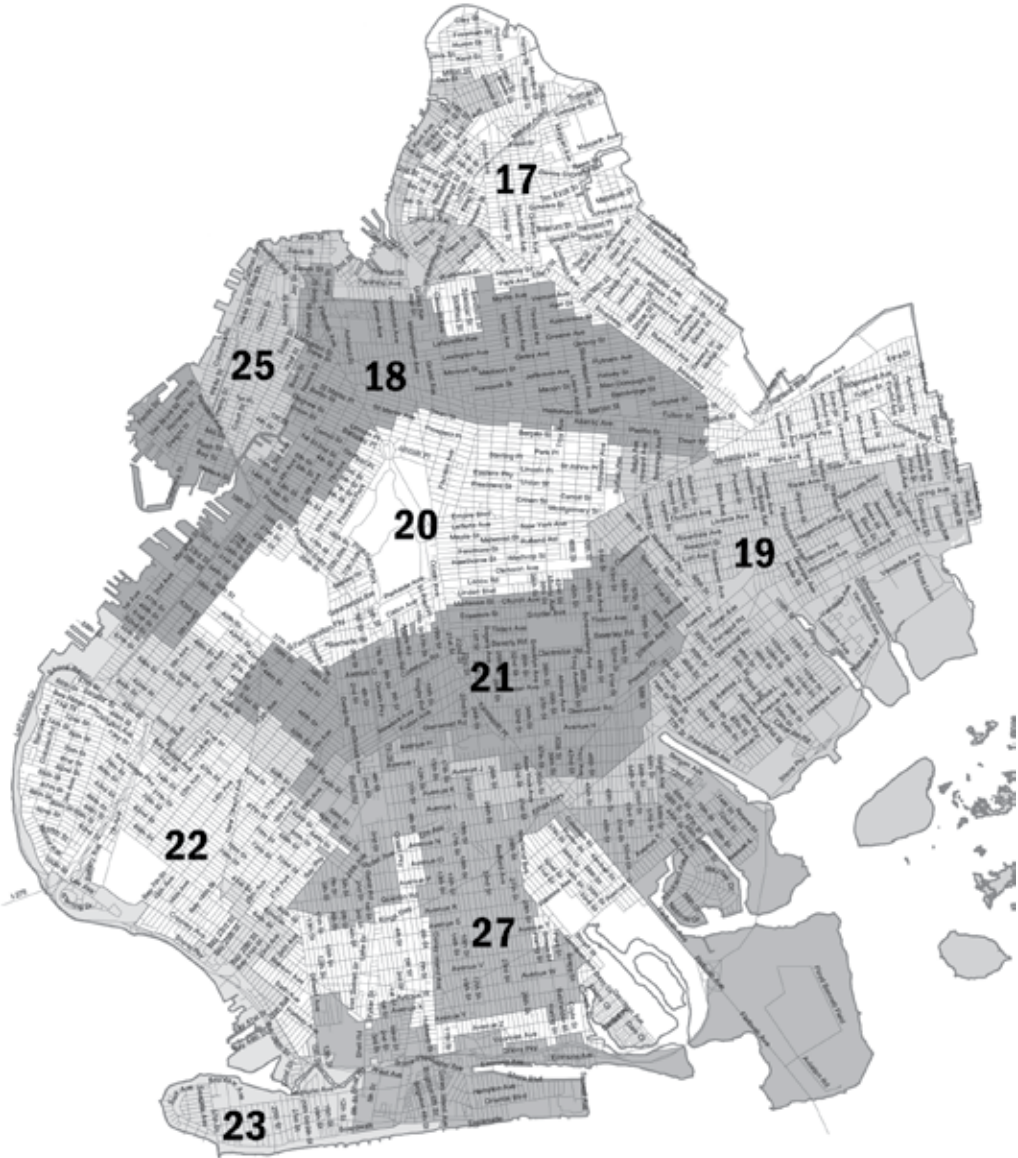


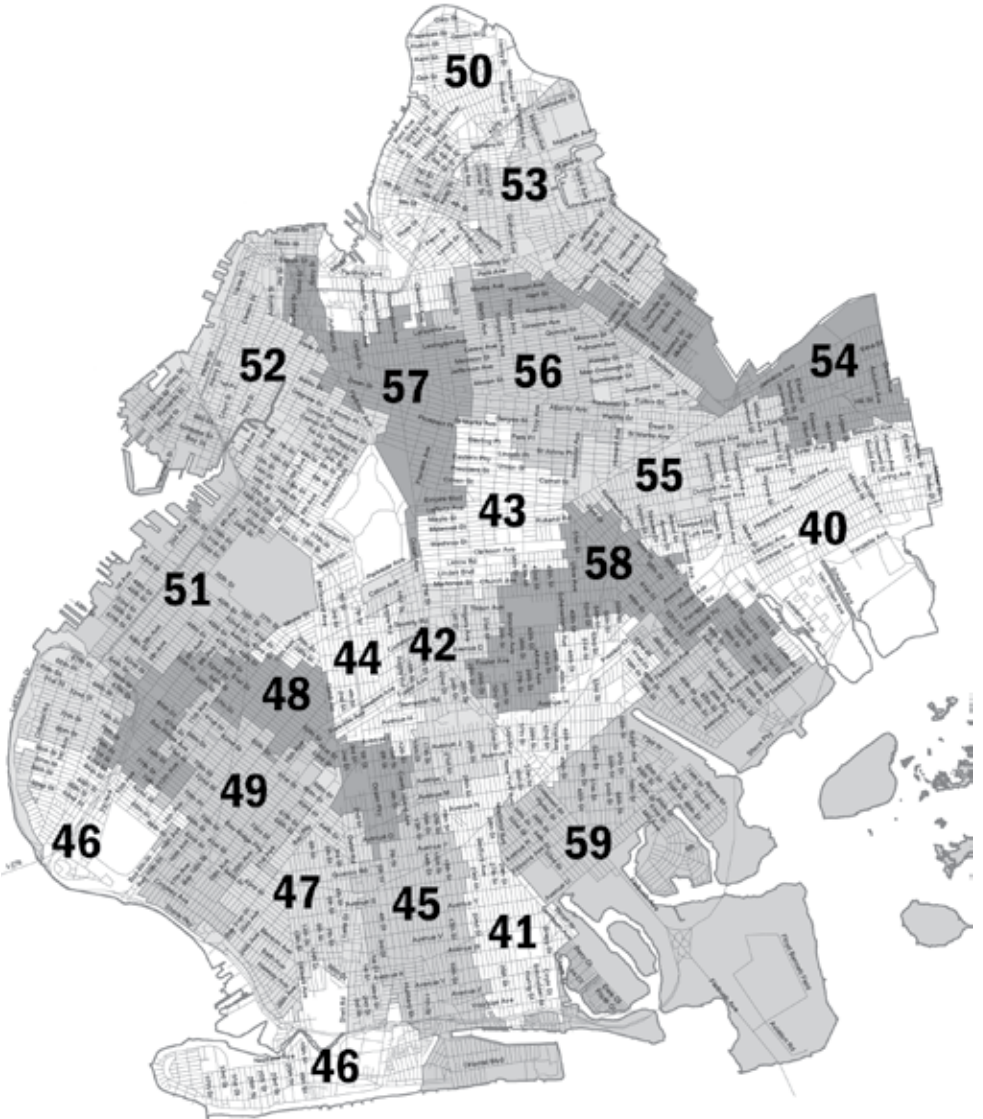


BROOKLYN STATE SENATE DISTRICT MAP





## BROOKLYN STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT MAP



**BROOKLYN STATE SENATE RACES**

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DISTRICT 20

★ **ENDORSED CANDIDATE—ERIC ADAMS—DEM, WF** ★

*Has returned questionnaire; responses on page 16*  
*Age: 47 Occupation: Member, NYS Senate*  
*Education: Masters Degree in Public Administration*

