apple.

# Mapa de Queens con los Distritos del Concejo

Mapa preparado para la Junta de Financiamiento de Campañas Electorales de la Ciudad de Nueva York por el Proyecto de Asistencia Cartográfica para la Comunidad de NYPIRG. Fuente: Departamento de Planificación Urbana de la Ciudad de Nueva York, Bytes of the Big Apple.