



Central Brooklyn Independent Democrats: 2022 State Candidate Questionnaire

Name of Candidate: Kaegan Mays-Williams **Office Sought:** State Senator, District 21

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Name of Person(s) completing the questionnaire: Kaegan Mays-Williams

Please answer each of the following questions to the best of your ability:

1) Why do you seek an endorsement from CBID?

I share a lot of the same values of the club and its members, and as a longtime resident of AD 44, I know that CBID's endorsement holds a lot of sway with politically active, progressive voters in the District. I would be honored to have CBID's endorsement.

2) If elected, what would be your top legislative priority?

Reducing gun violence through both holding the gun lobby industry accountable for unethical and illegal practices and advocating for sustainable, annual investment in community violence interruption organizations. Gun violence and public safety are some of the top issues in SD 21, and during my time at Everytown for Gun Safety, I have fought for common sense gun violence prevention bills across 19 states and the District of Columbia. Now I want to pass those same life-saving bills here at home.

As a working mother of a young child, I also want to fight for affordable, reliable, trustworthy childcare for working families and advocate for a living wage for caregivers that respects their value and reflects their importance to families and communities. I also want to support small business recovery from COVID-19 by holding corporate landlords accountable and offering tax credits to small businesses so that they can offer competitive wages and benefits (health care, childcare tax credits, etc.) to employees.

3) What measures would you support to improve educational opportunities for all students in New York State.

I support a New Deal for CUNY and want to fully fund our public schools. I want to increase wages for teachers and train a generation of teachers and educators.

4) NYS previously passed the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act. What are your priorities and what level of funding would you support to implement this Act? Do you support the Climate Can't Wait package?

Yes - I support the Climate Can't Wait package. I would sustainably fund the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act and the NY Renews \$15 billion budget request. With sky-high ConEd and National Grid bills affecting so many working families in the District these past few months, I would push for a renewable public power option immediately to help alleviate costs for so many families. Climate will be a priority for me because my daughter and her generation deserve to live on a planet that is not on fire.

5) How do you propose getting same-day voter registration and universal absentee voting approved



by voters in NY?

It was utterly shameful that same-day voter registration and universal absentee voting didn't pass in 2021. I would work with Elections Committee Chair Zellnor Myrie to put these proposals before voters again as soon as possible and sustain an education campaign to make sure voters know what the proposals actually mean and push state and local parties to work together to ensure those measures will pass.

6) What, if any, groups or types of people will you not accept campaign contributions from? If so, please note whose money you will not accept.

My campaign does not accept money from real estate developers or corporate PAC money.

7) Do you support the work of the state's Public Finance Commission? Do you support any campaign finance reforms in NY State? If so, please describe.

I do support the work of the state's Public Finance Commission. As an LGBTQ+ Black woman running for office, fundraising has been extremely challenging even though I have raised a competitive amount without matching funds. I would like candidates from marginalized communities to be able to run for office so that those communities can have a voice. Matching funds in NYC led to the election of the most diverse City Council in our city's history and a female majority of Council members for the first time. We should fight to have that level of representation in Albany as well, and matching funds would be an excellent way to help achieve this goal.

I think we need to close the LLC loophole and ban contributions from entities seeking state contracts.

8) The Supreme Court has ruled that state legislatures can gerrymander political districts along partisan lines. How and by whom should political districts be drawn?

The gerrymandering of my Ditmas Park neighborhood has been egregious over the last decade, where my block was in SD 17, my neighbors across the street were in SD 21, and that pattern continued for blocks on end. The voters should be able to choose their elected officials, not the other way around. Communities with shared identities and interests, like my South Asian neighbors in Kensington, have been split up into several State Senate districts, and they should have had a seat at the table and been able to advocate for their community to stay in the same districts.

9) Now that the Reproductive Health Act has passed, what is your next priority in increasing reproductive healthcare access and gender equity?

I support for the right to privacy and reproductive freedom through my lived experiences as a cisgender woman who has birthed a child with my wife through technological advancements. I support the rights of all humans to choose the means by which they choose to create their families whether it be by gestational surrogacy or use of our government systems -- while acknowledging the systemic and racial inequities baked into the process by which children are sometimes separated from their birth parents.

It also means acknowledging that birthing people should have the agency to make decisions about all



medical procedures concerning both their mental and physical health. I understand that policies have been enacted all over the country and the world to control decisions about how birthing people choose to live and whether they choose to parent children or not. I also understand that those decisions are not rooted in concern for their well-being, but an effort to dominate their sense of autonomy and ultimately restrict their participation in civil society.

Next, we need to advocate for legislation which allows pharmacists to prescribe and dispense birth control. New York trails behind some 20 odd states in increasing access to birth control to uninsured and younger patients.

10) What actions would you take to promote safer and more efficient transportation options for pedestrians, cyclists, mass transit users, and drivers in New York?

We need to have more protected bike lanes in our District to keep our streets safe. There have been far too many car accidents just on Cortelyou Road just in 2022. We need to invest in more and reliable public transit. Much of the east side of District 21 is a transit desert and folks out there rely on cars to get around. There are few buses that serve the eastern portion of the District, and some stop running at 10pm. I am a huge supporter of the Triboro line and would advocate for more frequent bus services and remove the fee to apply to become bus drivers so that we can hire and train more bus drivers. I look forward to working with groups like TransAlt to increase safer, greener, more reliable and efficient public transit across the city. In the meantime, I would support the Crash Victims Rights & Safety Act and fully fund complete streets to keep pedestrians and cyclists safe.

11) What policies do you support to ensure fairness in employment and workplace conditions, as well as strengthening and increasing access to unions?

I proudly stand with unions and fully support any workers who want to unionize and would push our federal leaders to pass the PRO Act.

12) What would you do to ensure access to affordable and quality housing for everyone?

I support the Good Cause Eviction Bill and mortgage relief for small homeowners in our district. I believe that 421-a needs to be replaced or amended to hold developers accountable for actually building truly affordable housing for those who need it most, and we need to fully fund NYCHA so that NYCHA residents live in safe, functioning, and energy efficient homes. We should increase our NYCHA housing stock.

13) What are your views on criminal justice reform issues, such as (but not limited to) police accountability, and ending solitary confinement?

To begin, yes I believe in ending solitary confinement, and yes, I believe in holding police accountable. In fact, during my time as an Assistant District Attorney, I stood up against [corrupt members of the NYPD](#) who



falsely arrested, framed and imprisoned a man who spent 7 months in jail before their deception was uncovered. I believe in ending qualified immunity, decriminalizing sex work, and reimagining public safety so that police officers can focus on solving crimes instead of doing the work of social workers.

Funding community violence interruption programs and policies that provide stability for the most vulnerable in our community is a way to address public safety and reduce gun violence. Addressing food insecurity is a gun violence prevention strategy. Funding summer youth employment programs is gun violence prevention strategy. Ensuring New Yorkers have access to safe and stable housing is gun violence prevention strategy. Advocating for accessible and affordable mental health care is gun violence prevention strategy.

All of the issues that plague our communities are interconnected and tied to public safety.

14) Do you support the New York Health Act?

Unequivocally yes. COVID has proven more than ever that health care – including mental health care – is a human right and everyone deserves affordable, accessible, and high-quality health care.