Elected in 2006, Eric Adams is a 22-year veteran of the New York City Police Department. The freshman senator is the Ranking Minority Member on the Crime Victims, Crime and Correction Committee, and the Veterans, Homeland Security & Minority Affairs Committee. Mr. Adams, a supporter of easier ballot access, is concerned that if the requirements to appear on the ballot are eased, a reformed campaign finance system at the state level might be subject to abuse. He argues that if it is made easier for candidates to appear on the ballot, then candidates should be required to meet certain thresholds to receive public campaign financing. He advocates making service in the legislature a full time job, and is supportive of legislative pay raises, but perhaps not while the economy is still doing poorly. He indicated that the issue of legislative pay raises should be considered by a bipartisan panel of non-legislators. When interviewed by CU two years ago, Mr. Adams supported merit appointment of judges; however he has since changed his position. He said the only reason he is not in favor of the reform is because of its impact on minority representation on the bench, but if there is a way to ensure diversity he would be supportive of taking control of judgeships out of the hands of county leaders. With the economic downturn, Mr. Adams noted that the budget this year was passed much too hastily, despite the fact that he voted in favor of it. Mr. Adams believes that not enough was done to cut spending or recoup government losses from items, such as Medicaid fraud. He did say, however, that any state budget cuts implemented should not affect education and healthcare delivery. In addition to reform issues, Mr. Adams said he would be an active advocate for the environment. He helped bring young adults to Albany to meet with the Senate Energy Committee and other legislators, organized a task force to discuss making environmental improvements, and communicated with his district about ways to reduce their carbon footprint. He would also like to see more bike stands installed to encourage people to ride to work. Mr. Adams was, however, against the mayor's congestion pricing plan —though supportive of a floor vote — because he would have first liked to have seen a larger charge for bridge access and a way to make public transportation free. After one term in Albany, Mr. Adams has proven to be a thoughtful and engaged legislator with the potential to be a strong leader, earning him CU's endorsement. We look forward to working with him on campaign finance reform, independent redistricting, and meaningful budget reform in the future.

STEVEN A. CHRISTOPHER—REP, CON

*Has not returned questionnaire.*

[CANDIDATE COULD NOT BE SCHEDULED FOR AN INTERVIEW.]

DISTRICT 23

★ ENDORSED CANDIDATE—DIANE SAVINO—DEM, WF ★

*Has returned questionnaire; responses on page 16*

*Age: N/A Occupation: Member, NYS Senate*

*Education: St. Johns University (BA);*

*Cornell Industrial School of Labor Relations (Labor Studies)*

Diane Savino was elected to represent the 23<sup>rd</sup> Senate District in 2004 at the encouragement of then minority leader David Paterson. Ms. Savino said she decided to run as a way to counter the Republican hold in Washington at the time. Since she entered office she has noticed that the Senate Republicans have begun to embrace small reform, but that much still remains to be done, like allowing committees to negotiate the budget. A strong supporter of the Citizens Union reform agenda, Ms. Savino said that the senate implements policies similar to the those in the Assembly that allow minority bills to be introduced in committee, and that there should be rigorous debate with mark-ups that go back to the sponsor. She said the state missed the opportunity early on to tackle the looming budget crisis because the state passed a budget this past year in a rush and based it on predictions before the April 15 financial numbers came in, out of fear that negotiations would break down. Ms. Savino said top issues at the state level include Medicaid reform and education funding. She believes that the formula for education funding needs to be changed, since currently the state spends more money in high tax areas at the expense of high need districts. With respect to the Medicaid program, the arrangement between Blue Cross/Empire State and hospitals has only led to an increase in cost without and increase in healthcare quality. To add to the problem, nursing homes are forced to accommodate prematurely discharged patients at a growing cost. She said that approximately \$40 million in revenue could possibly be found in unused member items and rolled back into the general fund to help alleviate the cost of education and other important items. In addition, the state will need to examine reform of the public authorities to curtail their spending and allowing representatives of the legislature to sit on their boards. As the state considers ways to decrease spending, Ms. Savino also proposes that nonessential projects be postponed until the economy of the state is in better shape. A strong and dedicated representative for her district with intimate knowledge both of local and state government issues, Ms. Savino has proven to be an effective legislator. Citizens Union endorses Ms. Savino and looks forward to working with her in the future on the reform issues she supports.

RICHARD THOMAS—REP, IND

*Has not returned questionnaire.*

[CANDIDATE COULD NOT BE SCHEDULED FOR AN INTERVIEW.]



