Why Is Our Local Party Spending Money to Kick Democrats Off the Ballot?

We call on the Brooklyn Democratic Party to stop wasting money on fights with grassroots Democrats when our focus should be on beating Republicans.

The Brooklyn Democratic Party is wasting time and money fighting against candidates for the volunteer position of Judicial Delegate, without even consulting their membership or the elected District Leaders who make up their own leadership body. This comes less than a year after a disastrous lack of Party support for Democratic candidates led to the loss of multiple long-held Democratic seats in the state legislature and Republican victories around New York City that cost Democrats the House Majority in the 2022 midterms.

The Party needs to get its priorities straight.

Every year, District Leaders from each Assembly District – who make up the leadership of the Brooklyn Democratic Party – help local Democrats run for the volunteer roles of Judicial Delegates. These delegates are elected during the June primary, and convene in August for the Judicial Nominating Convention to fill Supreme Court seats.

To get on the ballot, Judicial Delegates must collect a certain number of signatures from registered Democrats in their Assembly District. After clearing this hurdle, most end up running unopposed, which means they are not shown on the ballot.

However, when there are more Judicial Delegates who petition than available seats, all the qualifying candidates appear on the ballot. In this situation, the Party should let voters decide who to represent them at the Judicial Nominating Convention.

But this year, in districts with competitive elections, the Party funded a legal campaign in an attempt to handpick Judicial Delegates.

- In the 54th Assembly District, Party lawyers filed specific objections to Judicial Delegate candidates on behalf of District Leader Arleny Alvarado-McCalla, who also serves as the Chair of the Brooklyn County Committee. These objections were thrown out by a judge.

- In the 46th Assembly District, Party lawyers served 12 Judicial Delegate candidates with invalidating petitions, including Councilmember Justin Brannan and former District Leader candidate Angela Kravtchenko. This lawsuit was filed on behalf of District Leader Dionne Brown-Jordan (who is still under investigation for forged signatures during her last election).

This is yet another example of an irresponsible financial decision that puts the Party Chair's personal preferences ahead of what's best for our Party.

The move follows an alarming rule change passed last year to reduce the membership of the Party's internal finance committee, which should be providing oversight and management of the organization's finances.

After last year's disastrous midterms, the Party needs to be gearing up to support Democratic candidates in the upcoming election and mobilizing the 1.2 million Democrats living in Brooklyn – not wasting time and money on legal cases against volunteers.

We call on the Brooklyn Democratic Party to stop spending precious resources to fight grassroots Democrats – and focus on winning elections.

Signed,

New Kings Democrats

Bay Ridge Democrats

Brooklyn Young Democrats

Central Brooklyn Independent Democrats

Lambda Independent Democrats

North Brooklyn Progressive Democrats

Independent Neighborhood Democrats

South Central Brooklyn United for Progress

Southern Brooklyn Rising