## BROOKLYN RACES

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DISTRICT 25

### ★ NO ENDORSEMENT ★

JOHN G. CHROMCZAK—REP

*Has returned questionnaire; responses on page 16*  
*Age: 37 Occupation: NYU Langone Medical Center*  
*Education: BA, Biology and Music Performance*

Running in his first campaign, John Chromczak is hoping to provide a voice to the middle class and to increase voters' choices beyond the primary election. Mr. Chromczak stated that the number one reform item that needs to be addressed in Albany is the implementation of term limits. He would advocate for different terms for the assembly and senate, which he believes would provide the opportunity for new ideas and representation. In addition, he strongly supports facilitating easier ballot access. As a challenger from a party not highly represented in the district, he found the petition process oppressive and expensive. If elected, he would advocate for lengthening the time period for collecting signatures and lowering the signature requirement. With respect to campaign finance reform, he would support partial public financing along the lines of the New York City model, but has serious concerns with putting strained public resources into campaigns at this moment. In regard to Election Day voter registration, Mr. Chromczak said he would have to do further research into implementation that would safeguard against voter fraud. He is also supportive of an independent redistricting commission, hoping it would incorporate people from each region in the state and require a strict up or down vote from the legislature. He would support increasing contribution reporting, but would want assurance that the information could not be used over the internet for identity theft. His top issue is advancing progress on the rebuilding of the World Trade Center site, and believes that as a freshman senator he can be a strong advocate for this. He said no one is taking responsibility for its mismanagement, and as a result the project continues to be plagued with problems, similar to the MTA. Mr. Chromczak said he knocked on more than 10,000 doors this election and has been encouraging people to get involved in his campaign through volunteering. He believes that the many small contributions he has received and the money the Republican party has provided his campaign are a reflection of an awakening within the party to increase its diversity and solicit new energy. While Mr. Chromczak is an energetic and promising candidate with the potential to grow into an effective representative of his community, his limited knowledge of state government and untested experience gives CU pause. We encourage Mr. Chromczak to remain involved and build a track record for himself, as he is likely to emerge as a stronger candidate in the future.

DANIEL L. SQUADRON—DEM, WF

*Has returned questionnaire; responses on page 16*  
*Age: 28 Occupation: N/A*  
*Education: Yale University (BA)*

Daniel Squadron, who is running his first campaign for elected office, has worked with Senator Charles Schumer both as an aide and co-author of Winning Back the Middle-Class Majority One Family at a Time, worked at the Department of Education as a consultant, and lobbied on behalf of education and transportation issues as a representative of Knickerbocker-SKD. He believes that Albany needs to be reformed and supports a nonpartisan commission to draw state legislative district lines, and stronger efforts to hold public officials accountable. He has admirably released an eleven-point plan outlining his state government reform priori-



## BROOKLYN RACES

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ties which include campaign finance reform. His other top priorities are increasing education aid and affordable housing in his district. Mr. Squadron believes improved public education can help retain residents who are at risk of leaving the city. He is also supportive of rezoning in Chinatown to increase affordable housing, as was done in the Lower East Side with the help of community boards. Squadron is an appealing and energetic candidate, with a passion for public service. He moved to Carroll Gardens two years ago, a neighborhood in the district he seeks to represent. Voters would benefit from more detail about how he will implement some of his agenda for better education and more affordable housing because he did not provide specifics for how he plans to address these issues. When asked, he stated his first action as a legislator would be to begin a listening tour of the district to formulate his priorities, something CU hopes he is currently doing so that he knows the district and its issues well enough to enter with a specific and clear agenda for his district if elected. CU did not prefer him in his primary election contest against the incumbent Senator Martin Connor, but nonetheless sees a lot of promise in Mr. Squadron. If elected, CU has high hopes that he will be a strong representative for his district and a leader on the reform issues that both CU and he support.

### **BROOKLYN STATE ASSEMBLY RACES**

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#### DISTRICT 44

#### ★ ENDORSED CANDIDATE—JAMES BRENNAN—DEM, WF ★

*Has returned questionnaire; responses on page 16*

*Age: 56 Occupation: Member, NYS Assembly*

*Education: Yale University (BA); Brooklyn Law School (JD)*

A member of the State Assembly since 1984, James Brennan served as Chair of the Standing Committee on Mental Health, Mental Retardation, and Developmental Disabilities for five years before he lost the position due to his involvement in the 2000 effort to unseat Speaker Sheldon Silver. He now chairs the Committee on Cities and is a member of the Codes, Corporations, and Authorities and Commissions, Education, and Real Property Taxation Committees. He supports many of Citizens Union's reforms, including same day voter registration, which he notes could be accomplished without incidence of fraud by verifying the Election Day Registration before the ballot was counted. During his time in the Assembly, Mr. Brennan has sponsored legislation requiring the State Board of Elections to conduct a study on the feasibility of voting by mail, telephone, or internet and to publicize the results of the survey. Though Citizens Union prefers a public matching system, Mr. Brennan supports full public financing of elections, which he believes would create a level playing field and allow candidates to stop fundraising once the threshold had been met. He urged Albany to adopt some of the city's more stringent campaign finance restrictions, particularly with respect to conflicts of interest. When pressed on his efficacy in Albany, Mr. Brennan blamed a politically and regionally divided legislature marked more by disagreement than dysfunction, and argued that the Governor holds too much power over the budget-making process. Mr. Brennan said he is open to the creation of a legislative ethics commission, but was concerned with its constitutionality. He also was concerned with the ability of the Governor to appoint members, and would advocate that the current legislative ethics committee include non-legislators. Serving the interests of his district, Mr. Brennan has made homeowner protection a priority, having introduced a bill to enact a one-year moratorium on foreclosures and encourage settlements rather than litigation. He has fought for a reduction in the size of the Atlantic Yards project, noting that even a slight decline in the real estate market could hurt condominium profits and

the project as a whole. This renders the development a risky endeavor which holds little actual promise of affordable housing. His commitment to the environment is evidenced in two bills he worked on to promote greener sources of energy, and his bill to prevent the immediate drilling of oil and gas wells in upstate New York. The combination of Brennan's community involvement, dedication to reform, and successful track record of passing 58 laws which he sponsored, have earned him Citizens Union's support again this year.

YVETTE VELAZQUEZ-BENNETT—REP, CON

*Has returned questionnaire; responses on page 16*

*Age: 52 Occupation: Information Systems Engineer (Retired)*

*Education: City College of New York (BA)*

A mother of two who home schools both her children, Yvette Velazquez-Bennett is running in her third campaign for public office. She ran once for the City Council against Bill de Blasio, and ran against James Brennan in 2006. While Ms. Velazquez-Bennett supports some of Citizens Union's reform issues, she disagrees largely on campaign finance reform. She was not whole-heartedly supportive on lowering campaign contribution limits, and said she would like to raise more money if she could. She is supportive of a public matching system, but said she has concerns with the New York City program, though she remained unspecific. She said that transparency and reporting are the keys to successful campaign finance reform. While she has concerns with the potential for large contributions to influence legislators, she believes that transparency would remedy this because voters would be able to see from where their legislators were receiving funds. Ms. Velazquez-Bennett said that while she is pro-development, the Atlantic Yards project as it currently stands is far too large, and has serious concerns with tax payer dollars being used to acquire the property. She views it as violation of property rights that people are being pushed out of the neighborhood as a result of this project. Education is also a top priority for Ms. Velazquez-Bennett. She would like to see a voucher system in place, and claimed it would promote competition among schools. She specifically took issue with the Blaine Amendment and its prohibition of parochial schools. In addition, she would work to improve public schools by encouraging an emphasis on phonics at an early age, as she believes that educational success is dependent upon the ability to read. Other issues important to Ms. Velazquez-Bennett are increasing community interaction with contractors developing condominiums in the district and increasing jobs by revitalizing the industrial buildings in the area and taking care of the senior citizens who are being priced out of their homes. Ms. Velazquez-Bennett was also extremely passionate about the need to prevent sexual assault. She advocates having sexual predators classified as possessing a mental deficiency, so as to extend their incarceration. While Citizens Union believes Ms. Velazquez-Bennett is an energetic, likeable, and impassioned candidate with much to offer her community, she did not make a strong enough case as to why she would make a better legislator in Albany than her opponent, particularly since she takes issue with some of Citizens Union's core reform issues.